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Hamstring Stretches

Stretching is performed by lengthening and holding a muscle for 15-30 seconds and then repeating 2-3 times. Many individuals "stretch" as a warm-up activity. Stretching is best performed after a period of aerobic warm-up to prevent injury.

The stretching shown below are passive stretches which should be held at a point of easy tension for about 10 - 20 seconds with no bouncing. Before doing these stretches, you should limber up your whole body by jogging in place, twisting, reaching, lifting your legs, and walking around for 3 to 5 minutes to get the blood flowing, loosen joints, and warm up the temperature of your muscles.



Standing Hamstring and Calf Stretch

- This exercise stretches your Achilles heel cord and the back of your lower leg.
- Stand 2 or 3 feet from a wall or tree and both toes should be pointed straight forward as you lean toward the wall or tree with your hands.
- Keep your heels flat to stretch the calf.
- Hold 10 - 20 seconds and repeat.

Seated Hamstring Stretch



- This exercise stretches the hamstring muscles (back of the thigh).
- From a seated position with your legs straight out in front and hands on thighs, bend over slowly, reaching toward your toes. **KEEP KNEES DOWN TO FLOOR**
- Use a towel wrapped around your feet to help pull yourself toward your feet
- Keep your head and back straight as you move into the stretch.
- Hold 10 - 20 seconds and repeat.

Hamstring Stretch- One Leg



- Sit on the ground, your legs extended in front of you.
- Pull your right leg in toward your body as you would to sit cross-legged.
- Reach for your toes.
- Make sure to bend at your waist until you feel the stretch in the hamstring.
- Extend your right leg and repeat the exercise with your left leg.

Standing One Leg Hamstring Stretch



- Place foot on a stool.
- Slowly lean forward, reaching down shin until a stretch is felt in the back of thigh
- Do each exercise 10 times, rest and repeat with opposite leg

Calf Stretch



- Use a step with enough room for you to stand several inches off the ground.
- Stand on the step and back your feet up so that your heels hang off the step.
- Lower both heels until you feel the stretch in your calves.
- Raise both heels, then alternately lower your right then left heel, stretching each for 30 seconds.

Standing Leg Stretch



- Use a wall at hip height.
- Facing the wall, lift your right leg and rest the heel against the wall
- Bend forward slowly from the waist and hold the stretch for about 30 seconds.
- Return to a standing position and repeat the stretch with your left leg.
- Return to a standing position and repeat the exercise, this time with your body parallel to the wall, and bending sideways at the waist.



Quadricep Stretch

- This exercise is to stretch the muscles of the front of the thigh.
- Place your right hand against a wall or tree for balance, grab your left ankle with your left hand and pull it up and back until you can feel a stretch.
- Keep your back straight and your knee pointing toward the ground.
- The standing leg should have a slightly bent knee.
- Hold the stretch for 10 - 20 seconds for each leg and repeat.



Inner Thigh Stretch

- This exercise stretches the inner thigh adductor muscles.
- Sit with your back straight, bend your knees and put the soles of your feet together.
- Slowly press your knees to the floor and lean forward from the hips.
- Hold for 10 - 20 seconds and repeat.



Lower Back Stretch

- This exercise stretches the muscles of the lower back.
- Lie flat on your back with your legs extended and pull your right knee up to the chest.
- Press your back to the ground.
- Hold the position 10 - 20 seconds and repeat with your left knee.

Crunches

- A proper crunch is performed with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle, low back on the floor, and hands lightly supporting your head, not neck.
- Lift your shoulder blades until they are a few inches off the floor, holding slightly and slowly releasing the contraction to the starting point.
- Your lower back should be flat against the floor the entire time.
- The movement is slow and controlled.