

GETTING TO THE CORE

by Lian Monley

I am about to expose you to a revolutionary paradigm that will create a physically attractive and functionally sound physique. Most people think that your abs are meant to be trained using isolated exercise. Many of us have been conditioned to believe that in order to fulfill our physical potential, we must "pick and choose" what body parts we are going to work on. This is the same idea that has pervaded Western medicine and has created a million "specialists" who continue to know more and more about less and less. When we begin to realise the "relatedness" that everything has to each another, we will experience transformation in our physiques, our vitality, our energy levels and our minds. You are an integrated assembly of systems, and nowhere is this truth more evident than with regard to your core.

Today, our bodies are an exact expression of what our ancestors were over 100,000 years ago. It is believed that it takes about 100,000 years for 0.001 percent of a genome to change, so you and Primal man are essentially the same. With the generally understood notion that Primal men were hunters and gatherers, it is safe to say that our bodies are still designed with the primary objective of hunting and gathering.

Our nervous system is designed in such a way that its most important function is to protect the vital organs and brain, so that you can get off your butt and search for sustenance in the great, dangerous wilderness. Obviously, today we can just go to the local supermarket, but this was not always the case. Primal Man and even Agricultural Man had to hunt and work HARD for his food.

Through evolution, our amazing nervous system has integrated all of our organs with our muscles. Each of your organs acts as the "soil" in which all of your external elements (i.e., arms, legs, abdominals, etc.) have sprung forth and therefore are linked via the nervous system. The left arm, for example, is intrinsically linked via the nervous system to your heart. This explains why someone who is having a heart attack experiences his left arm go numb. The inhibitory effect on the muscles due to organ pain or inflammation is called viscerosomatic inhibition (VSI).

So what does all of this mean for your flabby abs? If it is understood that the function of the muscles are contingent upon the health and function of the organs and that the primary purpose of having muscles is to hunt and gather so that we can sustain life, then I've just opened up a huge can of worms for you!

The strength and function of the muscles, the abdominals in particular, are severely affected by the health of your organs.

Your deep abdominal wall, or transversus abdominus, is in the same nervous loop as your colon. So if your colon is not so happy because you fill your gut with processed foods like protein shakes, "sports drinks" and bars, then you can expect your stomach to only grow bigger, even as you crunch your life away! You may as well be tipping concrete mix into your body!

So the first step for completing the programme outlined below is: clean up your insides if you want your outside to look good! No ab routine in the world is going to work for you if you continue to inhibit the muscles of your deep abdominal wall through a dysfunctional lifestyle and a poor, processed foods diet. The exercise program I've outlined below is "integrated." It takes into account that your abs, being an intricate part of your "core," the originator of all movements and the protector of your organs, works together with every muscle in your body and in all movement patterns as it has for thousands of years. Imagine Primal Man needing to use a Crunch Machine so that his abs would be strong enough to propel a spear through the ribcage of a stampeding buffalo for dinner!

The exercises below are not designed to isolate your abdominals but to integrate them, which is the way they are designed to work. Integration of the muscles will create a powerhouse core which leads to a body that has never felt stronger with no pain and injury! Wow wouldn't that be good! When you have begun to integrate your abdominals into all of your movements, you will realize a rapid increase in your core strength. For example, secondary to my legs, the sorest part of my body a day after doing deadlifts is my abs. This is due to my understanding of how this mechanism works and making a conscious effort to integrate my core into the bend pattern. You can do this too, and when you do, your ab training will never be the same!

Say goodbye to boring post exercise ab routines that serve to isolate only the abs and say hello to an exciting and effective full body, core circuit.

Lian Monley is a qualified C.H.E.K (Corrective Holistic Exercise Kinesiology Practitioner) and Certified Fitness, Health and Nutrition Coach. Her goal is to provide individuals with an individualised corrective exercise and health/vitality program that educates them along the way. Lian takes a holistic approach to increased health and vitality when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. Lian incorporates Eastern and Western Philosophies to assess and treat clients. She specialises in working with the body from the inside out.

Spine Rotation Stretch



Lie on back, place legs up on ball at a right angle. Have arms at right angle. Slowly rotate ball from side to side controlling with your core.

10 Repetitions each side, slow tempo



Abdominal Extension



Lie over swiss ball , keeping your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Slowly move backwards until comfortable, reaching back with one hand to support. Do not go into full extension until this is comfortable. If you get dizzy when looking up at the sky do not do this stretch.

Back Extension



Lie face down over swiss ball. Keep toes on ground and lift torso up. As you inhale, extend up and rotate your arms outwards drawing your shoulder blades together, palms facing out. Exhale on return.

Reverse Hyper-Extension



Hip Extension



Lie on back with balls of feet on the ball, legs at a right angle. Slowly extend hips until you have reached full extension, lower hips one vertebrae at a time.

10 Reptitions, 5 seconds hold, 5 seconds lower.

Jack Knife



Start into a push position with your feet on a Swiss Ball and hands on the floor.

Hold spine straight, draw in belly button then slowly draw your knees towards your chest, hold then return to start position. Your butt should not raise up in the air.

The exercise is easier if the ball is firstly placed under your shins.



Back & Shoulder Stretch

Lie face down over swiss ball with hands on floor, inhale keeping legs straight as you raise them to where is comfortable, working your butt muscles, not just your back, lower legs as you exhale.



Kneel facing the ball place hands on ball, inhale and exhale as you slowly move into the stretched position.

10 Repetitions, ball can be twisted to either side for a deeper stretch.

Lian Monley Wellbeing
 info@lianmonleywellbeing.com
 www.lianmonleywellbeing.com