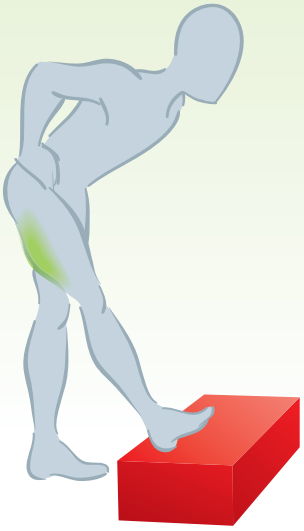
Stretches for Walking

Get healthy! Get Started!

Walking is a great way to add physical activity into your healthy lifestyle. But remember stretching is a very important part of your activity program. Be sure to warm up and stretch slowly for at least 5 minutes before you begin.



Hamstring Stretch:

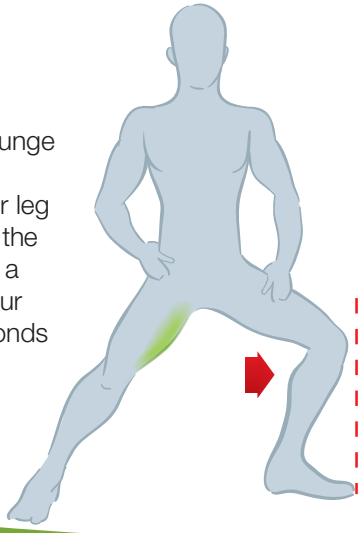
Prop one foot up on a low, secure bench or stairstep. Stand tall. Keeping your chest high, hips square and tailbone lifted, bend forward from your hips. Feel a stretch in the back of your thigh or knee. Hold 20–30 seconds on each leg.

Hip Flexor Stretch:

Lunge forward with one leg, knee bent. The back leg can stay straight or bent slightly. Push your hips forward until you feel a stretch in front of your back thigh near the groin. Keep your torso upright and your front knee behind your toes. Hold 20–30 seconds on each leg.

Abductor (inner thigh) stretch:

Keeping your torso upright, lunge to one side with a bent knee over the toe. Keep your other leg straight. Push your weight to the "bent knee" side until you feel a stretch in the inner thigh of your straight leg. Hold 20–30 seconds on each leg.



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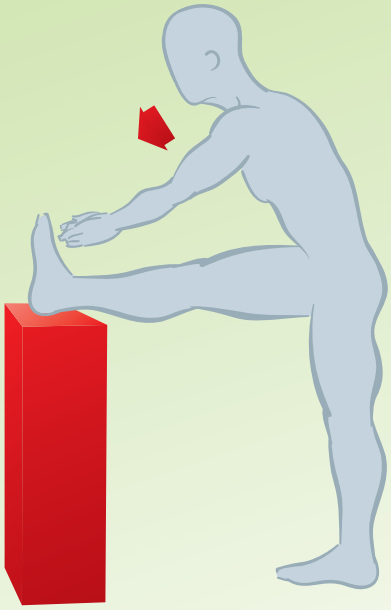
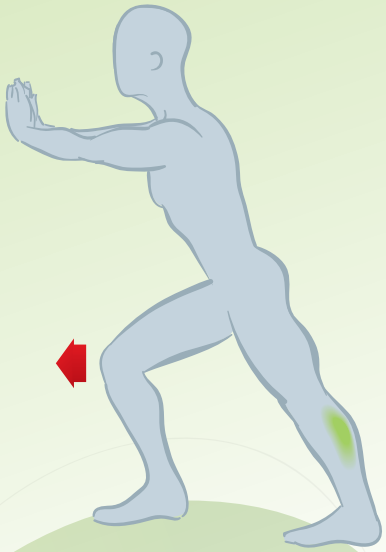
Toe Touch:

Place your right leg on a chair or railing, making a 90-degree angle with the other leg. Keep your left leg straight and lean forward, touching the toes of your right leg. Don't bounce. Switch legs and do the same thing. Repeat the entire exercise 1–2 times.



Calf Stretch:

Stand facing a wall with both hands on it. Position one foot forward (knee bent) and the other leg back with the leg straight, toes pointing at the wall. With your stomach tight, lean in toward the wall until you feel a stretch in the lower part of the back leg. Hold 20–30 seconds on each leg.

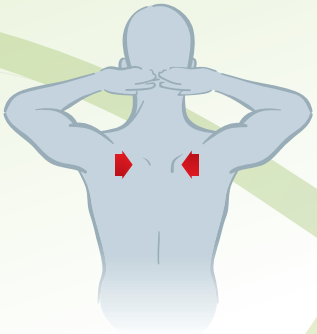


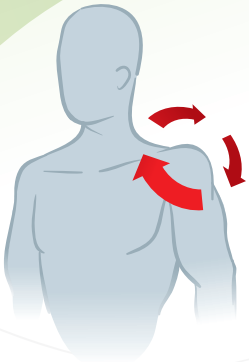
Chest stretch:

Place your fingertips lightly on the back of your head. Push your elbows back while squeezing with your upper back until you feel a stretch in your chest near your underarms. Hold for 20–30 seconds.

Option:
Another option is to stand in a corner with one hand or elbow on each wall. Your feet should be 1½–2 feet away from the corner in a split stance. Keeping your back straight and tummy pulled in, lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in your chest near your underarms. Hold for 20–30 seconds.

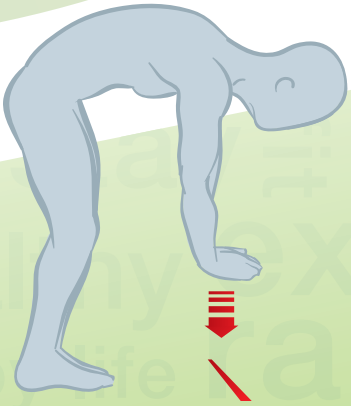
(Keep feet staggered, one behind the other.)





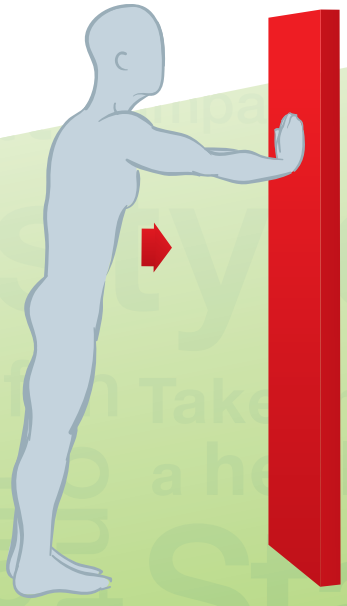
Shoulder Rolls:

Lift your shoulders up toward your ears, then down and backwards in a circular motion. Repeat 5–10 times. Perform with both shoulders simultaneously or alternate right and left.



Palm Touch:

Bend your knees slightly. Try to touch the floor by bending from the waist, but don't bounce. Hold the position for 10 seconds, then repeat 1–2 times. If you have lower back problems, do the same thing, but with your legs crossed.



Wall Push:

Stand 18 inches away from a wall. Lean forward, pushing against the wall with your hands and keeping your heels flat on the ground. Hold it for 10 seconds, then relax. Repeat 1–2 times.