

Myofascial Release Foam Roller Massage

What is it?

Self-myofascial release (SMR) on a foam roller offers safe benefits by breaking down soft tissue adhesions and scar tissue in fascia than traditional stretching techniques, which can increase your chances of injury. Fascia surrounds muscles, bones, and joints which gives our body structural integrity and strength. Abnormal fascia can be the leading cause of chronic pain, reduced flexibility and decreased athletic performance. SMR on the foam roller offers an effective, inexpensive, and convenient way to both reduce adhesion and scar tissue accumulation and eliminate what's already present. Just note that like stretching, foam rolling doesn't yield marked improvements overnight; you'll need to be diligent and stick with it (although you'll definitely notice quick benefits).

How it's done

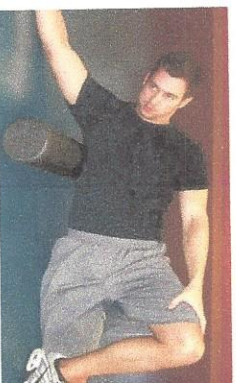
Roll at a slow pace and actually stop and bear down on the most tender spots ("hot spots"). Once the pain in these spots diminishes 50% to 75%, roll the other areas. Eventually you will not have sore or painful areas, in which case you roll for ten repetitions as maintenance and prevention. Use the roller prior to physical activity and afterwards to reduce muscle soreness and enhance recovery. It is recommended to work from the proximal (nearest the center of the body) to the distal (away from the center of the body) attachment of the muscle. It is important to working small sections using short strokes. Apply more pressure by using more of your body weight or simply "stacking" your legs.

Paraspinals



With your arms behind your head (not pulling on the neck), lie supine with roller positioned in the middle of your back; your glutes should be off the ground. Roll upward, reversing direction when you reach the level of the armpits.

Latisimus



Lie on your side with the same side arm overhead. The roller should be positioned at the attachment of the lat on the scapula in the starting position. You'll want to roll toward the attachment on the humerus (roll toward the armpit).

Thoracolumbar



With your arms behind your head, lie supine with the roller positioned under your mid-back. Elevate the glutes and arch backwards without touching the ground. Do not go on the lower spine.

Quadratus Lumborum



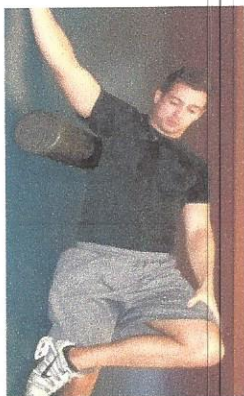
With your same side leg extended place the roll in the space between your last rib and top of the pelvis bone. Lift off the ground with the opposite bent leg rocking back and forth leaning backwards.

Gluteus Muscles/Minimus



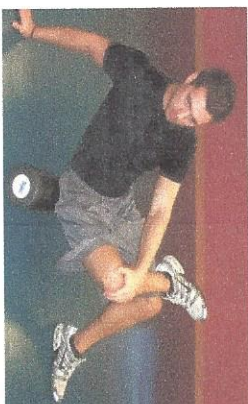
Lie on your side with the "meaty" part of your lateral glutes (just posterior to the head of the femur) resting on the roller. Balance on one hand with the same side leg on the ground and roll that lateral aspect of your glutes from top to bottom.

Shoulder



Lie on your side with the same side arm overhead. (Palm up) The roller should be positioned at the posterior triangle of the shoulder (armpit). You'll want to roll back and forth towards the shoulder blade and lat.

Piriformis



Sit on the side of glute area and cross the same side ankle over the opposite quad. Pull your knee towards the opposite shoulder and using your planted foot and stabilizing hand roll back and forth.

Hip Flexors



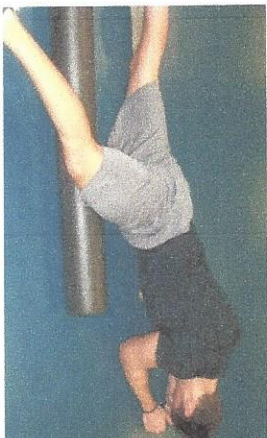
Balance on your forearms with the top of one thigh on the roller. Roll from the upper thigh into the hip. Try this with the femur both internally and externally rotated by shifting position of the opposite pelvis.

Upper Hamstrings



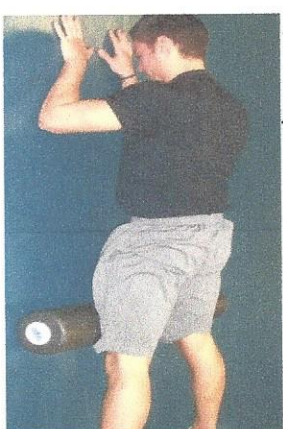
Balance on your hands and feet rolling over the upper hamstring area. You should be applying pressure directly on and over the 'Sit bone' on both sides (Ischial tuberosity) with a rocking motion.

Adductors



Balance on your forearms with the top of one of your inner thighs resting on the roller. Roll from the hip complex to the medial knee. Shift weight towards roller for more emphasis.

Quadriceps



Balance on elbows face down with quads on roller. Work your way up or down the roller. Turn your feet out to isolate the inner muscle. Shift bodyweight to one side to add more emphasis. You may cross legs to increase pressure even more.

Hamstrings

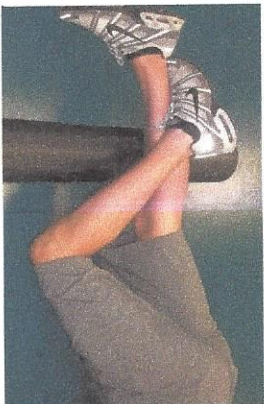


You'll want to try these with the feet turned in, out, and pointing straight ahead to completely work the entire hamstring complex. Balance on your hands with your hamstrings resting on the roller; then roll from the base of the glutes to the knee. To increase loading, you can stack one leg on top of the other.

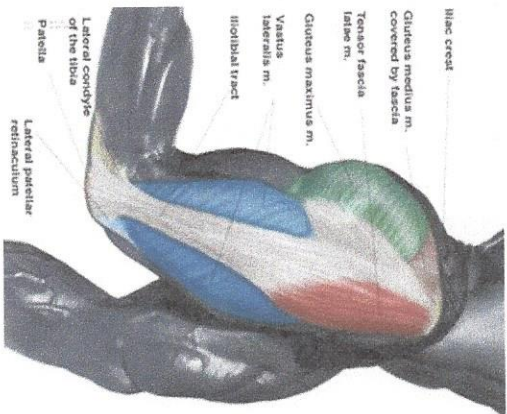
Iliotibial Tract



In the starting position, you'll be lying on your side with the roller positioned just below your pelvis. From here, you'll want to roll all the way down the lateral aspect of your thigh until you reach the knee. Stack the opposite leg on top to increase loading.



Resting on your elbows, place your shins on the roller. Cross over one leg and rest the ankle on top of the calf for emphasis. Roll from the knee to ankle. This takes a lot of core strength so start slow.



Peroneals #1



Kneeling on the roller, balance your body with hands on the floor. Roll from the knee to the ankle, leaning more to one side for emphasis and avoiding direct pressure to the shin bone.



Balance on your hands and roll from knee to ankle. Try this with the toes up (dorsiflexion) and down (plantarflexion). Stack one leg on top of the other to increase loading. Lean towards the outer and inner calf to add emphasis.

