GUIDE TO STRETCHES

Slide Show: A guide to basic stretches

- Stretches can increase flexibility and improve your joint's range of motion, helping you move more freely and ensuring that you have equal flexibility on both sides to prevent you from injuring yourself.

Before stretching, warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of gentle activity. Start slowly and stretch after a workout. Stretch gently and do not bounce. Do not hold your breath. If you feel pain, you've stretched too far.

Hold a stretch for 10 to 30 seconds. To the wrong side, repeat the stretch on both sides. Stretching is recommended two to three times a day.

If you have health conditions or injuries, talk to your healthcare provider about what stretches are safe for you.

Quadiceps stretch

Your quadiceps muscle runs along the front of your thigh. To stretch your quadiceps muscles:

- Stand near a wall or a piece of sturdy exercise equipment for support.
- Grasp your ankle and gently pull your heel up and back until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.
- Tighten your stomach muscles to prevent your stomach from sagging outward, and keep your knees close together.
- Hold for about 30 seconds.
- Switch legs and repeat.