

Quadriceps

Position yourself face down with both thighs resting on top of the roller. Support yourself on your elbows and forearms, and keep your abdominal and back muscles lightly flexed to stabilize your spine.

Roll slowly back and forth on the roller, from just above your ankles to just below your hips, and pause a few spots that feel especially tender. Your quadriceps muscles should stay relaxed throughout the movement and your feet should drag the floor. Because the quadriceps is such a large muscle group, you may want to spend extra time on this exercise. Repeat your back and forth movements until all tenderness disappears.

To dig down deeper, lean the roller and increase the intensity of this exercise, tilt your body to the left or right while rolling.



Iliotibial Tract (IT Band)

Position yourself on your side, with your lower leg extended and on top of the roller, and your upper leg bent, with your foot firmly on the floor. Support your upper body on one elbow and forearm. Keep your abdominal and back muscles lightly flexed to stabilize your spine.

Roll the outside of your thigh, from just below the hip joint to just above the knee. If the movement is too painful, reduce your force against the roller by shifting more of your weight to your foot that's on the floor.



Glute / Piriformis

Sit on top of the roller, with one foot crossed to the opposite knee. Place one or both hands on the floor behind you to support your upper body.

Slowly rock and roll the glute of your bent leg. Then switch leg positions to roll the opposite glute.



Lower Back

Caution: This exercise is not recommended for an individual with an injured or unstable lumbar spine.

Position yourself facing up, with your lower back on top of the roller, both knees bent, and feet flat on the floor. Keep your abdominal muscles flexed to support your upper body and stabilize your spine. Legs straight ahead, and keep your head and neck in a neutral position. If necessary, place one or both elbows on the floor beside you for additional support.

Roll from just above your feet to just below your lower ribs. If you feel the roller against your spine, tilt your body slightly to the right or left to refocus the pressure on the adjacent muscles.



Upper Back

Take a position identical to that of the lower back exercise, except with your upper back on top of the roller. Keep your abdominal muscles flexed and your head and neck in a neutral position.

Roll slowly from the lower edge of your trapezius muscles (lower-thoracic area) to the top of the rhomboids (upper-thoracic area). Do NOT roll onto your neck.

To increase the intensity of this exercise, cross your arms in front of you and rock to the right and left as you roll.



Hamstrings

Sit with back of your thighs on top of the roller and both hands on the floor behind you. Keep your leg muscles relaxed, and let your feet lightly drag the floor.

Roll your hamstrings from just above your knees to just below your pelvis. To increase intensity, shift your weight to one leg by crossing your legs at the ankle.



Calves

Take a position identical to that of the hamstring exercise, except with your feet on instead of your hamstrings on top of the roller.

Roll from just above your ankles to just below your knees. Cross your legs at the ankle to increase the exercise's intensity.

For even greater stimulation, rock your leg left and right to allow the bumps to dig deeper into the muscle.



Latissimus Dorsi (Lat)

Lie on your side on the floor, with your arm outstretched and over the top of the roller. Position the roller in the axillary area (armpit) so that it presses against your latissimus dorsi muscle.

Rock and roll slowly in all directions. The range of the rolling motion for this exercise is limited, but rocking from side to side will allow deep penetration of the muscle.



Neck

Caution: This exercise is not recommended for an individual with an injured or unstable cervical spine.

Lie face-up on the floor, with the back of your neck resting on top of the roller. Slowly rock your head from side to side, allowing the roller to press into the muscles on the sides of your neck. Keep your body relaxed during this exercise. The weight of your head should be the only force against the roller.

