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## **Fitness Embassy® Transform**

Young Athletes Corrective Exercise & Pre-Game Warm-up

Lower limb (hip, thigh, foot)

This corrective exercise program does not substitute for advice from an appropriately qualified allied health or fitness professional (Eg. Physiotherapist, Chiropractor, Exercise Physiologist or Personal Trainer). It is designed to raise awareness of exercise progression (sets and repetitions) to address the moderate to high risk factors identified in the Young Athletes Risk Stratification Protocol - Lower limb (hip, thigh, foot).

The recommended exercises selected in no way guarantees against injury. No responsibility or liability can be accepted by Fitness Embassy® for any injury that may arise from participating in the movements contained in this tool.

Please note:

### **There are 14 Exercises in total**

In order to progress to each Exercise you MUST be able to successfully complete the previous exercise. It is recommended to take 40 minutes in duration and that you complete this program prior to meeting with your coaches on game day.

### **Exercise 1 – Foam Roller**

Aim: To release tight muscles of the thigh and iliotibial band (ITB) and minimise/prevent ITB friction or runner's knee

Instructions:

1. Lay on a foam roller using your Right thigh
2. Cross the other leg over the roller
3. Slowly move up and down the side of the thigh, releasing any tight points along the way
4. Note: This will more than likely be painful
5. Continue steps 1 to 3 until completed 5 times
6. Change legs and repeat the foam rolling for the Left thigh

### **Exercise 2A – Side-Lying Reverse Clams Activation: Internal**

Aim: To activate the buttock (gluteal) muscle of the hip and pelvis, promote centre of gravity, build muscular strength and power

Instructions:

1. Lay on your Right side with your thighs together, knees bent and toes pointed up
2. With your knees together, open your feet like a clam
3. Make sure that both thighs stay in-line with each other
4. Relax the hips and thighs
5. Please make sure that your back is straight throughout the exercise
6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 for another 10 times or until fatigue experienced

7. Change sides and repeat the clams for the other side and thigh 10 times or until fatigue experienced

### **Exercise 2B – Clams Activation: External (modified)**

Aim: To activate the buttock (abductors) muscles of the hip and pelvis, promote centre of gravity, build muscular strength and power

Instructions:

1. Lay on your Right side with your thighs together, knees bent and toes pointed
2. Open your thigh like a clam
3. Extend the knee with both thighs in-line with each other
4. Bend the knee and return the extended thigh to the start position
5. Relax the hips and thighs
6. Please make sure that your back is straight throughout the exercise
7. Repeat steps 1 to 5 for another 10-12 times or until fatigue experienced
8. Change sides and repeat the clams for the other side and thigh 10-12 times or until fatigue experienced

### **Exercise 3 – Seated Alphabets**

Aim: To strengthen the muscles surrounding the knee and groin for muscular strength and power

Instructions:

1. Sit tall on a chair in an upright position and both feet place on the floor
2. Extend the Right leg with your second toe, knee and groin aligned
3. Write the alphabet from A through to Z using lower case (little) letters using very small movements
4. Remember to sit tall throughout the exercise with your toes pointed towards the sky
5. Repeat step 3 by writing the alphabet mirrored from A through to Z so that the letters appear backwards. This will take some concentrating to successfully complete.
6. Repeat Steps 1 to 4 for the Left leg.

### **Exercise 4 – Barefoot Ballerina Balance Hip Opener**

Aim: Develop single leg balance and stability when in rotation, increase hip mobility and simulate the soccer kick movement pattern

1. Stand tall with your shoulders relaxed
2. Pull your belly button (naval) towards your spine
3. Open the hip by slowly swinging the Right thigh outwards and toe tap the floor
4. Rotate the waist while keeping the Left leg planted onto the floor
5. Take the Right leg across the front of the body until the letter T is created with the foot, toe tapping the floor
6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 for the Right leg 10 times in total
7. Change legs and repeat steps 1 to 5 for the Left leg also 10 times in total

### **Exercise 5 – Barefoot Calf Raise to Heel Drop on Step**

Aim: Develop single leg balance, stability and strength and minimise lower leg injury (including calf, soleus, Achilles)

Instructions:

1. Stand barefoot on the edge of a step with both feet hip width apart
2. Perform a calf raise so that you balance onto the balls of both feet
3. Take the Left foot off the step and lower the balancing leg until a full stretch is achieved. Keep your knees straight at all times
4. Place both feet back onto the step

5. Repeat the calf raise using steps 2 to 4 but now take the Right foot off the step and lower the other balanced leg until a full stretch is achieved
6. Continue the exercise for each alternate Right and Left leg until you complete it successfully 10 times in total
7. Note: You may use your hands as a guide to assist you but do not hold on.

### **Exercise 6 – Seated Hamstring Nerve Glide (modified)**

Aim: To reduce nerve and muscle tightness of the back of thigh (hamstring) and reduce lower back and hamstring strains

Instructions:

1. Sit tall on the edge of a raised chair or bench so that your feet are not touching the floor
2. Place your hands behind your back
3. Lean over and extend your Right leg with your toes pointed into the sky at the same time
4. You may feel a stretch behind the calf, knee or back or hamstring
5. Repeat steps 1 to 4 by stretching the Left leg
6. Continue until you complete the movement 10 times for each leg.

### **Exercise 7 – Heel to Toe Rocks (with Football boots)**

Aim: To develop centre of gravity, balance and stability of the hip, knee and feet during movement

Instructions:

1. Stand in a relaxed position with both feet hip width apart and hand on your hips
2. Tuck your belly button (naval) in towards your spine
3. Naturally rock forwards and backwards in a rocking motion 20 times without stopping
4. Make sure that it is a natural movement and you DO NOT calf raise onto your toes

### **Exercise 8 – Walking High Knee March (with Football boots)**

Aim: To functionally stretch the buttocks (glutes) and increase range of motion (ROM) of the groin

Instructions:

1. Stand tall and raise your Right knee
2. Using your hands pull your thigh towards your chest while walking forward
3. Return your leg to the ground
4. Alternate legs and raise your Left knee, pulling it towards your chest
5. Do not rush this movement
6. Continue the stretch until completed 10 times in total

### **Exercise 9 – Stationary Jump & Matrix Jumps (with Football boots)**

Aim: To promote centre of gravity, proprioception and agility of the foot and ankle

Instructions:

1. Stand tall with your hips, knees and ankles relaxed
2. Jump on the spot 20 times
3. Maintained a controlled and relaxed pace
4. Rest by taking two deep breaths
5. Randomly jump in a cross motion (forward, backward, side to side) in any order for 20 times
6. Maintain a controlled and relaxed pace

### **Exercise 10 – Reverse Lunge Thigh Stretch with Rotation (with Football boots)**

Aim: To functionally stretch the hip flexor with rotation of the trunk to enhance balance and stability

Instructions:

1. Stand tall with belly button (naval) pulled toward your spine
2. Place the Right leg behind you with the back knee slightly bent

3. Lower the Right leg towards the floor until a stretch is felt in the front of the thigh and move into the reverse lunge position
4. Do NOT rush this movement and keep your knee off the floor at all times
5. Return to the standing start position
6. Change legs and repeat steps 1 to 5 for 10 times in total
7. Continue the reverse lunge stretch with a twisting of your waist to further the stretch. You may wish to place your hands out in front of you to help with your balance
8. Repeat the stretch for a further 4 times in total

### **Exercise 11 – Post or Partner Marching Drill (with Football boots)**

Aim: To warm up the hip, trunk and shoulders using moderate speed and agility

Instructions:

1. Place your hands on a post or partner who is of similar height (hands on shoulders)
2. Lean forward so that your body is in a straight line and move onto your toes with the Right knee bent
3. Change legs and lift your Left knee and move into a marching motion 20 times counting from 1 through to 20)

### **Exercise 12 – High Knees (with Football boots)**

Aim: To warm up the hip, thigh and foot and promote speed and agility

Instructions:

1. Stand tall with head straight and eyes straight ahead
2. Raise the Right knee to waist with toes pointed up and driving opposite arm downwards
3. The aim is to keep the Right heel underneath your buttock (glute)
4. Return the leg to the ground with force, landing with the ball of the foot
5. Repeat to the Left leg while maintaining a fast and upright posture
6. Continue 20 times

### **Exercise 13 – Zig Zag Shuffle Drill (with Football boots)**

Aim: To promote centre of gravity, agility and speed of the hip, thigh and foot

Instructions:

1. With feet shoulder width apart, chest tall, move into a defensive squat position
2. Shuffle your feet from side to side in an imaginary forward motion so that a zig zag pattern is created over an approximate 3m distance
3. Make sure that your chest is upright and your movements are small and quick
4. Maintain the zig zag shuffle by changing angles from left to right
5. Do NOT lead with the shoulders. Use your hips, knees and feet to change direction
6. Continue until 10 zig zags have been completed
7. Repeat the drill moving in reverse so that you are moving backwards and returning to the start position

### **Exercise 14 – Shuttle Pivot Sprints (with Football boots)**

Aim: To promote centre of gravity, agility, speed and power of the hip, thigh and foot

Instructions:

1. With feet shoulder width apart, chest tall, move into a defensive squat position
2. Pivot and turn to your Right and sprint off the mark for 3 to 5 metres
3. Slow the pace and move into a new defensive squat position
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 by pivoting to your Left side
5. Remember to use your arms for power during the take-off sprint action
6. Repeat the shuttle pivot sprints 8 times in total.