

PSOAS, HIP FLEXOR, & LOWER BACK FLOOR EXERCISES

10-15 minute routine; Excerpts from

Anatomy of Exercise & Movement (A of E & M) & The Vital Psoas Muscle (VPM)
by Jo Ann Staugaard-Jones*, Lotus Publishing; North Atlantic Books

Warm – up: Lie on back, knees bent, feet on floor, hands on belly. Deep breath, engaging the transverse abdominus ms. on a strong exhale for stabilization of lower spine & pelvis- 5 full breaths. This and # 1 from *The Vital Psoas Muscle book*, pg. 23.

1. **Pelvic Tilts:** same position as above, tilt pelvis forward and back, 5 times slowly.
2. **Sacro-Iliac Joint Stretch:** Lie on back, cross one ankle over other bent knee and roll legs side to side 3 times. Switch legs and repeat – *with straight leg, VPM pg. 31*. Add hip rolls for deep core strength: on back, knees bent & together, roll legs side to side 6x.
3. **Rotational Pelvic Exercises:** Lie on back, hips 2 inches off floor, feet into floor. ‘Hike’ hips side to side 6x; ‘roll’ hips side to side 6x; draw a figure 8 with hips 6x. Squeeze sit bones together (Kegel) at end, before rolling down the spine. *VPM pg. 24*.
4. **Hip Flexion & Psoas Strength Series:** Lie on back, legs straight, raise one leg and lower 5 times (never do both legs together!)– hold the 5th one up at 45 degrees for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other leg; keep spine and abdominals lengthened. Add ankle weights for more challenge. To protect lower back, bend knee. *A of E & M pg. 127*.
5. **V-Seats (Navasana)** for psoas isolation: Sit behind sit bones with hands on floor, raise one leg then the other – hold for 10 seconds - keep chest lifted and torso long – straighten legs and release arms forward for added resistance, engaging abs and lifting the pelvic floor. Do the butterfly stretch after. *VPM pg. 13 & 107*.
6. **Rectus Femoris (Quad)/Psoas Isolator:** Sit with legs extended in front, round spine forward half-way, with hands by knees on the floor. Lift one leg and hold for 10 counts- lower and relax – repeat on other leg –in/outward rotate the leg and repeat once on each leg again. Must engage abdominals to protect lower back. *Challenging exercise!*
7. **Hip Flexor & Psoas Yoga Stretches:** Up dog, half crescent moon, and lunge – hold each for 3 deep, full breaths. Add side stretches and twists to the last 2 ex. *VPM pg. 118, & 43, A of E & M pg. 130*.
8. **The Psoas Lift:** Lie on back with knees bent, feet on floor. Allow one leg to hang to side, push opposite hip off the floor – hold for 10+ counts. Repeat on other side – can add Kegel at end of each side. *VPM pg. 42*.
9. **Crossed Leg Stretch** (for sacro-iliac joint and piriformis muscle): Lie on back, cross one knee over the other (thighs together). Roll hips to the opposite side of the top leg slowly, hold and breathe, then roll to the other side. Switch legs and repeat.
10. **Knees To Chest:** Lie on back, knees to chest –hold & breathe. Add knee circles and if time, the Constructive Rest Position (*Vital Psoas, pgs. 20-22*). Have fun, and relax...

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