

STRETCHING Exercises

Approx 15-20 min.

Introduction

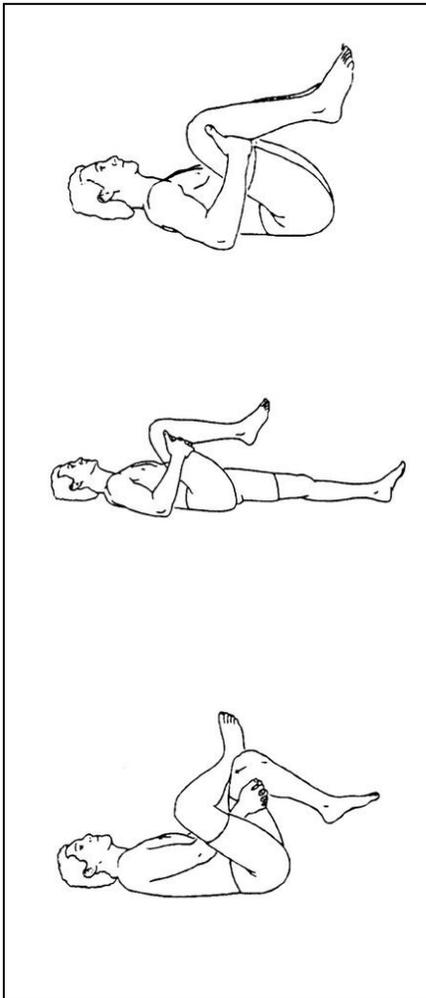
The following exercises are specifically designed to reduce tension in the lower back along with restoration of proper posture. This program can be done at any time during the day and will be the most effective if it is done on a daily basis.

Guidelines

Concentrate on doing each exercise slowly and carefully. Focus on your breathing, exhale slowly while doing the exercise. Do not hold your breath. Perform each exercise as indicated in each section or as recommended by your chiropractor.

These exercises should only be taken to the point of comfort and never overdo it or to the point where you are experiencing pain. This can lead to further injury.

Discontinue any exercise that may be causing you pain or discomfort and consult with your chiropractor.



1. Knees-to-Chest Stretch: Bilateral

Target Area: To stretch your lower back and buttocks.

Performing the Exercise: With hands behind knees, pull both knees in to chest until a comfortable stretch is felt in lower back and buttocks. Keep back relaxed.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

2. Knees-to-Chest Stretch: Unilateral

Target Area: To stretch hip, buttock and lower back.

Performing the Exercise:

Step 1: With hand behind right knee, pull knee in to chest until a comfortable stretch is felt in lower back and buttocks. Keep back relaxed. Hold for 15 Seconds:

Step 2: Now pull knee towards opposite shoulder to feel the stretch in the back of the right hip.

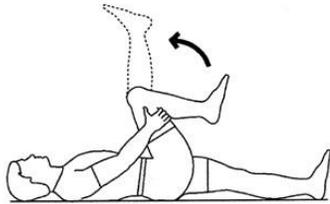
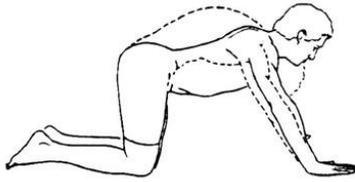
Hold for a count of 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set (per leg) and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

3. Hip Stretch

Target Area: To stretch the piriformis muscle.

Performing the Exercise: Cross legs, right on top. Gently pull other knee toward chest until stretch is felt in buttock/hip of top leg. Then switch and do other side.

Hold for a count of 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set (per leg) and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.



4. **Cat/Cow Stretch**

Target Area: To stretch lower and upper back.

Performing the Exercise: Tuck chin and tighten stomach, arching back. Then extend the neck and look up while allowing stomach to sag down arching more of the low back. You should feel this in both the upper back and the lower back.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

5. **Hamstring Stretch**

Target Area: To stretch the hamstring muscle and strengthen the quadriceps muscles.

Performing the Exercise: Slowly bring one knee to chest and straighten it vertically, stretching the heel to the ceiling.

Hold for a count of 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set (per leg) and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

6. **Pelvic Tilt**

Target Area: To stretch back muscles and strengthen stomach muscles.

Performing the Exercise: Press the lower back into the floor by slightly lifting the pelvis.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

7. **Abdominal Strengthening**

Target Area: To strengthen the abdominal muscles.

Performing the Exercise: Lie on back with knees bent and feet planted on the floor. Cross arms over chest or place finger tips lightly behind ears. Do NOT support your head with your hands; curl up slowly for a 2-3 second count and roll back down for a 4-5 second count.

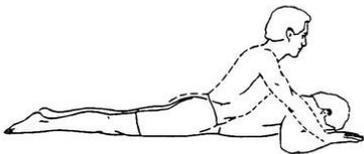
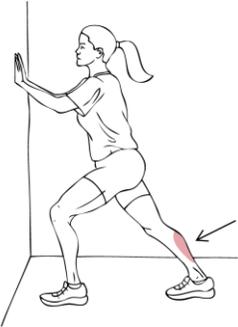
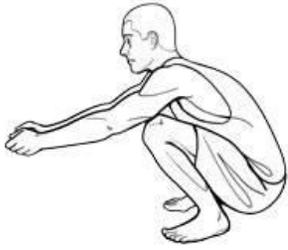
Repeat for 10-12 Reps and do 2-3 Sets. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

8. **Butterfly**

Target Area: To stretch inner thigh muscles.

Performing the Exercise: Grasp ankles and press gently down on legs with elbows, keeping your back straight.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.



9. **Squat**

Target Area: To release lower back tension, increase ankle mobility and strengthen glutes and hips.

Performing the Exercise: From the standing position with feet shoulder width apart and toes pointed slightly out, gently squat down keeping your heels flat on the ground.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

10. **Hip Flexor Stretch**

Target Area: To stretch the hip flexor muscle.

Performing the Exercise: Kneel on right knee (or left) and place left foot (right foot) flat on the floor in front of you with your knee bent and aligned with your ankle. Place hands on the leading leg (see picture). Press hips forward until you feel tension in the front of the right thigh (left).

Hold for a count of 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set (per leg) and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

11. **Calf Muscle Stretch**

Target Area: To stretch you calf muscle.

Performing the Exercise: While supporting yourself against a wall, keep you rear foot flat on the floor, this will be the leg being stretched. Gently bend your front leg, stretching the calf of the rear leg.

Hold for a count of 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set (per leg) and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.

12. **Press Up Stretch**

Target Area: To strengthen the back muscles.

Performing the Exercise: Press upper body upward, keeping hips in contact with floor. Keep lower back and buttocks relaxed.

Hold for 15 Seconds: Repeat 3 times per set and do 2-3 sets per stretching session. Try to do 1-2 sessions per day.