



Getting You On

# THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

A Quarterly Newsletter from Peninsula Rehab & Sport Medicine

Issue 3 – April 2009

## the dos and don'ts of safe fishing



By: Ron Wist, PT

Living as close as we do to the Atlantic Ocean and with Ocean City known as the White Marlin Capitol of the World, naturally we fish here.

Whether you are fishing the bay or offshore, you can easily sustain an injury if you are not careful. Take it from someone who has had a hook in his thumb, a knife in his palm and sore buttocks from slipping on the deck, injuries of all sorts can occur if you are not careful.

Those of you who have been around this area and have fished here know that some species can weigh in excess of 100 pounds. When you get into the shark or blue marlin categories, that weight can exceed 500 pounds. That is a lot of weight to be fighting, even if the fish is in the water and supposedly weighs less due to buoyancy.

They are still alive, pulling, tugging, jumping and darting around, trying to get that hook out of their mouths.

When fishing you need to protect your body, *especially your spine*. There is a tremendous amount of strain on your neck, arms, shoulders back and legs during the 15 minutes to several hours it might take to land one of these big guys. It's easy to say "practice good body mechanics". However, when that blue fin tuna is pulling and wanting to go deep, all you're thinking about is getting that bad boy on the boat and on the grill later.

The types of things you DO want to think about are:

- ✚ Keep a wider base of support by spreading your stance allowing the stronger muscles of your body to do the work.
- ✚ Try not to overuse your back muscles by leaning over too far forward at the waist. In a very short time this will place a very significant strain on your lower back.
- ✚ Stay as vertical as possible as you are reeling the fish in. Bending over too far also places a huge strain on the lower back.
- ✚ If you are getting tired, don't let your muscles get fatigued. If you do, you more than likely will cause injury. At this point you may need to pass the rod off to someone else to finish landing the fish.

- ✚ Use whatever is available on the boat for leverage. If there is no fighting chair, then brace your legs against the gunnels.
- ✚ If you have a fighting chair available use it as much as possible. It will allow you to use your legs to push off and brace against it as you reel in the big one.
- ✚ Everyone who has fished offshore will have a stand-up fighting belt. Use it. This will transfer the weight to the hip and pelvis region taking the strain off the lower back and upper body.

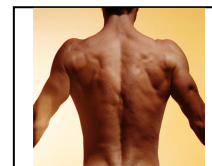
Should you sustain an injury, seek medical attention from your physician. If you have sustained a neck, back, shoulder or other injury, then you may want to have your physician refer you to a physical therapist for treatment.

Enjoy the day, but be safe, and remember if you hurt yourself it will be an awfully uncomfortable boat ride home.

## core stabilization firms up your spine

By Ron Wist, PT

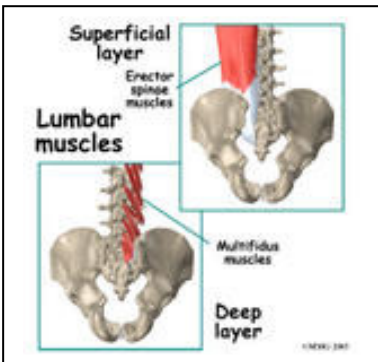
What is lumbar stabilization (or as it is sometimes referred to, "core" strengthening or stabilization.)? The



Strong muscles along the spine.

premise behind this type of exercise is to firm up the muscle groups

of the abdominal and back regions. In doing so the hope is that it will not be the spine alone enduring all the stresses which can lead to back problems.



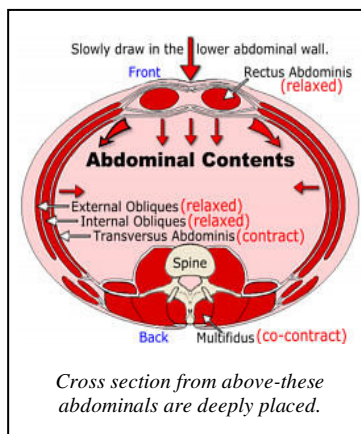
The muscles we are targeting are the Lumbar Erector Spinae, Multifidi, the Transverse Abdominus and the Obliques. These are the muscles that stabilize the front and back of the spine and therefore, the muscles that are targeted with these exercises.

Why would you, or should you care about strengthening these muscles? What good will it do you?

One reason is that these muscles are located in the deepest layer of the back and abdomen. They act as a “corset” of sorts and stabilize and protect the spine. It has been determined that in individuals with back pain these muscles are weak, and do not perform their role of stabilization effectively.

Another reason to be concerned is that it has been estimated that roughly 80 percent of our population has experienced back pain. Some think that if you do nothing low back pain will resolve on its own in 2 – 4 weeks. However, these individuals will be susceptible to continued reoccurrences if they do nothing to address the problem and strengthen the back.

Why is this the case? Because these muscles typically do not function in unison once a back injury has occurred. Therefore performing stabilization exercises is important to reestablish their protective function of the spine.



Now that we’ve talked about the need for lumbar stabilization exercises, how do you do them?

The key to performing these exercises correctly is to make sure you maintain what is referred to as the “neutral position”. The way to do this is to lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Once this position is achieved, try to flatten your lower back to the floor and then let it relax. The position that you end up in should be your neutral position.

It is important to remember this position; it will be the focus of all the exercises that you perform. Once this position has been achieved you will begin to incorporate arm movements, then leg movements, a combination of arm and leg movements, and so on.

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It is important that you consult with your physician as to whether you are medically able to perform these exercises based on your particular condition. Fitness level, age, weight and other factors all play a part in what you can do, and for that matter, what you should not do. Once you are medically approved, we would suggest that you have a physical therapist or qualified personal trainer instruct you on how to perform these exercises correctly.

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**Links you might find interesting:**

**Tips for a Successful Family Deep Sea Fishing Experience**

[http://www.noreasterfishing.com/pdf/deep\\_sea\\_fishing\\_in\\_maine.pdf](http://www.noreasterfishing.com/pdf/deep_sea_fishing_in_maine.pdf)

**Choosing a Personal Trainer**

<http://exercise.about.com/cs/forprofessionals/a/choosetrainer.htm>

**Benefits of a Strong Back:**

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Strong-To-The-Core-of-Your-Being---The-Benefits-Of-Core-Training&id=32610>

**Interested in Pilates Training? Not for everyone, but focuses on core.**

<http://www.pilates.com/BBAPP/V/about/what-is-pilates.html>

**Safe, Reliable Sources for On-Line Health and Medical Information**

- [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)
- [www.consumer.gov/weightloss](http://www.consumer.gov/weightloss)
- [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)
- [www.clevelandclinic.com](http://www.clevelandclinic.com)
- [www.americanheartassociation.com](http://www.americanheartassociation.com)
- [www.americancancersociety.com](http://www.americancancersociety.com)

**Next Issue Feature:**

***Play Smarter, Not Harder  
(The Realities of Getting Older)***

***Peninsula Rehab & Sports Medicine***

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with the goal of getting you on the road to recovery and back to the activities you enjoy.

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