



Barrhaven Chiropractic Health Centre

My Back Can't Keep Up With My Legs!

The snow has melted, the trails are cleared, the bikes are tuned up and the dry-fit spandex has been dug out of the closet. That's right, the cycling season has officially returned for 2008. Are you ready? Or should I ask, "Is your body ready?"

Most cyclists aim to develop strong legs to help maximize the "push" and "pull" cycle of the pedal stroke. However, all that force going through your legs is ultimately transferred up the chain to your body's natural shock absorber, the spine. Since the cycling posture places a large amount of stress on our discs, spinal ligaments and spinal muscles it is important that your exercise regime includes spinal stabilizing exercises and not simply leg exercises.

Low back pain can be a serious deterrent for a cyclist, not only resulting in a pain or time off to heal, but may also result in the cyclist altering his/her technique in order to compensate.

Solution: Try to prevent back pain from occurring by "Strengthening the Core". Core muscles act as your spines stabilizers. A weak core results in low back fatigue and eventual injury. Try doing the following two exercises to help strengthen your core and prevent injury.

1. Side Plank

- Lie on your right side and prop yourself up on your right forearm so your elbow is directly below your right shoulder and your forearm is perpendicular to your body.
- Keep your legs straight and stack your feet.
- Raise your hips so your body forms a straight line from ankles to shoulder.
- Hold that position for 6 (beginners) – 30 (advanced) seconds then relax. Perform 3–4 sets on each side.

2. Supine bridge

- Lie on your back with your knees bent to 90 degrees and your feet flat on the floor.
- Press your heels into the ground so that your hips come up off the ground forming a straight line between your knees and your shoulders.
- Hold this position for 2–3 seconds making sure to keep the stomach tight and squeezing your buttocks.
- Return to the start position without touching the ground and repeat.

Happy Pedaling

By:

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