



Not Your Father's Core Exercises...

Adam Stephenson, MS, CSCS

Traditionally, most of the American population has targeted their core, abs, or whatever they choose to call them, by performing 3 basic actions. These include:

LINEAR TRUNK FLEXION (Rectus Abdominis)



LATERAL TRUNK FLEXION (Obliques)



TRUNK ROTATION (Obliques)

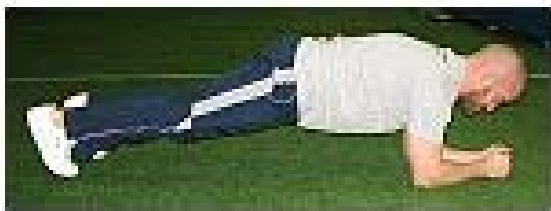


However, if you ask most experts what your core is and what it does they'll probably tell you that it is your entire body minus your appendages and it gives your appendages a base of support so they can apply force to other bodies (the ground, heavy objects, other people, etc.) without your body going with it. So we must then ask ourselves, if the core is meant to stabilize and resist movement, why do we create movement in an attempt to train those muscles?

These days, many professionals are rethinking their approaches to core training. An emerging thought is that instead of our Rectus Abdominis performing linear trunk flexion, they are actually set up to do the opposite, anti-trunk extension. Similarly, the Obliques are in place to resist lateral flexion and rotation which is again opposite of conventional knowledge.

An easy way to visualize this is to think of our core as a harness that doesn't allow too much lower trunk movement in any direction. By restricting motion in our lower back, we are kept out of pain and can continue doing activities we love. A few exercises to promote the health and strength of our midsection are:

PLANK (Anti-Extension)



ONE HAND DB WALKS (Anti-Lateral Flexion)



CABLE PUSH PULL'S (Anti-Rotation)

