

Lumbar Spine Instability 6

Lateral Stability

Side Bridge – Starting position (Figs 12 and 13)

The patient is in the side lying position with the hips and knees flexed, one leg lying on top of the other. The trunk is propped up on the elbow and the shoulder is supported by forceful downwards pressure from the other hand. The pelvis is tilted to form a straight line between the shoulders and the pelvis and not allowed to 'sag' downwards.



Side Bridge Remedial Exercise – Open Clam (Fig 14)



Whilst holding the side bridge starting position, the upper thigh is raised. The patient is instructed to feel for contraction of the gluteus medius (this is shown by the instructor in class) whilst also feeling the spinal bracing.

½ Side Bridge

From the starting position (Figs 12 and 13) rise forwards and upwards, to the end position (Figs 15 and 16). The spine should be braced at all times as the hips are extended to lift the trunk. This exercise has a higher activation of the obliques with less compressive forces than traditional sit-ups with rotation.



Figs 15 and 16 end positions of the ½ side bride

Side Bridge – Advanced (Fig 17)



Once the side bridge has been mastered, it can be made more difficult by extending the knees and increasing leverage on the lumbar spine. From the side lying position the patient is propped on the elbow as before then lifts the pelvis vertically as far as possible.

Care must be taken to ensure the trunk remains in line and does not rotate.