

## July Exercise of the Month

### Childs Pose Stretch

**Purpose:** To strengthen and stretch the abdominals, back, gluteus/hips and quadriceps

**Primary Muscles:** Erector Spinae (low back), Adductors (thighs)

**Equipment:** Exercise mat (optional)

#### Starting position:

- ❖ Kneel with the knees directly under the hips and toes pointing behind; the big toes should be touching.
- ❖ Widen the knees towards the end of the mat.
- ❖ Tighten the abdominal muscles and pull the shoulders down and back without arching the lower back.
- ❖ Slowly lean forward placing the hands on the floor, directly under the shoulders with the fingers facing forward; inhale.

#### Stretching/Hold position:

- ❖ While keeping the hands on the floor, exhale and bend at the hips, bringing the glutes to the heels.
- ❖ When sitting back, maintain the connection between the glutes and heels, extend through the back and arms.
- ❖ Pull the shoulders down and back; allow the chest to rest between the thighs and the forehead on the mat.
- ❖ Inhale while lengthening the spine, extending through the upper body and exhale to fold deeper into the pose, widening the knees as needed.
- ❖ Hold the position for 5-10 slow, deep breaths or between 30-60 seconds.

#### Variation:

- ❖ Extend the arms alongside the body with the palms facing upward and the front of the shoulders toward the floor.

