

Diastasis Recti Abdominis

What is DRA?

Diastasis = separation

Rectus Abdominis = outermost abdominal muscles

DRA is a thinning of the connective tissue at the center of your abdominal muscles.

In 30% of women this does not completely heal up postpartum.

You may notice doming or coning in the center of your belly during strenuous activity.

The depth and width of separation and how you manage pressure in abdomen is important.

Proper breathing is the first exercise toward getting your deep core stronger to help close and fill in the gap of DRA



Exercises

Diaphragmatic breathing with pelvic floor coordination

Inhale–

Ribs expand and open out to the side like an umbrella opening, belly expands in all directions (not just a belly rise, think breathing into sides and back as well for a general expansion - like a balloon filling),

pelvic floor elongates/stretching down and open (opposite of a kegel).

It is especially important for those with DRA to breathe into their BACKS (You don't want ALL the pressure from breath coming out the front).

Exhale–

Rib cage narrows back in like the umbrella closing,

Lower belly hollows down and low with gentle, deep tension (not clenching or gripping) belly button to spine.

Kegel up/into the body with both a gentle squeeze and lift up into the body around the urethra, vagina and anus.

Practice breathing in various positions – back with knees bent, sitting, and standing to really focus on pelvic floor and entire core coordination.



During and after pregnancy, your posture is very important for DRA.

DON'T: Lean back with hips in front of shoulders

Stick your head forward

Tuck your booty

DO: Lean forward with weight on front $\frac{1}{3}$ of foot

Stick out your booty

Keep ribs down





The breathing in #1 will be continued for all exercises. Move your legs with the exhale. Exhale, bring belly to spine, kegel, then lift one leg, keeping the opposite hip glued to the surface beneath you.

Maintain the contraction as you bring your foot back down. Reset with another breath and move again (or do opposite leg) on another exhale.



Once you can do the above exercise 20 times on each leg with good, quality movements (no breath holding or hip rotating), try progressing to tabletop position.

This is much harder!

While you are lifting each leg one at a time, maintain belly to spine and kegel- without breath holding! It doesn't matter if you're breathing in or out during movement, just keep breathing! Stop if you see/feel bulging out of middle of stomach.



Call with 515-255-3932 with questions or to schedule an appointment.



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