

## Abdominal Rolling



### **GETTING STARTED:**

The PFMs are influenced by the fascia of the abdominal muscles. When the PFMs are painful, in spasms, and lack mobility, the abdominal muscle can sometimes respond by becoming tight, painful and developing trigger points. I find that when abdominal massage and rolling are incorporated into the treatment sessions, my patients are better able to tolerate the intravaginal stretches and massage more easily. Many of my patients tell me that after the abdominal massage they can insert their dilator or finger into their vaginas with more ease and less pain. The abdominal muscles may also have trigger points in them, and you will discover yours as you massage and explore the abdominals.

If you come across a very painful trigger point – and sometimes these painful spots can refer pain elsewhere in the pelvis – hold the spot for 90 seconds until the pain subsides. Repeat the 90-second holds until you have either eliminated the trigger point or reduced the pain by 50 percent. See upcoming paragraphs on abdominal trigger point therapy for more information.

Remember that it's important to determine your pain level at the start of any treatment so that you can track your progress. To facilitate abdominal rolling, place a heating pad or hot water bottle on your tummy for ten minutes before you start rolling. The heat has to be low heat. Avoid high heat because you could burn yourself. Trust me: patients inadvertently burn themselves at home all the time. You can roll the abdominal muscles with or without an oil. First, try without an oil; if that is too painful then think about using aromatherapy and choose an oil that helps you to relax and glide over the abdominal muscle with ease and less or no pain. Look into Young Living Oils to help release pain, spasms and help with digestion. The Young Living Oils I use most frequently for the abdominals include lavender and peppermint.

### **Precaution for Abdominal Rolling**

Your physician will provide the guidelines, but generally you must wait until six weeks after your abdominal surgery before starting these techniques. (Also check with your doctor if you are recovering from another type of surgery.) This is when the abdominal scar is almost fully healed. While your doctor may give you permission to start earlier, do not begin abdominal rolling/massage any earlier than six weeks after abdominal or laparoscopic surgery without medical clearance. During these surgeries small incisions are made into the abdomen. Also check with your MD regarding time frames for Cesarean or myomectomy surgeries.

### **WHAT TO DO:**

1. Get a pleasant aromatherapy oil with a scent that helps you to relax as you work with your abdominal rolling. Lavender oil is a great scent and helps reduce bladder symptoms. I use Young Living Oils. You can order these at [www.youngliving.com/en\\_US/](http://www.youngliving.com/en_US/) and use my number #1422496 when ordering. Make sure to obtain medical clearance from your MD before using any aromatherapy oils.

2. Cup your abdominal muscles by placing index fingers near each other so they are gently touching and place your thumbs superior to the other fingers as in the photo above. Stay superficial on your abdominal muscle and avoid grabbing the muscles too deeply.
3. Gently glide your fingers toward your thumbs repeating 10 to 20 times and change your hand placement. For simplicity's sake, I have divided the abdominal muscles into an upper part and lower part. Roll the lower part first, focusing on upward motions. Make sure to cover all the lower abdominal muscles and then switch to rolling the upper abdominal muscles in a downward motion.
4. Remember to pay attention to the trigger points and handle or treat them as previously described in this chapter.
5. Finish your abdominal rolling by gently massaging your entire abdominal region with clockwise circles.
6. Try to roll your abdominals 5 to 15 minutes on a daily basis and perform at least 20 clockwise circles to end your massage.