

CORE STRENGTH TEST OUTREACH PROGRAM

Core strength provides a solid foundation for movement of the extremities. Strong balanced core muscles help maintain appropriate posture and reduce strain on the spine. With this in mind the OCA created an interactive *Core Strength Test* for members to perform on participants during outreach activities.



PURPOSE

The OCA *Core Strength Test* can be used as an interactive component of a public education booth or outreach activity. The test is a great way to actively engage the public by having them participate in a simple test to determine core strength. Once their strength level has been determined they are given suggested core exercises to further develop their core strength. The test allows for chiropractors to talk about the importance of core strength and its relation to a healthy back.

INTERACTIVE PROGRAM

Once you have identified an opportunity, such as a booth at a fair or health and wellness event, or a lunch and learn here is how you conduct the *Core Strength Test* activity.

What you will need

- Yoga mat or portable table
- Stop watch
- Core Test Instruction sheet
- Take-away exercise sheets

Suggested Core Strength Tests *

Lateral Musculature Test

This is done in the side-bridge position with the legs fully extended. Have the person place the top foot in front of the bottom foot for better stability and support. They will then lift their hips up off the mat, supporting themselves on their elbow. This should create a straight line with the subject's body. The other arm can be placed across the chest with the hand on the shoulder. The test is "done" when the person loses their straight back posture and the hip drops to the floor.

* Make sure to convey to participant that this test doesn't constitute a diagnosis.

Flexor Endurance Test

This ideally begins with the subject resting with their back against a support at 60°. However, it can be done without support as long as the subject maintains a 60° angle.

With a support available — Have the patient begin by sitting in front of the support. Both knees and hips are flexed 90° and the arms are folded across the chest. The back is resting against the support. The test begins by pulling the support back approximately 10 cm. The person must then maintain their position by sustaining the isometric contraction. Failure is determined when the person's back touches the support.

Without a support available — Have the person start sitting with both feet on the floor and the knees and hips bent to 90°. The arms are folded across the chest. The test begins by having the person lean the upper body back to an approximately 60° angle. Failure is determined when the position can no longer be sustained.

Back Extensor Test

If a table is available then a test of back extensor strength can be done. The person is face down on the table and positioned so that the lower body is on the table with the upper body hanging over the edge of the table. The arms are crossed on the chest. Failure occurs when the horizontal body position is lost.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Mean Endurance times for these tests are available for comparison.

Test	Men's Mean time (sec)	Women's Mean time (sec)	Average Mean time for both (sec)
Flexor Test	136	134	134
Right Side Balance	95	75	83
Left Side Balance	99	78	86
Extension	161	185	173

More telling than the times themselves are the relationships between different tests, which may suggest imbalances. The easy comparison here is left to right lateral musculature test. The comparison of right side bridge/left side bridge should not be greater than 0.05.

When it is possible to do all 3 tests, the following analysis can be done. The following discrepancies suggest an imbalance in the three muscle groups tested (flexors, extensor and lateral.)

Right-side bridge/left side bridge	less than 0.95 or greater than 1.05
Flexion/extension endurance	greater than 1.0
Side bridge (either side)/extension endurance	greater than .75

* It is important to indicate to participants that if they feel pain or discomfort while performing any of the tests or exercises, to cease doing them and consult their doctor.

Tests and normative data — McGill, Stuart (2002) Evidence-Based Prevention and Rehabilitation, *Low Back Disorders*.

INQUIRIES

Questions and requests for assistance or further information may be directed to:

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TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Try to:

- keep activities educational and promote the chiropractic profession, as a whole, not your individual service.
- get the maximum number of members involved.
- have a professional looking display.
- have appropriate handouts and give-away materials from reputable sources.
- refer the public to the OCA's "Find a Chiropractor" feature at www.chiropractic.on.ca, or our toll-free referral number 1-877-327-2273.
- demonstrate using models and props.
- remember you are representing the profession as a whole when dealing with the public.
- ensure that you are familiar with and follow the CCO Public Display Protocol Policy — (P-016) and the Advertising Standard of Practice (S-016).

Avoid:

- pre-screening patients or performing spinal screenings.
- providing treatment to anyone in a mall or trade show setting.
- offering free consultations as a result of someone coming to the booth.
- performing any examination procedures at a mall display (including thermography scanning, SAM machines, etc.)
- guessing — If you're not sure of an answer to an inquiry don't guess. Get contact information and indicate you will get back to them.
- talking negatively about other professions or professionals.
- handing out your own business cards or booking appointments with potential clients.
- making an on-the-spot diagnosis.
- providing specific treatment advice or discussing specific back issues with participants.

Please share with us any stories of successful events/ approaches you or your Society have used in your community.