

STRETCH & FLEX Program

Stretching improves flexibility and mobility. **Stretch Smoothly:** Bouncing during a stretch invites muscles to respond by tightening up to protect themselves. Begin slowly and move smoothly. Work toward a position that starts to feel tight but never becomes painful.

Pain is Not Good: Feeling pain during a stretch is self-defeating. If you feel pain, you are working against the body's loosening-up mechanism. Always ease into your stretch; to do otherwise is to invite injury.

Staying Loose: As you stretch, it is important to keep your body relaxed. This can be accomplished by keeping your breathing even and consistent.

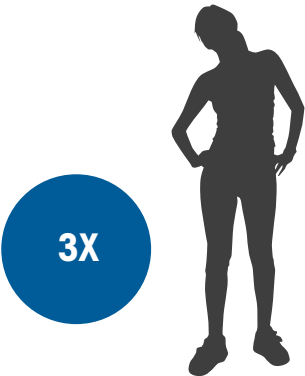
Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program or if you have any questions about your ability to perform any stretch.

WARM-UP:
• 1 minute stationary walking.

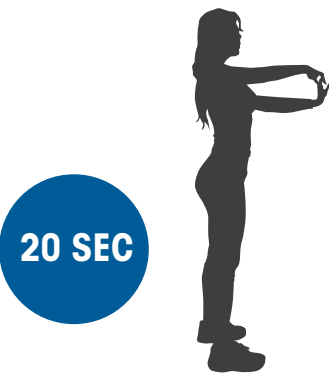
DYNAMIC WARM-UP:
Repeat each of the following movements 10 times.
Wrists:
• Move wrists up and down and rotate.
Shoulders:
• Alternate raising each arm overhead. Keep palms facing each other.
Side Bend:
• Reach up and over to the right or left. As you are reaching, let your heel come off the ground (alternate).
Trunk Twists:
• As you twist: lift heel, and move slowly side to side.

Arm Circles:
• Start with arms raised.
• Slowly rotate in small circles.
• Gradually increase circle size while maintaining control.
• Change direction.

Ankle Circles
• Stand on one foot.
• Lift up other foot.
• Rotate lifted foot in small circles.
• Rotate clockwise and counter clockwise.



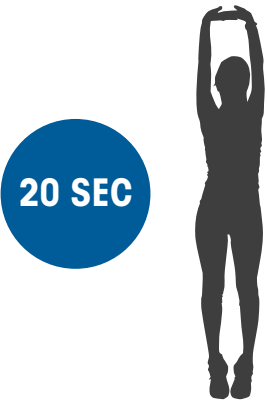
NECK STRETCH
• Stand with feet shoulder width apart.
• Place hands on hips.
• Slowly and gently tilt to the left, front, right and back.
• Repeat other direction.



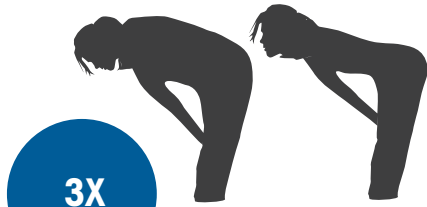
WRIST STRETCH
• Gently pull palm up.
• Pull back of hand down.



SHOULDER STRETCH
• Place one arm across chest.
• Bend other arm and hold behind the elbow.



ABDOMINAL STRETCH
• Interlock fingers overhead with palms facing upward.
• Reach as high as you can.
• First lean forward and then backward slightly.



BACK STRETCH
• Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
• Bend down, resting your hands on slightly bent knees.
• Look up, pointing your chin at the ceiling and creating an arch in your back.
• Take a deep breath. As you exhale, count to three; tuck your chin into your chest, and round your back.



HAMSTRING STRETCH
• Stand up straight with one foot staggered slightly in front of the other.
• Slightly bend your left leg, putting hands on your left thigh.
• Extend your right leg, keeping your heel on the floor. Look straight ahead, hold and then switch.



QUAD STRETCH
• Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart.
• Extend your left arm or use a wall (neighbor) for balance.
• Hold your right ankle with your right hand and pull up toward your back.
• Keep your body in alignment with your knees fairly close together.



REACH HIGH
• Stand up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart.
• Stretch your arms up over your head as high as you can.
• Spread your fingers.
• Take a deep breath, hold for 3 seconds and exhale (repeat 3 times).



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