

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 smoothly. Work towards 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.

WARM-UP

1 minute stationary walking

DYNAMIC WARM-UP *(repeat 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 go 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 foot in small circles.
- Do clockwise and counterclockwise rotations.



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



3X

NECK STRETCH

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Hands on hips
- Slowly and gently tilt left, front, right and back (3x)
- Repeat other direction (3x)



20 SEC

WRIST STRETCH

- Gently pull palm up
- Pull back of hand down
- Hold each direction for 20 seconds



20 SEC

SHOULDER STRETCH

- Place one arm across chest
- Bend other arm and hold behind the elbow
- Gently stretch for 20 seconds



20 SEC

ABDOMINAL STRETCH

- Interlock fingers overhead with palms facing upward
- Reach as high as you can
- Lean forward/backward slightly for 20 seconds



3X

CAT STRETCH

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart
- Bend down, putting 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 (repeat 3 times)



20 SEC

HAMSTRING STRETCH

- Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart.
- 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 for 20 seconds and switch



20 SEC

QUAD STRETCH

- Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart
- Extend your left arm or use a wall (neighbor) for balance
- Grab your right ankle with your right hand and pull up toward your back
- Keep your body in good alignment with your knees fairly close together
- Hold for 20 seconds and switch



20 SEC

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, count to three and exhale (repeat 3 times)
- 20 seconds and switch