

Flexibility and Resistance Training Program

WHAT IS IT?

Flexibility Training involves stretching exercises to improve joint and muscle function.

Stretching can be an important part of a complete physical activity program when combined with aerobic exercises (walking or jogging) and anaerobic exercises (lifting weights).

Resistance Training is the use of weights and/or machines to increase muscle strength and endurance.

If you have a history of heart disease or high blood pressure, you should speak with your healthcare provider prior to starting a resistance training program.



STEPS of the Flexibility and Resistance Training Program

WARM UP 5 minutes of walking at a comfortable pace.

WORKOUT Resistance Exercises

COOL DOWN Flexibility Exercises

Equipment

No gym membership? No worries. These exercises use only your own body, dumbbells, steps, and chair. Dumbbells are available at most sporting goods stores. Don't have those either? Make your own.

For Dumbbells use: 15oz soup cans, 16-20oz water bottles or half-gallon plastic milk jugs filled halfway with water (for heavier weights)

Remember to always start with the lowest weight that is comfortable for you before moving up.

Make Your Own Dumbbells



15 oz
soup can



16-20 oz
water
bottle



Half-gallon
milk jug



Beginner

(1-2 months)

Number of Repetitions:

8 - 12 (one set)

Number of Sets: 1

Exercises:

- WALL SITTING
- BEGINNER CURL-UP
- KNEELING HIP EXTENSION
- SIDE-LYING LEG RAISES
- MODIFIED INCLINE PUSH-UP
- CALF RAISES

Advanced Beginner

(1-2 months)

Number of Repetitions:

8 - 12 (one set)

Number of Sets: 1

Exercises:

- CHAIR SQUATS
- BEGINNER SEATED PRESS-UP
- ADVANCED BEGINNER CURL-UP
- MODIFIED KNEE PUSH-UP
- CALF RAISES
- DUMBBELL ROW
- STEP-UP
- MODIFIED PRONE PLANK



workout
stage

Intermediate

(usually lasts 3-6 months but may take up to 1 year)

Number of Repetitions:

8 - 12 (one set)

Number of Sets: 1

Exercises:

- SQUATS
- PUSH-UP
- CURL-UP
- SEATED PRESS-UP
- STEP-UP
- CALF RAISES
- BICEPS CURL
- DUMBBELL ROWS
- PRONE AND SIDE PLANKS

Expert

Contact a fitness professional at your local YMCA or gym. You can also make an appointment with a physical therapist.



Wall Sitting



Stand 1-2 feet away from a wall and place your back against the wall. Slide your body down the wall until your knees form a 90 degree angle. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds and return to the starting position. This is one repetition. Only 6-8 repetitions of this exercise are required to equal one set.

Modified Incline Push-Up



a. Standing a few feet from the wall, place your palms on the wall at shoulder height, slightly wider than your shoulders. **b.** Bend your elbows until your face almost touches the wall. Your back should stay straight. Hold this position briefly and then return to the starting position. This is one repetition.

Too Easy? Try using your kitchen counter instead of a wall. This increases the incline and makes you work harder.

Chair Squat



Stand with your back facing a chair and your hands held out in front of you. Keeping your back straight, sit down in the chair. Return to the starting position. This is one repetition.

Squat



Stand with your knees and feet shoulder width apart and your arms held out in front of you. Lean slightly forward at the hips and bend your knees until they are parallel to the floor. Hold this position briefly and then stand back up. This is one repetition.

Modified Knee Push-Up

a. Get down on your knees and hands with your hands slightly wider than your shoulders. Lift your feet off the floor and cross your ankles. **b.** Bend your elbows and slowly lower your chest towards the floor. Stop when you are 3-4 inches from the floor or your elbows are at a 90 degree angle. Push back up to the starting position. This is one repetition.



Push-Up

a. Place your toes and hands on the floor, with your hands placed slightly wider than your shoulders. Keep your back and arms straight. **b.** Bend your elbows and slowly lower your chest towards the floor. Stop when you are 3-4 inches from the floor or your elbows are at a 90 degree angle. Push back up to the starting position. This is one repetition.

Beginner Curl-Up

a. While lying flat on your back, bend your knees and hips to 90 degrees and place your arms by your sides. Lift your shoulders and upper back off the floor. **b.** Hold this position briefly and then return your back to the floor. This is one repetition.



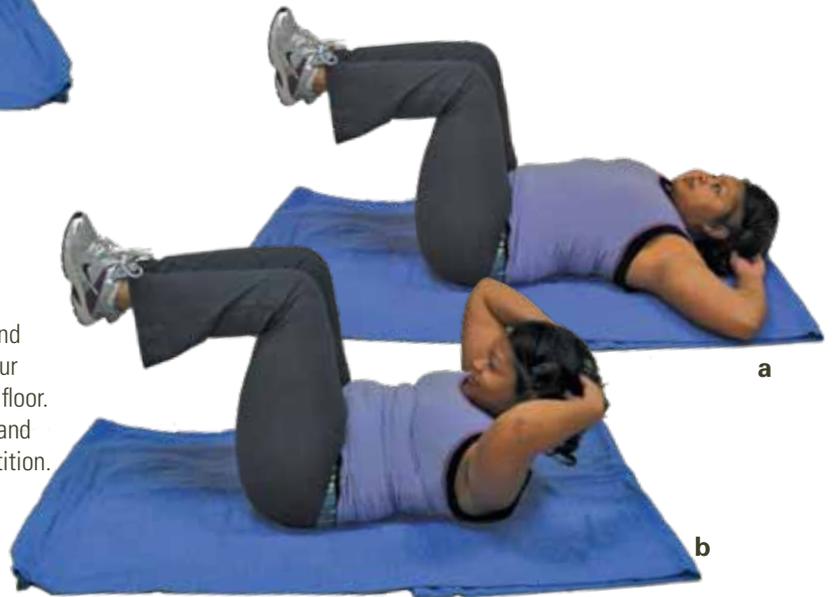


Advanced Beginner Curl-Up

a. While lying flat on your back, bend your knees and hips to 90 degrees and cross your arms over your chest. **b.** Lift your shoulders and upper back off the floor. Hold this position briefly and then return your back to the floor. This is one repetition.

Curl-Up

a. While lying flat on your back, bend your knees and hips to 90 degrees and place your hands behind your head. **a.** Lift your shoulders and upper back off the floor. Do not pull on your neck. Hold this position briefly and then return your back to the floor. This is one repetition.



Kneeling Hip Extension

a. Place your palms and knees on the floor in the crawl position. **b.** Lift and straighten your right leg until it is parallel with the floor. Keep your shoulders and hips level. Hold this position briefly and return your right knee to the floor. Repeat with the left leg. This is one repetition.

Side-Lying Leg Raises

a. Lie on your right side with your right leg slightly bent and your left leg straight. Place your right arm under your head and your left arm, palm down in front of your chest for balance. **b.** While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lift your left leg until it is level with the hip. Hold this position briefly and then return to the starting position. This is one repetition. Remember repeat on the other leg.

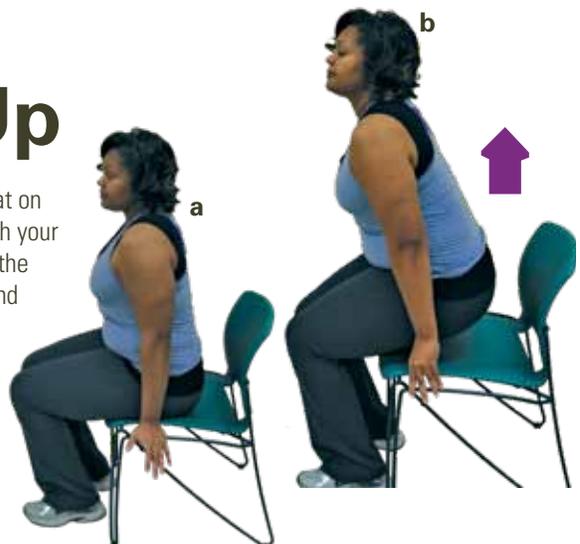


Calf Raises

a. Place the balls of your feet on a step with your heels hanging off the back of the step. Use a handrail to help maintain your balance. **b.** Raise your heels until you are standing on your tip-toes. Hold this position briefly and then return to the starting position. This is one repetition.

Beginner Seated Press-Up

a. Face forward while sitting in a chair. Place your palms flat on the chair bottom beside your thighs. **b.** Push downward with your palms to lift your buttocks off the chair. Leave your feet on the floor but do not use your feet to aid in lifting. Hold briefly and return to the starting position. This is one repetition.



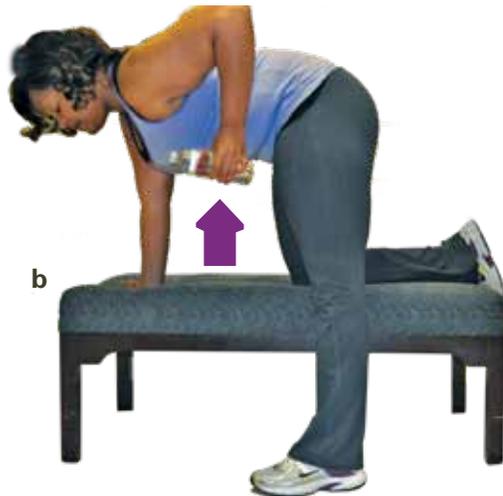


Seated Press-Up

Face forward while sitting in a chair. Place your palms flat on the chair bottom beside your thighs. Lift your feet slightly off the floor. Push downward with your palms to lift your buttocks off the chair. Hold briefly and return to the starting position. This is one repetition.

Dumbbell Row

a. Standing on the left side of a bench, put your right knee and palm of your right hand on the bench surface. Your back and arm should be straight. Extend your left arm straight down and hold your dumbbell with your left hand. **b.** Pull your dumbbell upwards by bending your elbow and shoulder. Lower your left hand back



Step-Up

a. Stand and face a step approximately 6-15 inches in height. (The higher the step, the harder the exercise). Place your right foot completely on the step. **b.** Transfer your weight to the heel of your foot and press down into the step while straightening your leg. Touch your left toe to the step but do not put your weight on this foot. Return to starting position. This is one repetition.

Biceps Curl

a. Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Your arms should be by your side and you should hold a dumbbell in each hand with palm side of hand facing out. **b.** Bend your elbows and bring your hands upward toward your shoulders. Straighten your elbows and return your hands to your side. This is one repetition.



Modified Prone Plank

Lay face down on the floor. Rise up on your forearms and your knees. Your back and neck should remain straight. Continue to breath normally. Hold for 10-20 seconds. This is one repetition. Only 5-8 repetitions are required of this exercise to equal one set.



Prone Plank

Lay face down on the floor. Rise up on your forearms and your toes. Your back and neck should remain straight. Continue to breath normally. Hold for 20-30 seconds. This is one repetition.



Side Plank

Lay on your side with your legs straight. Your weight should be supported on your bottom arm. Use your abdominal muscles to keep your hip in line with your shoulders. Hold for 20-30 seconds. This is one repetition. Only 4-6 repetitions are required for prone and side planks to equal one set

Stretches for Flexibility

Good Stretches

Stretching works best when done for at least 10 minutes, 2-3 days per week.

Stretching has the most benefit when performed after your fitness or resistance exercises when your muscles are already warmed up. Stretches should be held for 15-60 seconds and repeated 4 times. You should never stretch to the point of pain.

Neck



Forward Flexion: Face forward and move your head forward like you are placing your chin on your chest. You should feel this stretch in the back of your neck and upper back.



Lateral Flexion: Face forward and move your head to the side like you are placing your ear on your shoulder. Repeat with both sides of the neck. You should feel this stretch on the opposite side of your neck.

Retraction: Sit upright in a chair and rest your arms by your sides. Pick a spot on the wall to focus on and keep your head level. Keep your back against the chair and extend your neck by sticking your chin out. You should feel this stretch behind your ears and down your neck.



Shoulder

Arms across chest: Face forward, straighten your right arm, and move it across your chest. Hold your right arm with your left hand and use gentle pressure on your right arm. Repeat with the left arm. You should feel this stretch in your shoulder.

Upper Back



Upper Back: Crisscross your arms over the front of your upper chest, point your elbows forward, and give a gentle squeeze. This is just like giving yourself a hug. You should feel this stretch in the middle of your upper back between your shoulder blades.

Lower Back

Lower Back: Lie flat on your back with your legs straight out in front of you and your heels on the floor. Pull your right knee up toward your chest. You can keep your other leg straight or bend it. Repeat with the other leg. You should feel this stretch in your lower back. Do not perform this stretch if you have osteoporosis.



Triceps

Elbow behind the head: Face forward, lift your right arm straight up, bend at the elbow and reach for your left shoulder. You can support your right arm with your left hand. Repeat on the left side. You should feel this stretch in your triceps (underside of the top part of your arm).



Chest Stretch

Chest Stretch: Face forward, straighten your arms, and raise them up to your sides and slightly toward your back. Make sure to keep your shoulders relaxed and your arms slightly lower than your shoulders. You should feel this stretch across your upper chest.



Biceps

Wall Stretch: Touch the wall with your right palm and forearm and slowly turn your body away from the wall. Repeat on the left side. You should feel this stretch in your bicep muscle (top part of your upper arm) and across your upper chest.



Hips

Butterfly stretch: Sit on the floor, bend your knees, and touch the soles of your feet together. Lean slightly forward and use your elbows to gently press down on your knees. You should feel this stretch in your upper thighs.



Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch

- a. Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch: Place your left foot and right knee on the floor. Both of your legs should now form a 90 degree angle.
- b. Shift your weight forward to your left knee. Repeat on the right side. You should feel this stretch on the inside of your hip.

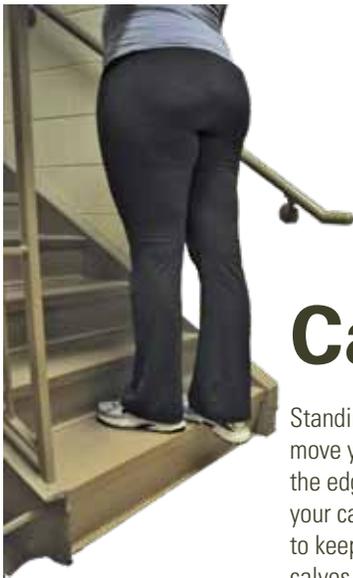


Hamstring

Seated Hamstring Stretch: Sit on the floor with both legs straight out in front of you. Place your hands on your thighs and slowly move your hands toward your feet. Keep your chest lifted up. You should feel the most stretch in your hamstring (back of your thighs) and some stretch in your calves.

Quadriceps

Standing Quadriceps Stretch: While standing, bend your left knee toward your buttocks. Hold your left ankle with your right hand and gently pull back on your thigh. You may use a chair or the wall for support. Repeat with the right leg. You should feel this stretch in your front thigh.



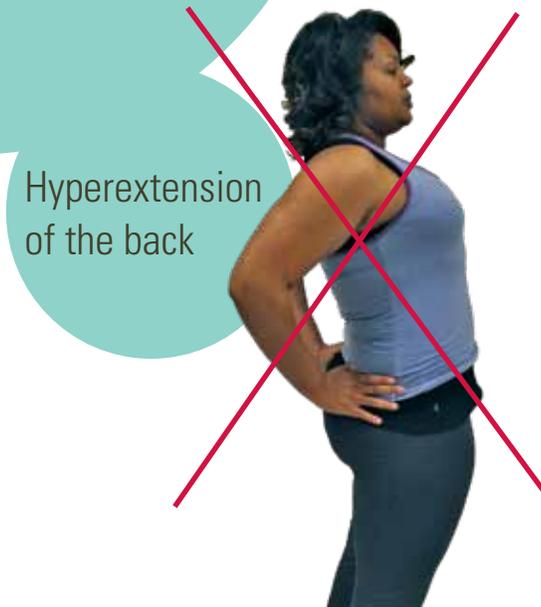
Calves

Standing Calf Step Stretch: While standing straight on a step, move your right foot slightly backward. Your heel should be off the edge of the step. Lower your right heel slowly to stretch your calf. Repeat on the left side. Remember to use a handrail to keep yourself steady. You should feel this stretch in your calves (back of your lower leg).



Bad Stretches

Some stretches put unnecessary strain on your muscles and joints. For this reason, there are some stretches you should avoid or only use under the direction of a physical therapist.





Sources

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