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New Hire Alert

Don't Get Cross With Us

Part 2: Lower Cross Syndrome (LCS)

By Julie Sopchak and Anup Sharma

Last month, we ran the first part of this series which focused on Upper Cross Syndrome (UCS). We talked about how this condition is a mostly rectifiable imbalance of muscles. Luckily, the only real difference between Upper and Lower Cross Syndromes is the muscles involved, so we can get right into it.

Whereas UCS occurs around the neck and upper back, LCS is located around the lumbopelvic area (hips and lower back). This time, the too-tight and overfacilitated muscles are overpowering the over-stretched and weaker muscles to pull the pelvis into an **anterior tilt**. This tilt causes the lumbar spine to sit in hyper-extension which places unwanted pressure on those intervertebral discs. Many times when individuals approach us with lower back pain, the muscles involved with LCS are the first ones we take a look at.



Here's a little preliminary look at what an anterior tilt looks like, which often results from LCS



Look familiar? Newly-hired Coach Luke started his journey with NEFF as an intern and we liked him so much, we decided to hang on to him.

Luke joins the team with a B.S. in Applied Exercise Science and a minor in Athletic Coaching from Springfield College where he also competed in the 400m and 4x4 relay for the track squad.

As a coach, Luke aims to build sustainable habits for long-term success rather than quick fixes or fads. He firmly believes that fitness is a lifestyle; one that should be enjoyable and accessible to everyone regardless of their age or performance level.

Luke's main area of focus is performance and mobility training. He emphasizes the importance of mobility as a critical factor in overall health and wellness, particularly for athletes and everyday individuals.

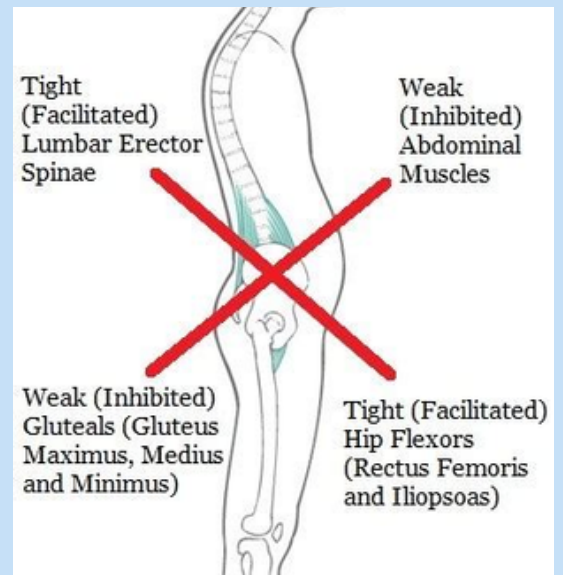
By creating customized training programs that are both challenging and rewarding, Luke is dedicated to helping his clients achieve their fitness goals and lead happier, healthier lives. Welcome to the team Coach Luke!

NOT A TYPO

Lower Cross Syndrome

So let's really get into it now and talk about exactly what muscles are doing what and how that might be affecting you. First, let's talk a little bit more about different positions of the pelvis; ideally we want our default position to be *neutral*. Think of the pelvis like a bucket filled with water; when standing in neutral, the water doesn't spill. In posterior pelvic tilt, the bucket would be tipped backwards and water spills out the back. Tip that bucket forward and water spills out the front, which is that anterior tilt we mentioned earlier.

In the image to the right, you'll notice a similar "X" to what we saw last month. The tight muscle groupings are diagonal to each other, and the weaker muscles are diagonal to each other. However, it's the left two and the right two groupings that are at odds with each other.



Erector Spinae vs Gluteals and Hamstrings

In the back are our Erector Spinae which is a group of muscles that surrounds the lumbar spine. These muscles are responsible for pulling the low spine into extension. Over time, these muscles can become too tight and overactive, which is going to pull the top part of that posterior pelvis upwards. Just below them are the gluteal muscles (your tushy) and your hamstrings. Over time, these muscles have become too stretched and weak which is going to inhibit them from pulling that pelvis back down.

Abdominals vs Hip Flexors

Moving to the front, we first take note of the Hip Flexors, which are responsible for lifting your thigh straight up, like if you were marching. Becoming too tight/overactive, these muscles start to pull down on the front of the pelvis. The abdominals, which have become too weak/stretched are having similar difficulties to the glutes/hamstrings in that they cannot match that pulling.

So now your pelvis is getting pulled up from the back, and pulled down in the front, putting us in that lumbar hyper-extension mentioned earlier. When the spine is in this position, it compresses unfavorably and unevenly onto the intervertebral discs, causing that low back pain.

"Let me guess, we're going to fix this the same way we do for UCS?"

Man y'all are smart! Yes, that's exactly what we're going to do. We want to get your pelvis back into that neutral position, so we will make your glutes, hamstrings, and abdominals stronger while stretching out your hip flexors and low back muscles. Wash, rinse, repeat, and stop spilling all that water!



SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Jaime McKinley - W.F. Young



Jaime McKinley is CEO of W.F. Young, a 130-year-old, family-owned global leader in animal health products including iconic brands such as Absorbine, UltraShield and Silver Honey. As a fifth-generation family member and 30-year company veteran, Jaime's passion for innovation and growth has cultivated an environment that attracts and retains employees who share her goal of providing the best possible products for her customers and partners, all while maintaining the personal touches of a family-owned business.

Founded in 1892 by Mary Ida and her husband, Wilbur Fenelon Young, W. F. Young, Inc. has manufactured and distributed high-quality and trusted animal health and wellness products that improve wellness and enhance the quality and enjoyment of life for people and their animals. For more information, please visit www.wfyoung.com.