

# 8

## Exercises to improve flexibility

Stretching keeps muscles flexible, strong, and healthy, and it helps to maintain a range of motion in the joints.

Stretch only to the point of mild tension, but never to the point of pain.



### **QUADS**

(front of thighs)

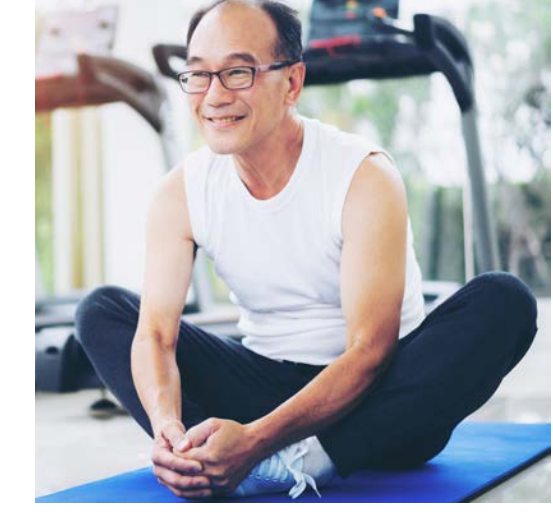
Stand and hold onto a wall for balance if needed. Grab the top of your left foot and bend your knee, bringing your foot towards your butt and keeping your knee pointing straight at the floor. You should feel a stretch right down the front of your leg. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds and switch sides. Repeat 3 times.



### **HAMSTRINGS**

(back of thighs)

Start by sitting on the floor with both of your legs out straight. Extend your arms and reach forward by bending at the waist as far as possible while keeping your knees straight. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds. Relax back into the starting position. Repeat 3 times.



### **INNER THIGHS**

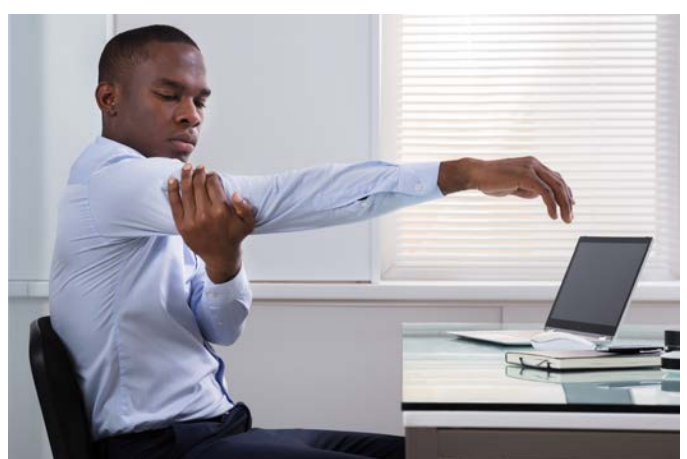
Sit with the soles of your feet together in front of you. Place your hands on your feet as you pull your heels toward your butt. Keep your back straight and your stomach muscles tight as you let your knees relax and inch your knees closer to the floor. You will feel a slight stretch in your groin muscles. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times.



### **FOREARMS**

Seated or standing, stretch your left arm out with your hand out so that your fingers point straight ahead. Use your right hand to gently pull your fingers up towards you, feeling a stretch in your forearm. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds and switch to your other hand. Repeat 3 times.

### **SHOULDERS**



Take your right arm straight across your chest and curl your left hand around your elbow, gently pulling on your right arm to deepen the stretch in your shoulders. Try dropping your shoulder down if you are not feeling a stretch. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds and switch sides. Repeat 3 times.

### **HIPS**



Sit on the floor with both of your legs extended in front of you. Cross your left leg over your right, and place your left foot flat on the floor. Place your left hand on the floor behind your body. Place your right hand on your left quad or your right elbow on your right knee (as shown) and press your right leg to the left as you twist your torso to the right. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds and switch sides. Repeat 3 times.



### **NECK**

Gently tilt your head toward your left shoulder and try to touch your shoulder with your ear. Stop when you feel the stretch. Do not raise your shoulder. Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds, then return to the start position. Repeat on your right side. Work your way up to 10 repetitions on both sides.

For extra stretch, press lightly with your fingertips (as shown).



### **TRICEPS**

(back of upper arms)

Bend your right elbow behind your head and use the left hand to gently pull the right elbow in further until you feel a stretch in your triceps. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds and switch sides. Repeat 3 times.