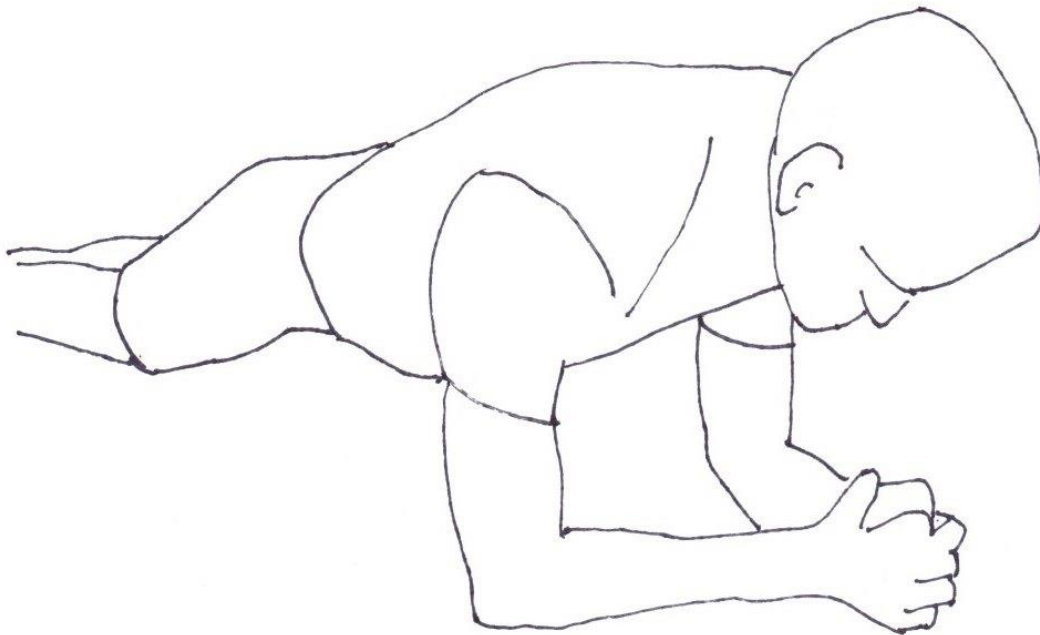
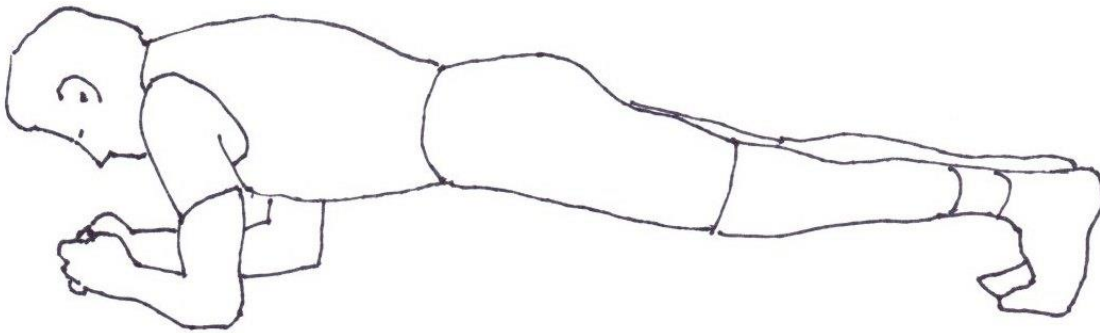


## ABDOMINAL STRENGTHENING / “CORE” EXERCISES—“PLANK”

1. This exercise is best accomplished on a firm surface, and is best performed when stomach is not full—or even partly-full (at least 30 minutes after eating or drinking even a moderate amount).
2. Starting position is prone (face down); bring arms in and flex them at the elbows, so that your upper body weight is resting on elbows that are directly under your shoulders.
3. Legs should remain straight /extended, so that lower body weight is supported by the base of your (dorsi-flexed) toes. Ankles should be together, but may be wider if that allows more stability.
4. You shall be using multiple muscle groups (in an isometric contraction) to hold your chest, shoulders, trunk +pelvis, and lower extremities off the floor in a straight line from ankles to head.
5. Make sure to breathe deeply, as use of multiple and large muscle groups demands oxygen to be sustained > 30 seconds. Goal is to hold this position for at least 60 seconds before resting, with a total of 120 sec. per session.
6. This exercise deserves to be done in conjunction with “Therapeutic Postures”, and is best done **before** such.



## ABDOMINAL STRENGTHENING—SIDE-PLANK:

1. This is best accomplished on a firm surface. If that surface is very hard, you will likely be more comfortable with a pad or cushion under the elbow that will be on that surface.
2. This is more challenging than “Basic Plank” and should be done only after one can hold plank position for at least 45 seconds... This will more dynamically engage external and internal oblique muscle groups, promoting greater functional improvement of torso movement
3. Starting position is on one side, legs slightly bent at the knee, ankles together. Bend the down-side arm at the elbow and bring this elbow so that it is directly under the shoulder, while straightening legs and “pushing” your feet into the surface you are on, keeping ankles firmly together.
4. Use muscle groups of chest + shoulder, torso/trunk, and lower extremities to hold your hips and torso off the surface in a straight line that runs from your ankles thru your torso to your head.
5. Make sure to maintain deep respirations, as using so many large muscle groups will create quite an oxygen demand.
6. Goal is to hold this position for at least 60 seconds, each side, for a total of 120 seconds.

