

Tennessee Back Pain Center

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Bird Dog – Exercise Instructions

- Begin by getting on hands and knees
 - Knees should be under hips
 - Hands should be under shoulders
- Keep a neutral spine throughout exercise
 - Keep gaze between hands for a neutral neck
 - Don't arch your back
- Breathe through the nose and into the belly
- Begin by raising one hand at a time till it is parallel to the floor.
 - Bring your hand back to the ground.
- Raise other hand and then return to the ground
- Once you feel that you can move the hands and keep the pelvis stable, move to the legs.
 - Return to neutral
- Kick back one leg at a time
- Leg should go parallel to the ground while the pelvis doesn't move.
 - Return leg to neutral with knee under hip.
 - Repeat with the other leg.
- Once you can accomplish these with a still and stable hips/pelvis, advance to contralateral patterns.
- Raise one hand while extending the opposite leg.
 - Don't let the rib cage flare
 - Don't let the back arch
 - Keep good belly pressure throughout the whole exercise.
- Return to neutral and repeat exercise on the other side.
- The final progression of this exercise is unilateral movements.
- Lift the same arm and leg at the same time while maintaining good core pressure and not letting the hips/pelvis move.
- The key here is to keep the hips/pelvis stable and still throughout the whole exercise by breathing into the belly and creating abdominal pressure. Don't progress exercises to more advanced stages without consulting your doctor first.
 - Perform exercises 3 times a day
 - 10 repetitions = 1 set
 - Perform 3 sets 3 times a day
 - Don't suck in. Press your belly out when you breathe in.

- Notes:
 - As always, abide by a pain rule of 4/10. Anything below a 4/10 is okay to push through. Anything above a 4/10, please stop and consult your doctor. We understand this rule is subjective but do your best to judge your pain.



Bird Dog

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Reach one arm
forward at a time



Keep back flat



Straighten one
leg at a time



Wrists under
shoulders



Knees under
hips



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