

18 Main Muscles Involved in the function of Your 'Core'

Muscle	Where is it	What does it do
Rectus abdominis	Spans the front of the abdomen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flex the trunk forwards • Assists in respiration
Internal Obliques	Spans the side and front of the abdomen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in respiration • Rotates and side bends the trunk
External Obliques	Spans the side and front of the abdomen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulls chest down, compresses the abdominal cavity increasing intra-abdominal pressure • Rotates and side bends the trunk
Transverse Abdominis	runs horizontally across the abdomen underneath all other muscles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compress the ribs and viscera, providing thoracic and pelvic stability • Nicknamed the 'Corset Muscle' as it pulls in an otherwise protruding abdomen • Assists with childbirth
Quadratus Lumborum	Lower back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side bends the spine • straightens the spine • Assists in respiration
Iliopsoas	Front of the hip and thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the strongest hip flexor
Gluteals	The largest muscles at the back of the hip; the bum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stabilises the hip • Extends the hip • Rotates the leg externally and internally • Adducts the leg
Paravertebral Muscles	Running along the spine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straighten the spine • Rotate the spine
Pelvic Floor	Sits underneath the pelvis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the organs that lie on it • Give us control over our bowel and bladder • Important for sexual function • provide support for the baby during pregnancy and assist in the birthing process • Helps optimise intra-abdominal pressure