

Pelvic Clock®

# Hip Flexors

## Stretches & Exercises



**Hip Flexor Muscles** move the thighs towards the front of the body and stabilize the lumbar spine. In addition to this main function, they are important for posture and for preventing or relieving lower back and hip pain.

Both “neutral spine” and “neutral pelvis” positions rely on flexible, strong hip flexor muscles.

Tight hip flexors lead to an **Anterior Pelvic Tilt**, whereas weak hip flexors can lead to a **Posterior Pelvic Tilt**, a forward-shifted pelvis and a **Sway Back Posture**.

Regular stretching and strengthening of the hip flexors help to keep the pelvis and spine in a healthy, neutral position.

The primary hip flexor muscles (Iliopsoas, Rectus Femoris, and Sartorius) either originate from or run through the pelvis.

**Iliopsoas** is a group of three hip flexors:

The **Psoas Major** muscle starts at the last thoracic and first four lumbar vertebrae (above the **12** o'clock marker of a clock dial). The left psoas runs toward the **5** o'clock marker (left femur) and the right psoas goes toward the **7** o'clock marker (right femur).

The **Iliacus** muscle runs from the iliac (hip bone) to the femur.

The **Psoas Minor** muscle is absent in 73% of humans.

Our hip flexors are often tight from sitting at a desk, driving a car, or biking.

A daily hip flexor stretch is the best prevention for lower back and hip pain. However, excessive stretching of the Iliopsoas muscles can be as counterproductive as stretching a rubber band: when you overstretch an elastic band, it pulls back with a greater energy.

A simple hip flexor muscle release is more effective than aggressive muscle pulling. Plus, it eliminates the risk of a groin injury from over enthusiastic stretching.

With the Pelvic Clock® Exercise Device, hip flexor stretches quickly loosen up a tight Iliopsoas, improve hip mobility, and correct pelvic alignment in less than five minutes, by using your own body weight and allowing gravity to “unlock” the tight Iliopsoas.

The stretches combine muscle release with minimal pelvic rotation, hip and lumbar extensions.

People diagnosed with a Sway Back Posture need to strengthen their weak Hip Flexors together with the deep core muscles, such as the Lumbar Multifidus, Erector Spinae, Transversus Abdominis, and Internal Oblique muscles.

The Pelvic Clock® Exercise Device is for people dedicated to pursuing a regular exercise program to treat their chronic lower back pain and other related conditions.

Some people feel the effects of using the Pelvic Clock® device right away, especially after a long day of sitting. However, please keep in mind that it is not a one-off effort and in order to get the full benefits, you need to make pelvic clock exercises part of your daily regimen.

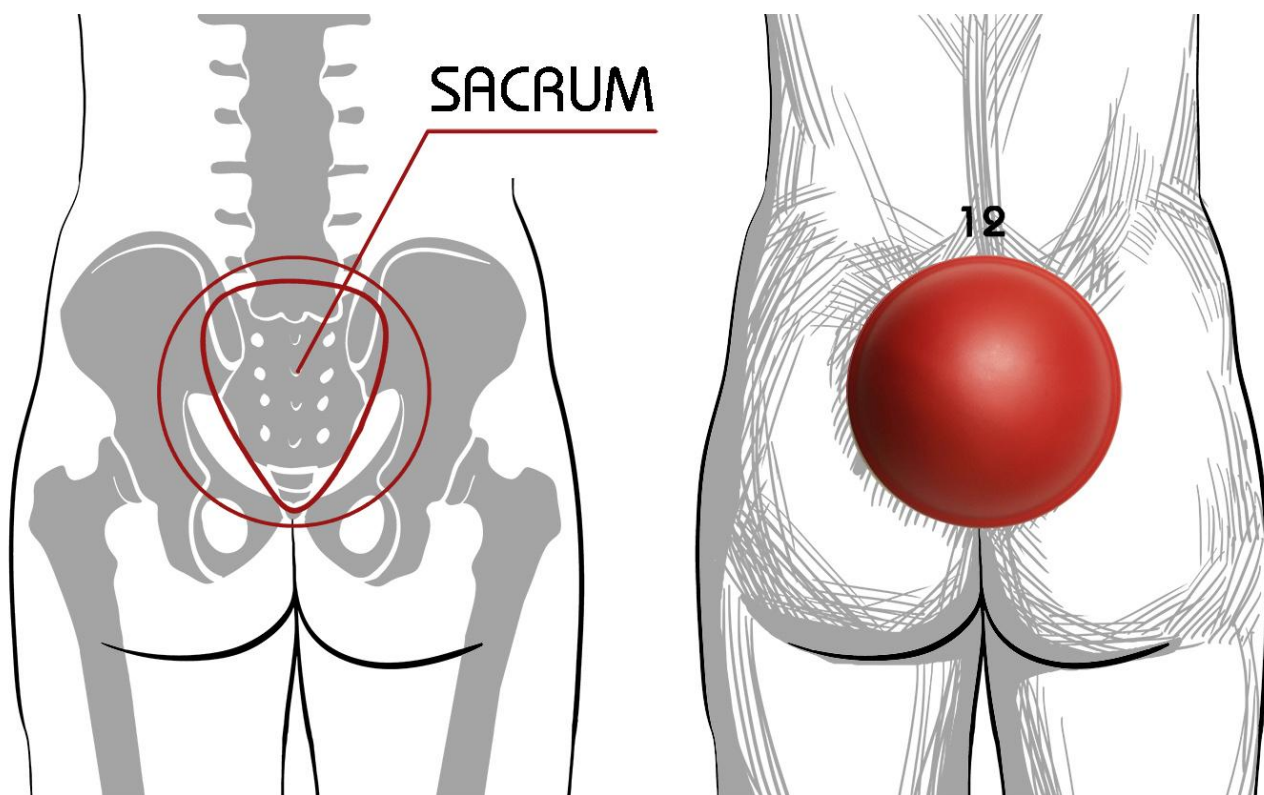
**TIPS:**

1. Start at a slow pace. Take time to build up your exercise routine. Take your time to stretch and decompress.
2. Listen to your body. When you are looking for pain relief, your own intuition and common sense can be very helpful. You need to find the direction of the movement that reduces your pain. If tilting your pelvis in one direction increases your pain, tilt it in the opposite direction.
3. If you are experiencing pain, stop your practice. Ice your lower back for 15 minutes, and give it a little rest.
4. Always exercise within your own limits. Gradually increase your range of motion until you are pain free.
5. In the first 2 weeks of your practice, you might want to use a small towel on top of the device for extra padding.
6. If your mobility is limited, start exercising on the bed or massage table. The soft surface will reduce the height of the device.

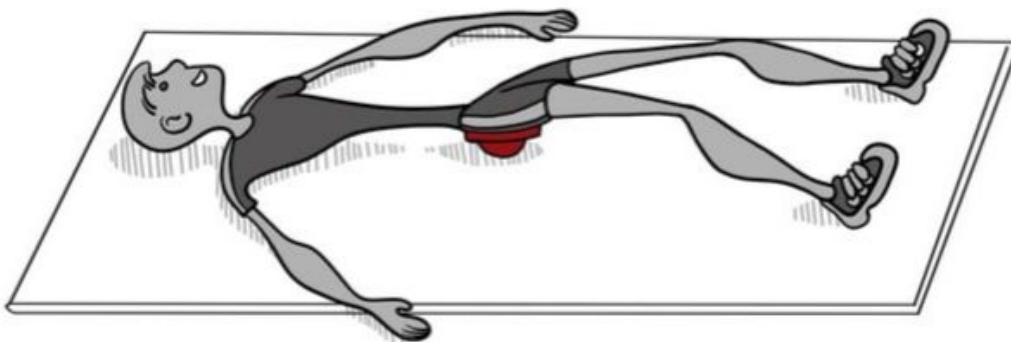
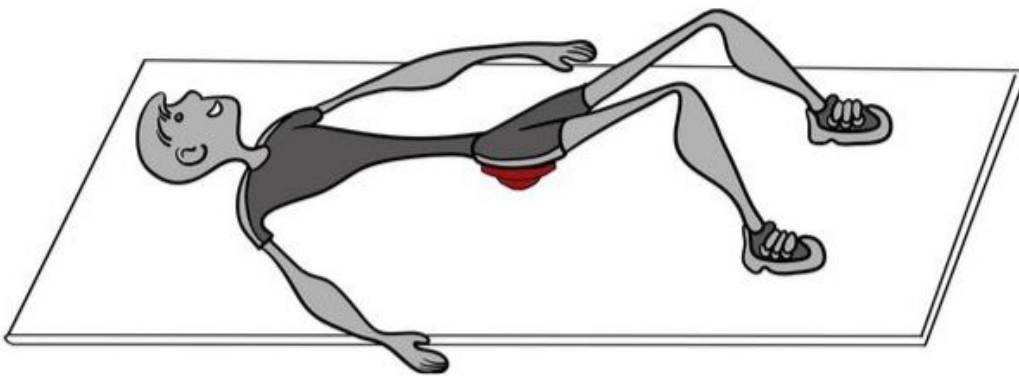
# How to Set Up For Exercises

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the mat (this is called the semi-supine position). The feet should be hip distance apart.

Lift your pelvis about 1 to 3 inches off the floor. Then, place the device below your sacrum, between your sacrum and the floor. Lower your pelvis, and your sacrum should be sitting in the recess of the flat upper surface. The convex lower surface of the device stays in contact with the floor. Point the **12** o'clock marker on the device toward your head.

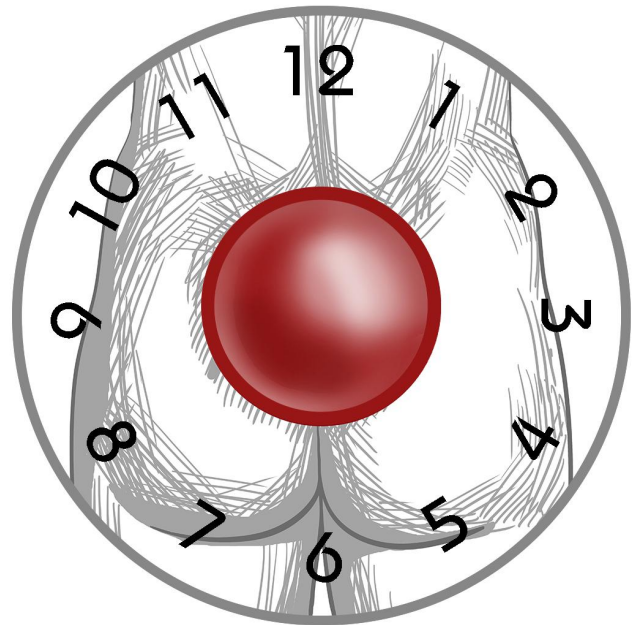
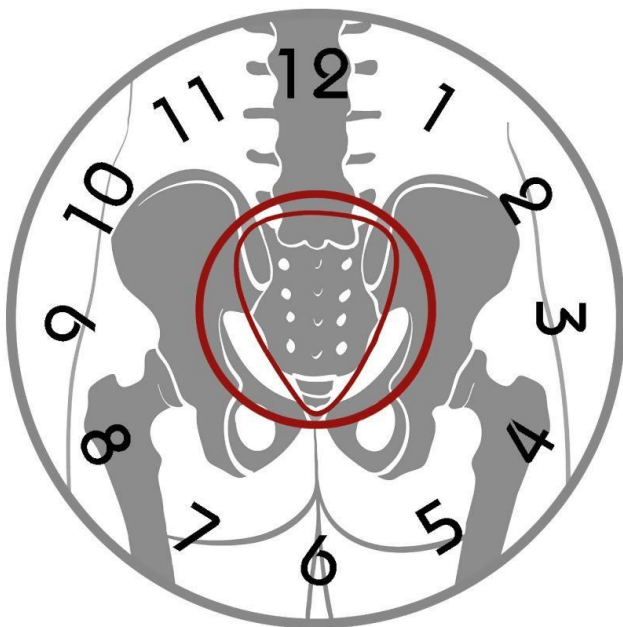


Once you have the device in position, you can just relax on it for a minute or two. Stretch out your legs on the mat or try rocking side to side.



# Exercise Patterns

In each exercise, your pelvis will follow a different pattern, using the numbers of the clock as a guide.



## Duration of Exercises

Aim to repeat each exercise 10 to 20 times. The number of repetitions and length of practice will vary for each person, depending on factors like affected side, physical condition, age, gender, and degree of pain. The goal is to perform all of these exercises within a range of motion that does not increase your pain and with the expectation that the device will help you to gradually increase your range of motion until you are pain free.

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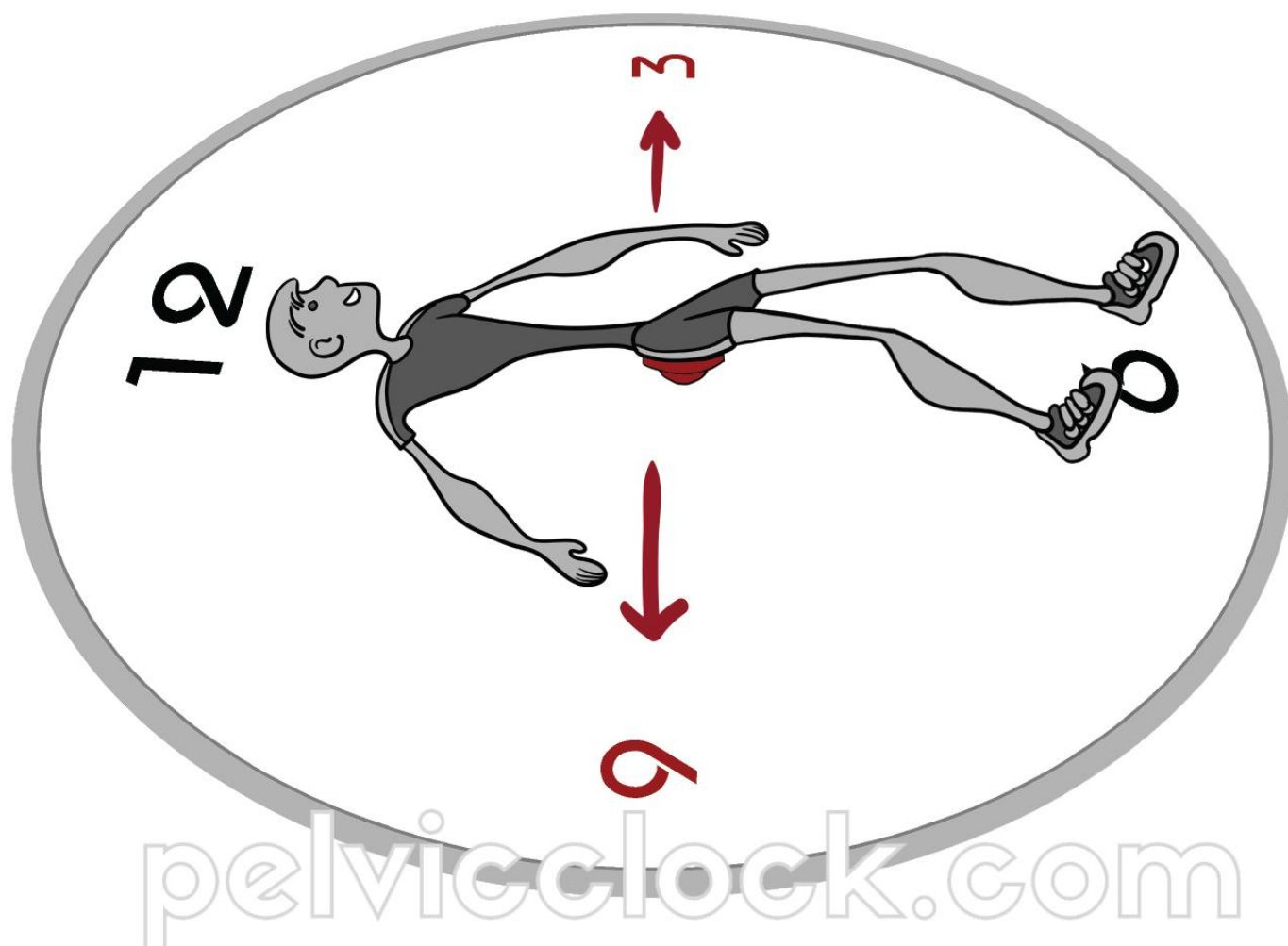
# Hip Flexor Stretching



## Exercise "3-9" with straight legs

Stretch your legs, relax, and rock your pelvis side to side following the **3-9** pattern.

Repeat 10-20 times.



# Cross Stretch

This stretch is perfect for targeting the psoas muscle (a hip flexor), as well as the shoulder.

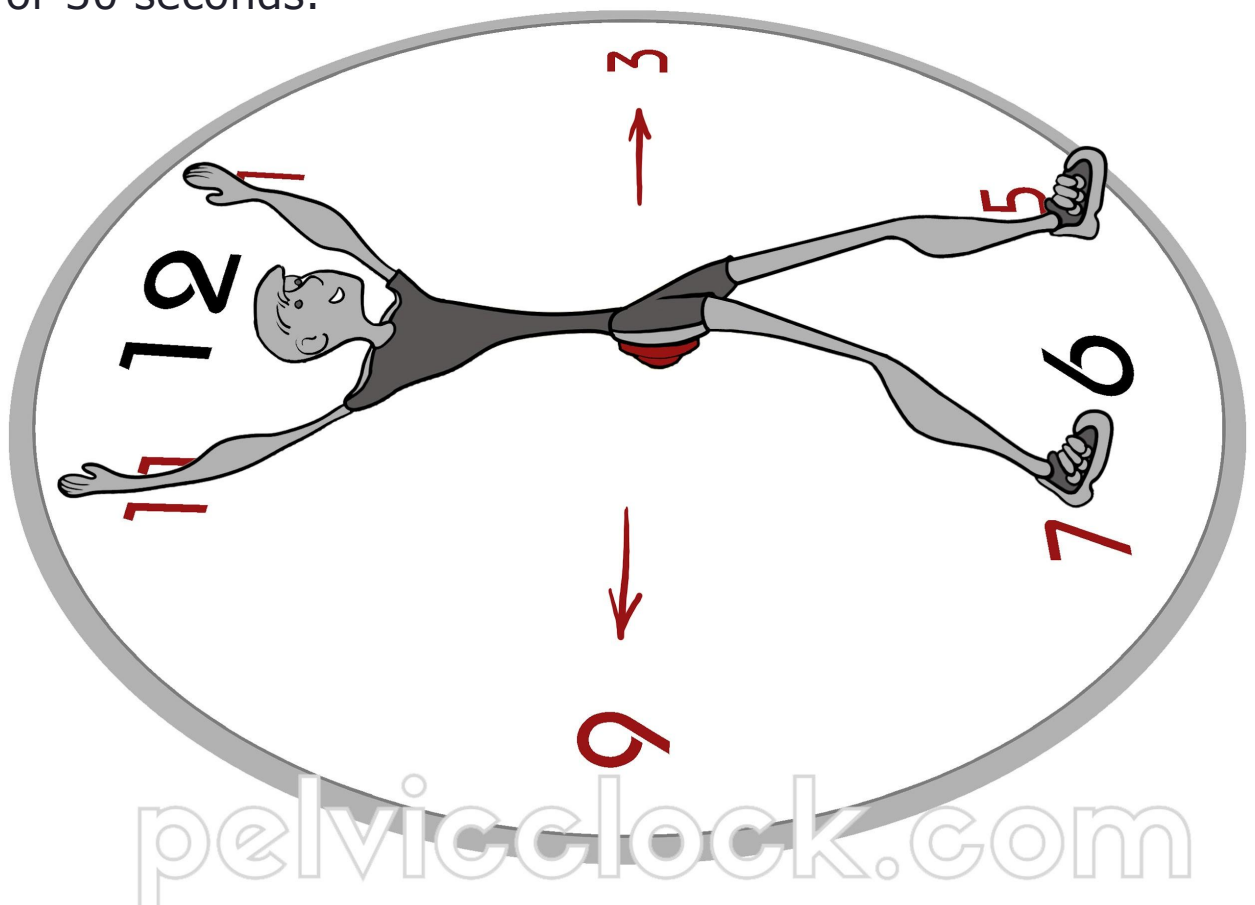
Get into position with your legs and arms stretched wide.

Tilt your pelvis to the left toward the **3** o'clock marker, stretch your right arm to the **11** o'clock marker, and stretch your left leg to the **5** o'clock marker.

Hold for 30 seconds.

Tilt your pelvis to the right toward the **9** o'clock marker, stretch your left arm to the **1** o'clock marker, and stretch your right leg to the **7** o'clock marker.

Hold for 30 seconds.

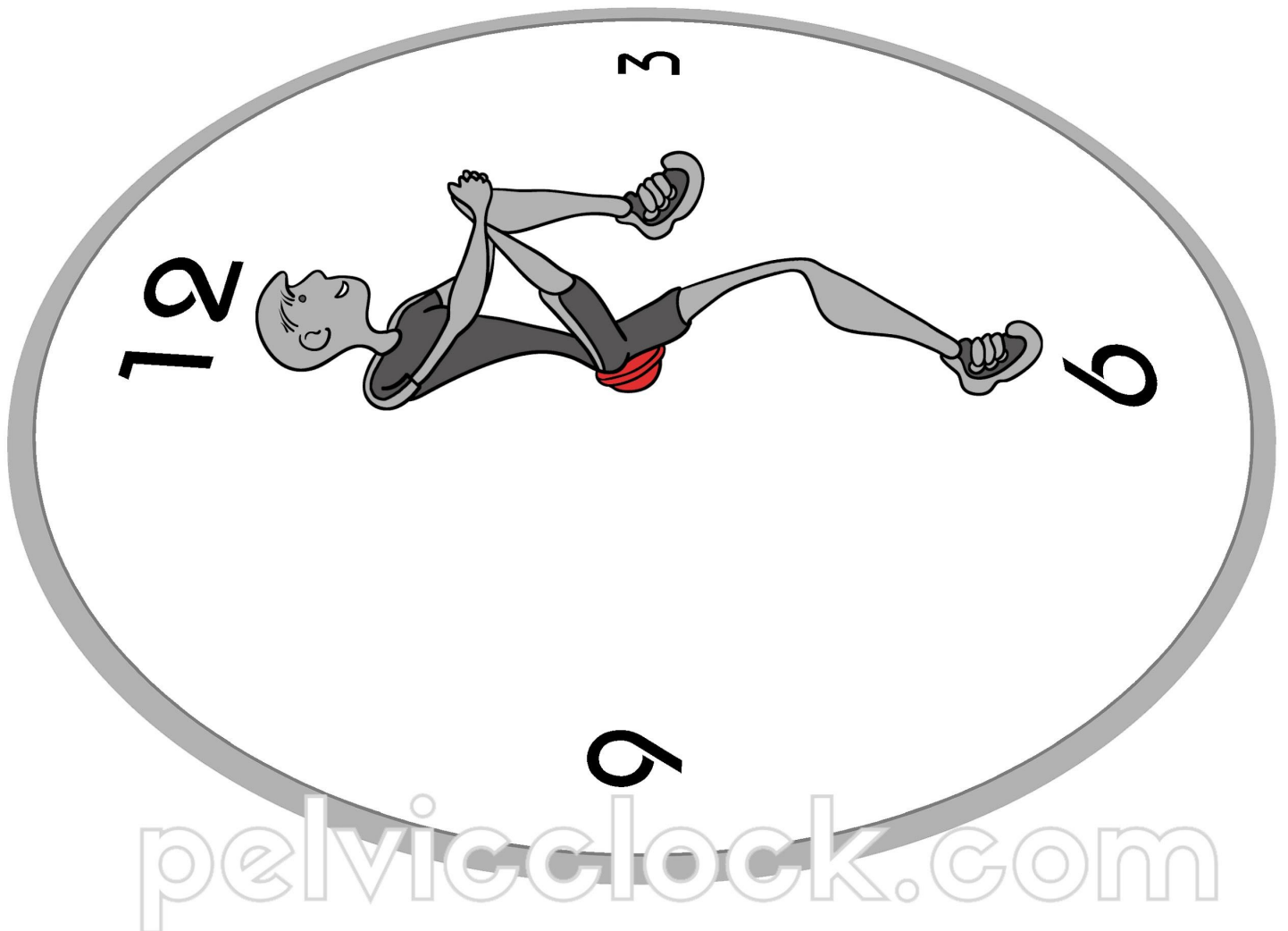


# Knee-to-Chest Stretch

Pull your **right** knee toward your chest. Stretch your left leg and relax.

Slowly rock your pelvis in different directions for 30+ seconds.

Then repeat this stretch with your **left** knee.



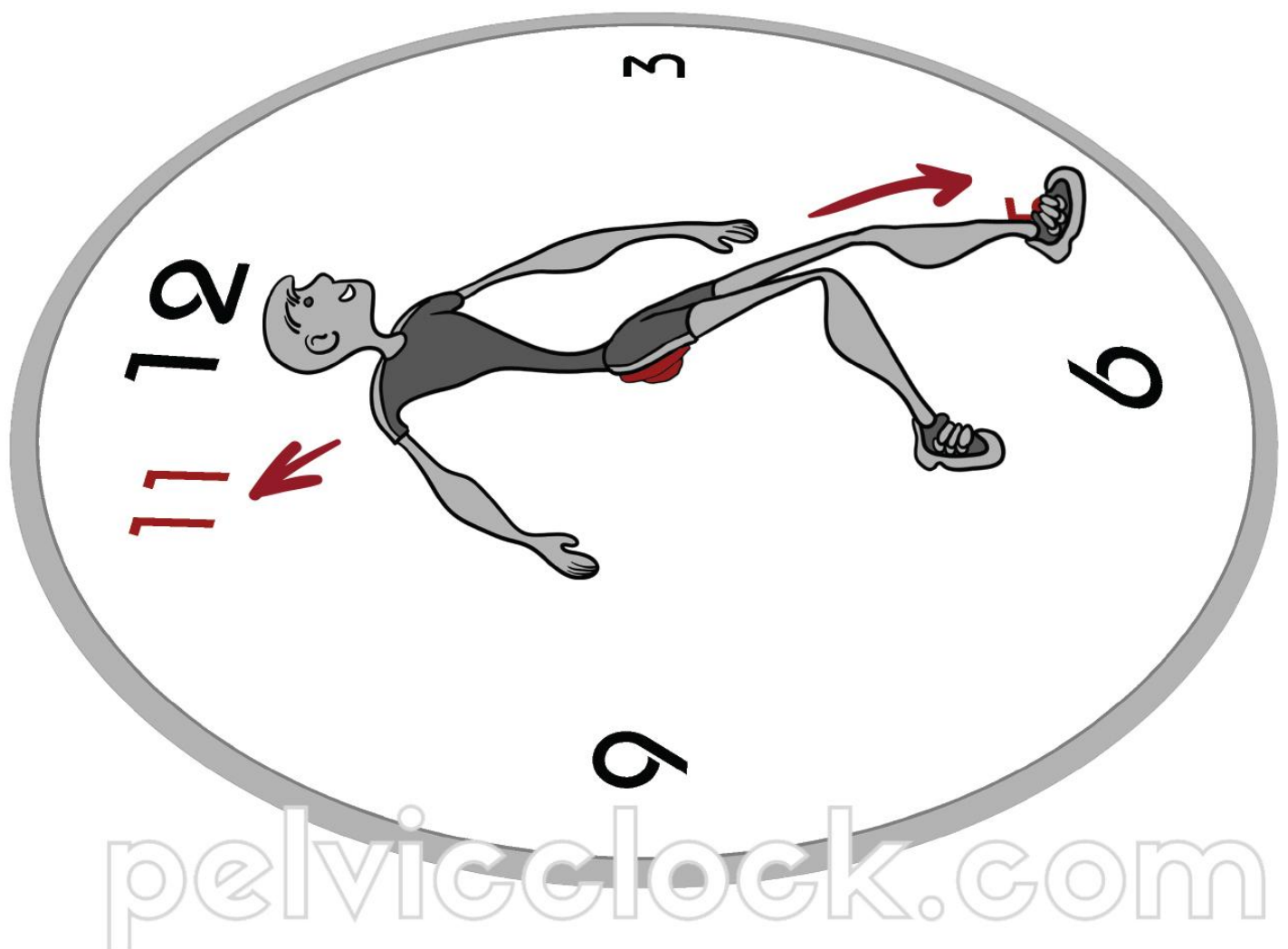
## Exercise "5-11"

Stretch your left leg and slide it a few inches toward the **5** o'clock marker (a forward-left tilt).

Drop your right ribs toward the **11** o'clock marker (a back-right tilt) and "CRUNCH" the **right** side of your stomach.

HOLD this position for 15-30 seconds.  
Try to straighten your left knee.

Repeat 5 times.



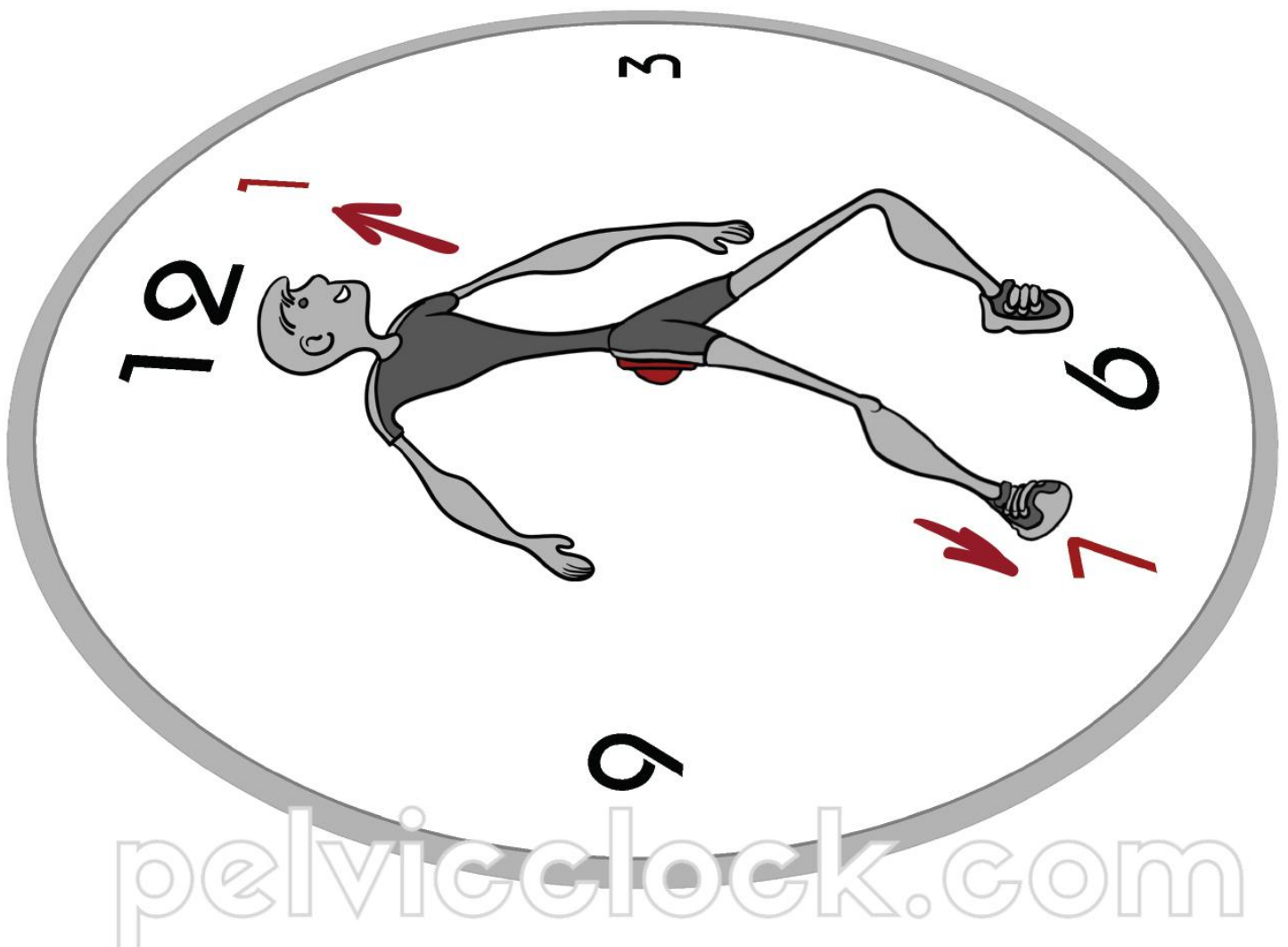
## Exercise "1-7"

Stretch your right leg and slide it a few inches toward the **7** o'clock marker (a forward-right tilt).

Drop your left ribs toward the **1** o'clock marker (a back-left tilt) and "CRUNCH" the **left** side of your stomach.

HOLD this position for 15-30 seconds.  
Try to straighten your right knee.

Repeat 5 times.



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# Hip Flexor Strengthening

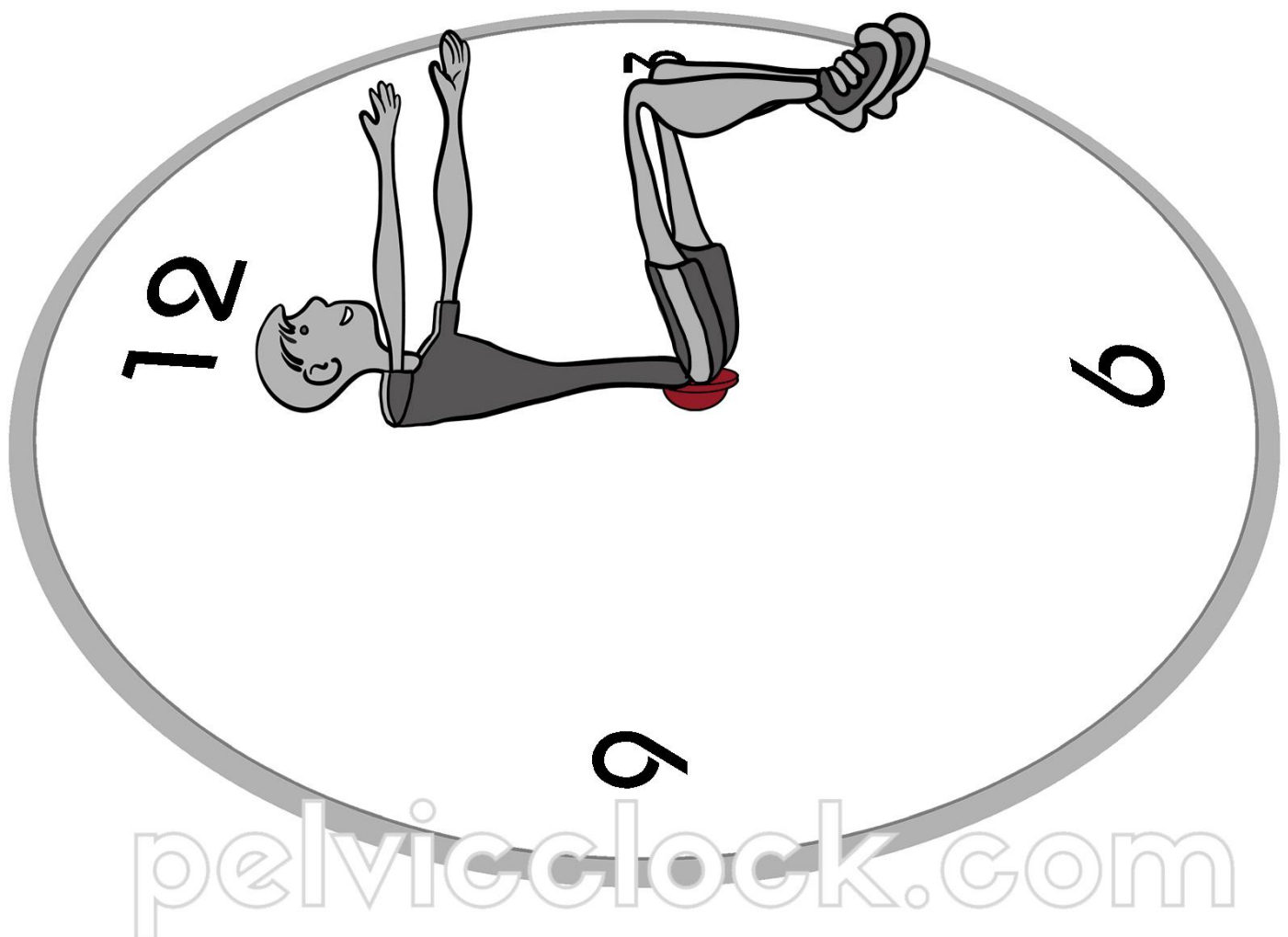
# Dead Bug

Lift your legs up in the air with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle.

Stretch your arms upwards. Hands aligned with shoulders.

Take five deep breaths, as you balance in this position, keeping the flat surface of the device perfectly parallel to the floor.

Repeat 5 times.



# Dead Bug Moving Legs

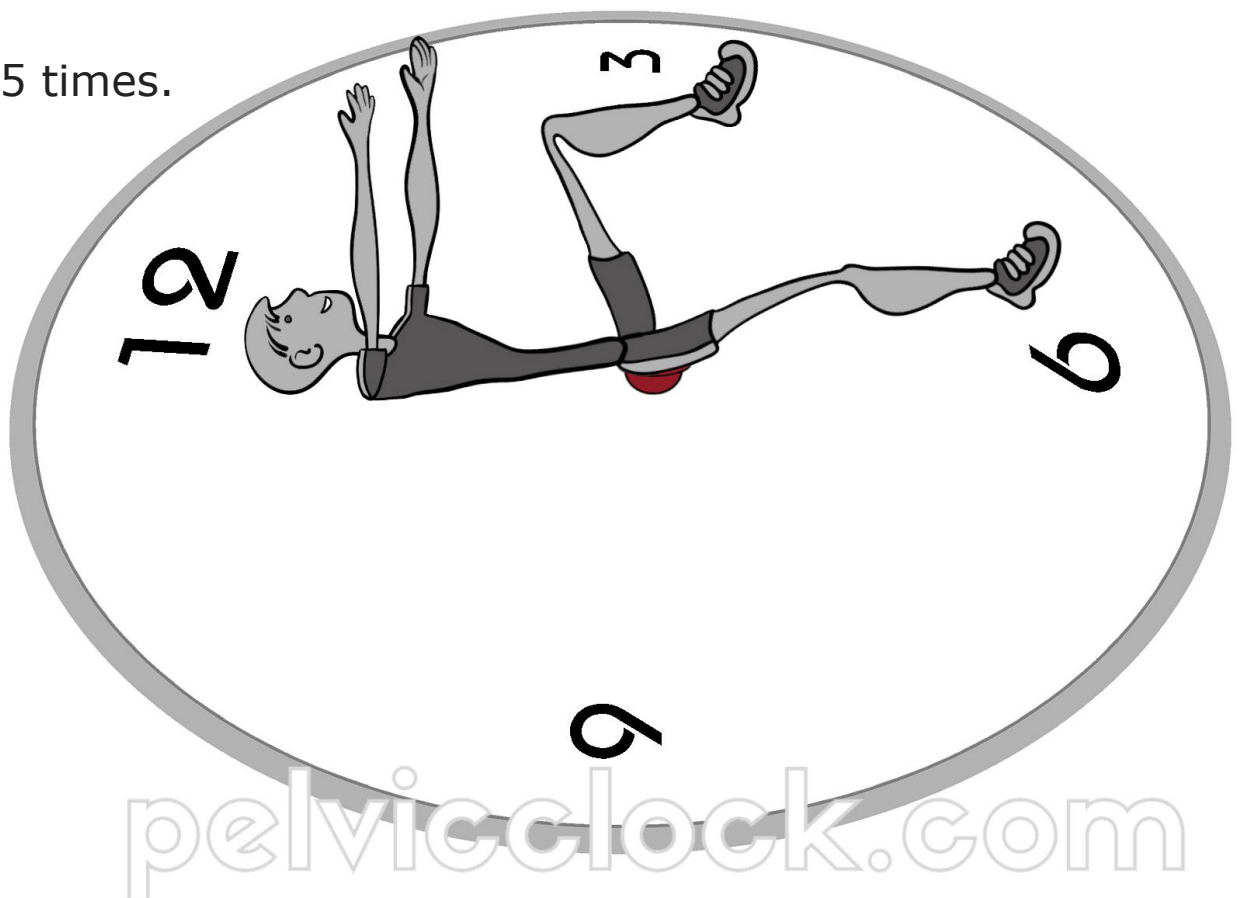
Lift your legs up in the air with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle.

Stretch your arms upwards. Hands aligned with shoulders. Balance in this position for a few seconds, keeping the flat surface of the device perfectly parallel to the floor.

Stretch your **right leg** forward toward the **6** o'clock marker. Keep the leg in the air parallel to the floor. Take five deep breaths, as you balance in this position.

Stretch your **left leg** forward toward the **6** o'clock marker. Keep the leg in the air parallel to the floor. Take five deep breaths, as you balance in this position.

Repeat 5 times.





# Dead Bug Moving Legs Diagonally

Lift your legs up in the air with slightly bent knees.

Stretch your arms upwards. Hands aligned with shoulders. Balance in this position for a few seconds, keeping the flat surface of the device perfectly parallel to the floor.

Stretch your **right leg** forward to the right toward the **7** o'clock marker. Keep the leg in the air parallel to the floor. Take five deep breaths, as you balance in this position.

Stretch your **left leg** forward the left toward the **5** o'clock marker. Keep the leg in the air parallel to the floor. Take five deep breaths, as you balance in this position.

Repeat 5 times.

