

Phase 3: Leg Exercises

Once you have completed Phase 2 (or as your healthcare provider instructs), continue your rehabilitation program with the exercises in this Phase 3 infosheet. For additional resources, including videos, to help you with your rehabilitation exercises, visit [Rx3 for Hip Pain online](#).

Perform 10 reps (repetitions) of each exercise in order (1–4), and then repeat the entire cycle for a total of 3 sets with minimal rest between exercises.

- 10 reps each
- 3 sets
- Cycle all exercises (back-to-back-to-back)
- Minimal rest between exercises

1. Single Leg Wall Reach

Starting position: Stand 3–5 feet away from a wall and balance on the leg on your injured side, keeping a slight bend in the knee.

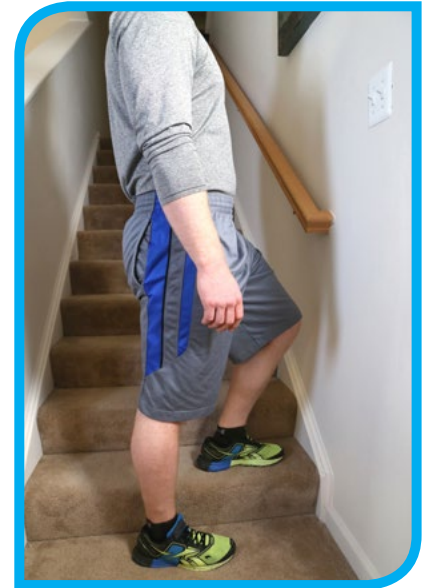
How to perform: Keeping your back straight, hinge at the hip to bend over towards the wall as you kick your uninjured leg straight back behind you, and reach toward the wall with your fingertips. Pause briefly for balance and then slowly return to the starting position. You should feel the activity in the back of the thigh or glute muscles of the standing leg. Repeat using the other leg. One “rep” consists of both sides. Hold a light (10–20 lb) weight in your hands to make the exercise more challenging.



2. Step-ups

Starting position: Stand next to a step/platform (about 12–24 inches high), with the foot on your injured side on top of the step. Your entire foot should be firmly planted close to the edge of the step.

How to perform: Step up on the step using the leg on your injured side. Pause briefly (and keep your balance) before slowly returning to the starting position. Use a taller step only if you feel no pain and you can keep control and balance your body weight throughout the entire exercise set.



3. Walking Lunges

Starting position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart, legs straight.

How to perform: Take one exaggerated step forward and lower your body by bending the back knee until it is 1–2 inches above the floor. Keep your torso upright. Push through the heel of your front leg to step forward, walking into the next repetition, alternating legs throughout the set. A “rep” is two steps (both legs). Add repetitions (up to 15 reps each leg) to make the exercise more challenging.



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Phase 3: Core Exercises

Perform each exercise in order (1–3), and then repeat the entire cycle 2 more times, for a total of 3 sets with minimal rest between exercises.

- 3 sets
- Cycle all exercises (back-to-back-to-back)
- Minimal rest between exercises

1. Single Leg Glute Bridge

Reps: 10x each leg

Starting position: Lie face up on the ground, knees bent about 60 degrees, and kick one leg straight, holding it slightly off the ground. Keep the foot of the bent leg firmly planted on the floor.

How to perform: Lift your hips off the floor, pushing through the heel of your foot and squeezing your glutes as you lift your hips. Slowly lower hips to the ground and repeat. Do not overextend your back! You should feel the activity mostly in your legs. Complete all reps on one leg before switching. Add repetitions (up to 15 reps each leg) to make the exercise more challenging.

2. Plank

Reps: One (with 45–60 sec hold)

Starting position: Lie face down propped up with your forearms on the ground and your elbows under your shoulders, with legs extended straight.

How to perform: Lift your hips off the ground, creating a “bridge” from your forearms to your toes. Keep your abs—your abdominal muscles—tight and your back flat as you hold the position for 45 sec. (Do this in front of a mirror so you can see that you’re keeping a straight body position.) Add time (up to 60 sec) to make the exercise more challenging.

3. Side Plank (staggered feet)

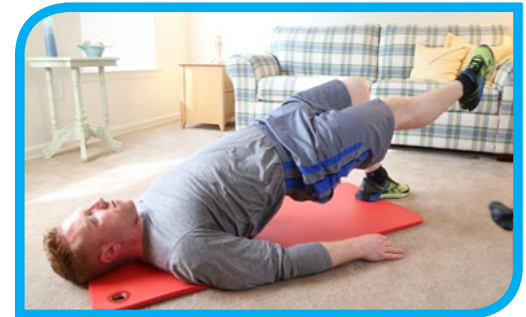
Reps: One each side (with 30 sec hold)

Starting position: Lie on your side, propped up on your forearm, with one elbow directly under your shoulder and your hip on the ground. Extend both legs straight with one foot in front of the other (staggered stance).

How to perform: Lift your hips off the ground, creating a “bridge” from your forearm to your feet. Keep your abs—your abdominal muscles—tight and your back straight as you hold the position for 30 sec. Immediately switch to the opposite side before moving to the next activity. Add time to each hold (up to 60 sec) to make the exercise more challenging.



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Phase 3: Cardio component

Do some kind of low-impact cardio activity at least 3 days a week, and then 5 days a week as it becomes easier. As a general rule, don’t increase the volume or intensity of your cardio exercises more than 10% per week.

Exercises: Running (cushioned track, running trail, or treadmill)

How to perform: The goal of Phase 3 is to increase your intensity (speed) to build your endurance to a pace enabling you to pass and excel at the aerobic portion of your physical fitness test. You should only perform impact running (cushioned track, running trail, or treadmill) a maximum of 3 days per week—with a day of rest between running days. If you wish to perform cardio exercise 4 or 5 days a week, you can swim, row, bike, or elliptical for the other 2 days. If you have an increase in hip pain, scale back the frequency of running to 1–2 days per week at a lower intensity. If pain continues to occur, please see your healthcare provider.

Duration: 20–30 minutes

Phase 3: Stretches

Perform in the order listed, holding each stretch for 30 to 60 sec each and taking a brief rest (5–10 sec) between reps.

- 2–3 reps
- 30–60 sec hold each
- Rest 5–10 sec

1. Self-Massage – Quad

Starting position: Lie face down on the floor with a tennis ball, foam roller, or similar object under the thigh on your injured side so the object is pinned between the floor and your thigh.

How to perform: Support your body weight with your forearms and toes, moving up, down, and around the thigh on the massage object. Try to relax your body, especially the thigh you're rolling. Give extra attention and time to areas in the muscles that feel sore.

2. Standing Quad Stretch

Starting position: Stand on the leg of your uninjured side and hold the foot of the other leg or loop a towel around that foot.

How to perform: Keep your balance (hold on to something if you need) and press your hips forward by squeezing your glutes, slowly pulling the foot or towel behind you until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.

3. Lying Glute Stretch

Starting position: Lying face up on the ground with both knees bent, cross the leg on your injured side over the other, resting the ankle on the opposite knee.

How to perform: Keeping your back flat on the ground, grab the thigh of the leg of your uninjured side with your arms and pull it towards your chest. You should feel a stretch in the glute of the top leg.

4. Lying Hamstring Stretch (with towel)

Starting position: Lying face up on the ground, bend your knee on your injured side and loop a towel around that foot. The other leg should be extended straight and resting on the floor.

How to perform: Keeping a slight bend in the knee, slowly lift your injured leg into the air using the towel for support. You should feel a stretch in the back of the thigh of your raised leg.

Progression

- Perform all the exercises outlined in Phase 3 for at least 3 weeks.
- If you have pain with the Phase 3 exercises, immediately contact your healthcare provider.
- When you can complete all the Phase 3 exercises for the maximum recommended sets and repetitions for at least 3 days a week, you are ready to move on to the maintenance phase.
- The maintenance phase is a return to your own physical fitness training program while still incorporating the same elements of strength, core stability, cardio, and stretching, but at a pace and frequency that meets your goals. Please visit our [“Moving On”](#) page to find more information and the program that is right for you.

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