



FAVE BUTT EXERCISE: MUFF ON THE BALL

Is it just me or do most women (and secretly many men) have a bit of a preoccupation with butt lifting exercises? While vanity might be to blame for the general populations' obsession with firm tushes, my preoccupation with glute strength is firmly based on bio-mechanics and injury prevention.

Most people don't know that butt strength is an integral part of a well functioning core. If you sit on your arss all day, you glutes are stretched out and totally dormant and asleep. If the most your exercise involves movements that are about moving forward in a straight line:

running
walking
biking
elliptical-ling

And most of your strength work involves only squatting or lunging without any isolated glute work then chances are your glutes are lazy and amnesic.

So what? If you don't care how your butt looks in jeans, then maybe you DO care about preventing repetitive strain injuries in your knees.

Without adequate glute medius strength, every time your foot hits the ground your knees will be under extra stress and strain. The glute medius is critical in stabilizing the trunk (aka core) and keeping it in an upright position when one foot is raised while walking or running. If there is weakness in the glute medius there is structural instability that can ultimately result in excessive wear of the joint cartilage and pain.

If you end up in physio's office with some type of repetitive strain injury in the knee, you better count on getting prescribed glute med work.

I see many clients during rehab and post rehab. I also see many clients who refuse to get a firm diagnosis on whatever is causing them knee pain. But the one thing most of these people have in common is improper firing of the glute med on one or both sides. And the reality is that most people who haven't been focusing on improving glute strength need to tackle it to avoid injuries like NOW!

So at last, here is one of my fave glute med exercises.
MUFF ON THE BALL.

1. Lie face down with your muff right in the middle on the ball and your hands on the ground.
2. Turn your toes out like a penguin with your feet wider than hip width apart and tighten your lower abdominals.
3. Exhale and lift your legs tightening your butt and keeping your upper body still. As you exhale make sure you tighten all the muscles around your stomach and do a keigel. This will make sure the work doesn't land in your lower back and gets isolated in your glutes.
4. If you want to make it harder imagine someone is pressing down on your legs creating more resistance. Complete about 15 reps with a clear focus on firing those glutes med muscles keeping your toes out the whole time. Do a few sets while you're at it!

I could write a book with all the glute exercises I know. But I did this exercise in my workshop a couple weeks ago and all my peeps said they had a hard time sitting on the toilet after so I thought this one was worth highlighting. The name came about because I needed something specific and graphic to describe how to place the body on the ball. And all of us in the room got a good laugh.

Good luck butt lifting!

Jane