



WARM UP & SOME USEFUL STRETCHES!

Warming up and cooling down before and after training is essential to prevent injury during exercise. Therefore, we want to provide you with top exercise techniques that will help you warm up and cool down allowing you to train safely and with confidence. This guide provides you with instructions for warming up, key stretches, additional stretches and strengthening exercises.

*Please note we do encourage you to consult to your GP before you commence your exercise program.

Muscle cramps: Stop this exercise if it causes a muscle cramp.

Osteoporosis: If you have osteoporosis or a back compression fracture, then check with your doctor before doing this exercise.

Before stretching

Marching in place

- Stand, holding on to a supportive railing or the back of a chair
- Hold onto two chairs if you feel unsteady.
- Alternate lifting knees up and down as if marching in place.
- March in place for 3 to 5 minutes.
- Gradually try to lift knees higher and/or march faster toward the end.

KEY STRETCHES TO DO BEFORE AND AFTER YOU TRAIN

Remember: Stretch gently and smoothly, and do not bounce.

Be sure to do each stretch on both left and right hand sides. Don't hold your breath.

1. Stretch your calf muscles

- Lean against the wall, tree, or chair for support.
- Place your right foot back and keep your toes facing forward.
- Slightly bend the knee of your left leg, never letting your knee go beyond your toes
- Keep your head up and spine straight.
- Press the heel of your right foot into the ground.
- Hold and then repeat with your left leg.



2. Stretch Your Hamstrings

Seated

- Sit on the edge of the bench, chair and other low, firm surface.
- Stretch out your right leg with your toes pointing up, and place your hands on your left thigh.
- Keep your left foot flat on the ground.
- Keeping your back straight, gently lean forward from your hips until you feel a stretch in the back of your right thigh.
- You may feel a stretch by just straightening up your back.
- Hold and repeat with your left leg.



Standing

- Holding onto a supportive railing or wall, place your right leg on a slightly raised surface, like a step or curb.
- Keep your hips facing forward and your standing knee bent.
- Slowly bend your left knee until you feel a very mild tension or stretch on the back of your right thigh.
- To stretch a little more, bend forward just a little at your hips, keeping your back straight.
- Hold and then repeat with your other leg.



3. Stretch your hip Flexors and Quadriceps



Seated

- Sit on the side of a stable chair, bench, or other low firm surface.
- Gently move your right leg back and behind you.
- Tuck your buttocks tightly under your hips.
- You will feel a stretch on the front of your right hip and upper thigh.
- Slide to the opposite side of the chair.
- Repeat with the left leg.



Standing

- Step forward with your left foot, keeping your right knee bent.
- Tuck your buttocks tightly under your hips.
- You will feel a stretch on the front of your right hip and upper thigh.
- Hold and then repeat with your left leg.

4. Stretch your illiotibial bands (ITB's)

- Stand with your right hip less than foot from a wall.
- Cross your left leg in front, but don't put weight on it, and use your right arm against the wall for support, keeping both knees slightly bent.
- Lean towards the wall with your right hip until you feel a stretch on the outside of your right hip.
- Turn around and repeat on the other side.



Additional stretches you may wish to try

Bent leg calf stretch

- Lean against a wall, tree, or chair for support.
- Place your right foot back, keeping your toes facing forward.
- Slightly bend your left knee never letting it go beyond your toes.
- Slightly bend your right knee, as well. Keep your head up and spine straight.
- Press the heel of the right foot into the ground.
- Hold and then repeat with the left leg.



Front of calf and toe stretch

- Lean against a wall, tree or chair for support.
- Bend your left knee slightly, never letting it go beyond your toes.
- Put your right leg back with the toe pointing straight back.
- Keep your head up and spine straight.
- Gently press front of back foot and lower leg toward the floor.
- Hold and then repeat with your left leg.

Strengthening Exercises

Do these exercises three times each week to help strengthen the muscles and joints. Start with 5 to 10 repetitions on each side; increase to no more than 30 repetitions.

Standing back leg lift

- Hold on to a counter, table, railing, or wall for support.
- Stand straight and lift your right foot back (keeping your ankle bent) until only your right toes are on the floor, then bring your foot forward again.
- Keep your right leg straight as you move it back and forth.
- Stand straight and don't lean forward, so the motion comes from your hip and you feel the muscles tighten in your buttocks.
- Return only your toes to the floor between repetitions.
- Repeat with your left foot.
- Repeat 5 times on each side to start, increasing to no more than 30 times on each side.



Heel and toe raises

Standing

- Hold on to a counter, table, railing or wall for support.
- Lift your toes, keeping your heels on the floor and hold for a count of 5 and lower slowly
- Repeat 5 times to start, increasing to no more than 30 times.
- It is easier to do both legs at the same time. If your feet are too sore, then wear shoes or do this exercise while sitting down.



Seated

- Sit down with or without your shoes on
- Lift your toes, keeping your heels on the floor and hold for a count of 5
- Lower slowly
- Lift your heels, keeping toes on the floor and hold for count of 5 and lower slowly
- Repeat 5 times to start, increasing to no more than 30 times
- It is easier to do both legs at the same time

Basic quadriceps strengthening



Standing

- Hold onto a counter, table railing, or wall for support
- **Stand on your right foot, keeping your right knee slightly bent.**
- Bring your left leg forward so it is slightly off the ground, but tighten the muscles on the top of your left thigh before you do it.
- Repeat 5 times to start, increasing to no more than 30 times
- Repeat standing on your left foot and using your right leg

Standing mini- squats

- Stand straight with your feet hip distance apart
- Turn your feet slightly outward
- Squeeze your buttocks together
- Slowly bend your knees to lower your body just a few inches
- Keep your feet flat and do not allow your knees to go past your toes.
- Hold for a count of 5
- Repeat 5 times to start, increasing to no more than 30 times.



Injury prevention

Good shoes, good running form, good stretching and adequate recovery after workouts will help to minimize the risk of injury. Some of the common running injuries are outlined below. Should you experience any of these symptoms visit your medical professional immediately. If you ignore the symptoms you could find yourself in trouble.

Shin Splints

Symptoms: Pain in the shins. Typically during runs and/or early in the morning. The pain may be dull at first and gradually increase during runs or throughout training. The pain is commonly caused by the detachment of the muscle to the bone. Stress fractures can result if not treated.

Treatment: Ice and rest. Take a day off and skip a run or two if you need to. Ice both shins for 15-20 minutes four times per day.

Plantar Fasciitis

Symptoms: Pain in the foot between the heel and toes. Your foot may feel very tender when you begin a run or step out of bed in the morning.

Treatment: Take a day off and skip a run or two if you need to. Ice the area for 15-20 minutes four times per day. Make sure you are stretching properly and maybe add more stretching to your training. Instead of stretching once, stretch twice.

Achilles Tendonitis

Symptoms: Pain along the calf muscle toward your foot.

Treatment: Take a day off and skip a run or two if you need to. Ice the area for 15-20 minutes four times per day.. Further stretch the calf muscles. If you begin to experience any of these pains, then treat them immediately.

If pain persists after treating for 2-3 weeks, then consider seeing your doctor. Injury prevention is critical to your success.

Injury prevention is best done by awareness, ice, and rest. Extra stretching after runs or lifting weights can also help.

Remember – you know your body better than anyone. If you have any pain or discomfort that is unusual, stop exercising and rest. Ice the area that is sore and if the pain continues, make an appointment to see your doctor.