

Before you start any kind of exercise regimen, think safety first. Talk to your doctor before you begin any new routine. Make sure you understand how you should be exercising (talk to a qualified trainer if you have any questions), ensure that you work within your own capabilities and always monitor yourself whilst working out.

General Stretching Program

KEY POINTS

- Look to increase heart rate/blood flow prior to any stretching program (gentle warm up)
- Use static stretching to familiarize yourself with muscle groups and movement (hold each stretch for 20-30 seconds and then relax. Repeat on the opposite side if relevant)
- Progress to Active Isolated Stretching (AIS) techniques when confident (repeating each movement 10-12 times, holding end stretch point for just 2 secs on each repetition)
- Only stretch until you feel a sensation of mild tension (not pain or discomfort)
- Do not hold your breath when stretching
- Never bounce or force a stretch
- Work through stretching program 3-4 times a week (more if desired)

BENEFITS

- Improves flexibility
- Decreases risk of injury
- Reduces muscle tension
- Improves circulation
- Reduces anxiety, stress & fatigue
- Improves muscle coordination
- Improves physical performance
- Enhances enjoyment of physical activities
- Provides sense of well being



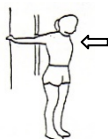
Upper Trapezius

Sit or stand with hands loosely at your sides. Gently Tilt your head sideways.



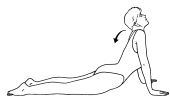
Neck Flexors/Extensors

Sit or stand with hands loosely at your sides. Gently tilt your head forward and then backwards until you feel the stretch.



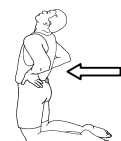
Chest (Pectorals)

Place both arms directly behind you against a flat surface with arms parallel to the floor. Push against flat surface until stretch is felt in chest.



Abdominals

Lie on front side and push upper torso upwards with arms until stretch is felt



Lower Back

With hands on the small of the back, slightly bend back until stretch is felt.



Latissimus Dorsi

Begin by kneeling and extending forward until stretch is felt. Slide hands forward and push buttocks backward.



Rhomboids

Pull your left arm across your chest and push on your elbow close to your chest with your right hand.



Triceps

Raise right arm over your head with elbow pointing towards ceiling. Pull down elbow with opposite arm and lean arm towards the opposite



Biceps

Reach arms behind your back and interlock fingers. Slightly raise arms and pull them away from your trunk



Hip Adductors

Gently push knees to floor until stretch is felt. Keep back straight



Hip Abductors/QL

Cross your right leg over your left leg. Look over your right shoulder while turning your trunk and pushing back on knee with left elbow



Hip Flexors/Extensors

Slowly lean and push hip to floor until stretch is felt on front of hip.



Gluteals

Place right foot above left knee. Bend left knee and slowly lift leg towards chest. Keep arms flat on floor.



Quadriceps (Standing)

Pull heel toward buttocks until a stretch is felt in front of the thigh. Keep leg close to body with knee pointing to floor.



Hamstring #1 (Lying)

Slowly bring knee towards chest. Gently extend leg, with knee slightly bent, until you feel a gentle/comfortable stretch.



Gastrocnemius (Upper calf)

Hands against the wall. Keep back leg straight. Push heels down and slowly lean forward until stretch is felt in the back of the calf.



Soleus (Lower calf)

Same stretch as gastrocnemius, but bend knees of both legs.