

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## FLEXIBILITY

Stretching a little bit everyday helps normal daily activities and movements become possible and pain free!

Flexibility is necessary for activities that require bending, twisting, and reaching!

### What are the benefits of stretching and being flexible?

- Reduces lower back pain and arthritis.
- Improves balance and reduces your risk of falling.
- Improves poor sitting and standing posture.
- Increases your blood flow and energy levels.
- Increases moments of relaxation for your body and mind.

### F.I.T. Program: Flexibility Exercises

**F**requency – 2 to 3 days/week

**I**ntensity – stretch until slight discomfort / muscle tightness

**T**ime – aim for 10-15 minutes at least or 4 flexibility exercises

**P**rogression – increase duration and/or frequency as your flexibility improves over time

*Flexibility is crucial to your exercise program – increasing your flexibility decreases your chances of injury.*



# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## FLEXIBILITY

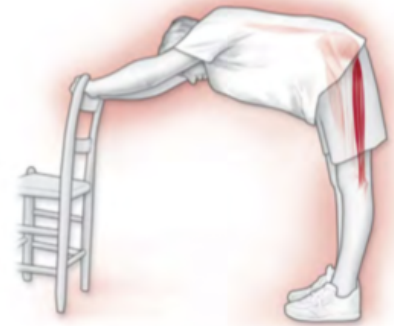
### Getting Started!

Below are a few tips for stretching & improving your flexibility:

- As you stretch, breathe deeply, and go slowly.
- Listen to your body and never force a movement that causes pain.
- It's okay if you can't bend very far. It's more important to use good form.
- Perform each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds; repeat at least twice.
- With regular stretching, your flexibility will improve.
- Most stretches can be done without any equipment and with minimal space. Many of the standing and floor stretches can also be done in a chair.

*Flexibility requires an open mind.  
Wisdom comes from having multiple perspectives.*

- Stand far enough behind a chair that you can hold the back of it with both hands and also bend over at your hips until your torso is parallel to the floor.
- Lift your tailbone towards the ceiling to feel a deeper stretch down the back of your legs.
- Try to keep your back and shoulders straight, and knees slightly bent. Hold the position for 10-30 seconds. Repeat for 1-2 rounds.



*A resilient mind assumes responsibility to  
change a situation regardless of its roots.*

## HAMSTRING STRETCH



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## FLEXIBILITY

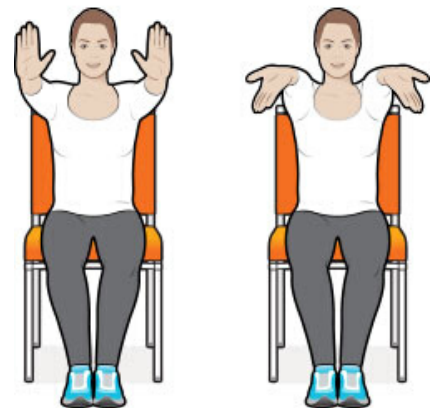
- Stand facing a chair (or box-like object), with the object against a wall for support.
- Raise your left foot up and rest it flat on the chair.
- Keep your spine as upright as possible. Press your pelvis forward gently until you feel a stretch at the top of your right thigh. Your pelvis will move forward only a little.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds. Switch legs and repeat for 1-2 rounds.



## HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

***Blessed are the flexible, they don't get so bent out of shape.***

- For wrists, hold your arms straight in front of you and flex the wrist, as though you are saying "Halt!"
- Then rotate your palm so your fingers point toward the floor. Repeat for 1-2 rounds.
- For ankles, try drawing letters of the alphabet or spelling your name with each foot.



## WRISTS & ANKLES

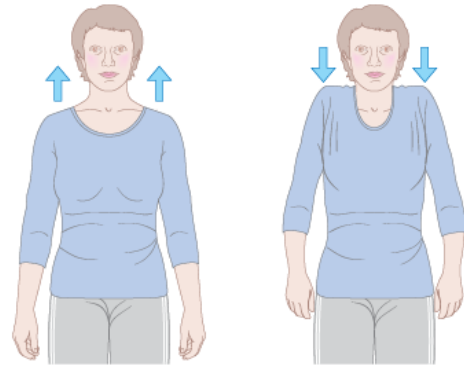
***Be stubborn about your life goals and flexible in your methods.***



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- Start by relaxing your shoulders.
- Lift your shoulders up towards your ears slowly and gently. Then slowly relax them back down.
- Repeat for 1-2 rounds.



## SHOULDER SHRUGS

*This exercise helps lubricate and protect your joints.*

***Growing your resilience allows you to be flexible in the storms of life, like the tree whose branches bend and sway in a storm rather than remain rigid and crack under pressure.***

- In front of a wall, stretch out your arms with your palms flat against the wall and elbows almost straight.
- Slightly bend your right knee and step back a foot or two with your left leg. Keep your left foot flat on the floor and your right leg slightly bent.
- Make sure your feet are pointing straight ahead.
- You should feel this stretch in your calf and Achilles tendon. If you don't, move your foot back a bit further.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds. Switch legs and repeat for 1-2 rounds.



***“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” - Arthur Ashe***



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- Stand or sit upright in a sturdy chair.
- With good posture, reach upward with your right hand as far as you can, while letting your left hand slide gently downward.
- You should feel this stretch along your rib cage, spine, and waist.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds. Switch arms and repeat for 1-2 rounds.

***“Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.” - Babe Ruth***



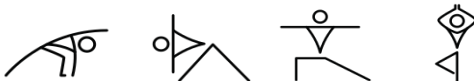
## SIDE STRETCH

- Stand next to a wall so you can touch it for balance if necessary.
- Keeping one leg straight, bend your other leg and grasp your ankle; pull your heel up towards your buttock.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds. Switch legs and repeat for 1-2 rounds.

***Often our best successes come on the heels of failure. Failure is just an indicator that we lack experience – keep trying!***



## THIGH STRETCH



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- Lie flat on your back with legs extended. Keep your neck on the floor and look down towards your chest.
- Bend both knees (or one at a time) and clasp them with your hands. Pull your knees toward your chest as far as they will comfortably go.
- Breathe in deeply and bring in your knees closer as you exhale.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds, while breathing normally. Repeat for 1-2 rounds.

***Practicing wellness with ourselves and others allows us to enhance our resilience.***

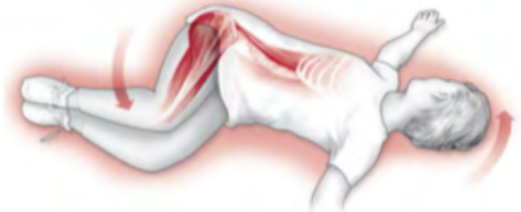
*\*This stretch can be modified by sitting upright in a sturdy chair.*



## HIP & LOWER BACK STRETCH

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Gently lower both legs to the left, keeping your knees together, and turn your head to the right. Keep your shoulders on the floor.
- You should feel this stretch along your hip.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds, bring your knees back to center, switch sides, and repeat for 1-2 rounds.

*\*If you have a hip replacement, talk to your doctor before trying this stretch. They may recommend that you avoid it.*



## DOUBLE HIP ROTATION

***Resilient individuals engage with the world from a place of worthiness and compassion.***





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- Sit with your knees bent (pointing outward) and your feet together (or one at a time while sitting upright in a sturdy chair).
- Bring your feet/heels close to your body (or one at a time).
- Holding your shins or feet with your hands, bend your upper body forward and press your knees down with your elbows.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds. Repeat for 1-2 rounds.

***Resilient individuals take responsibility, think in ways that empower them, and create meaningful connections with other people.***



## INNER-LEG STRETCH

- Cross your left leg over your right leg, so your left ankle is laying across your right thigh.
- Put your left hand on your left thigh and gently press down until you feel resistance.
- Breathe in deeply and tilt forward at the hips slowly as you exhale. Keep your chest up and your back straight.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds while breathing normally. Repeat for 1-2 rounds.

***A moment of self-compassion can enhance your entire day. Be gentle and understanding towards yourself.***



## HIP STRETCH

