

SPRING INTO SPRING WITH THIS STRETCHING ROUTINE!

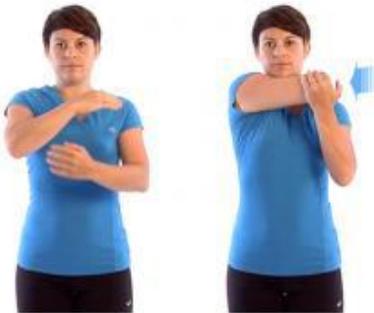
Hold each stretch for 20-30 seconds twice in a row. You should feel “light tension or a gentle pull” in the muscles being stretched – NOT PAIN.



NECK STRETCH: Turn your head 45 degrees to the left and slowly bring your chin down towards your chest until you feel a gentle pull in the back and right side of your neck. To feel more of a stretch, use your left hand to gently pull your head further down to your chest. Repeat on the right side.



CHEST DOORWAY STRETCH: Stand in a doorframe and place the palms of your hands on the frame at shoulder height. Slowly step forward until you feel a gentle pull in your chest. To stretch a different area of your chest, place your hands on the frame slightly above or below shoulder height.



SHOULDER STRETCH: Place your right hand on your left shoulder. Use your left hand to gently pull your elbow across your body and towards your left shoulder until you feel a gentle pull in the back of your right arm. Repeat with your left arm.



QUAD AND HIP STRETCH:

Stand facing a wall or holding onto the back of a chair. Step back with your right foot and slightly bend your right knee. Squeeze your buttocks muscles to tilt your pelvis backward and slowly bring your weight forward onto your left leg until a stretch is felt in front of your right hip. Repeat on the left leg.



HAMSTRING STRETCH: Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair with both feet flat on the floor. Straighten your right leg in front of you. Sitting up nice and tall, bend forward at the hips until you feel a gentle pull on the back of your right leg. Repeat on the left leg.



PIRIFORMIS STRETCH: Sit in a chair with both feet flat on the floor and legs bent at 90 degrees. Place the ankle of your right foot on your left thigh just above your knee. Sitting up nice and tall, bend forward at the hips until you feel a gentle pull on the outside of your right hip and buttocks. Repeat on other leg.

Note: This stretch can "open up the hips" and reduce pressure on the sciatic nerve.



CALF STRETCH: Stand facing a wall or holding onto the back of a chair. Step back with your left foot and place your heel on the floor with your toes pointing forward. Keeping your left leg straight, step into your right leg until you feel a stretch in the lower part of your left leg. Repeat on the right leg.



LOW BACK STRETCH: Place your hands on a sturdy surface in front of you. Gently round out your back until you feel a gentle pull in your upper and mid back. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Then gently arch your low back until you feel a gentle pull in your belly or slight tension in your low back. Hold for 5-10 seconds and repeat for 1 min.

NOTE: This exercise is best done after 10-20 min of applying heat to the low back.



BED LOW BACK STRETCH: Lay on your back on a bed. Press your back into the bed and hug your knees towards your chest until you feel a gentle pull in your low back and buttocks. Again, applying heat your low back first will help with opening up these tight low back muscles.