

*When stretching, hold each stretching position for about 15 seconds, and repeat each stretching exercise three or more times.*

## Simple Stretching Exercises

Hold each stretch position approximately 15 seconds.

### Stretches for the head and neck

*Avoid rolling your head; that can cause injury.*

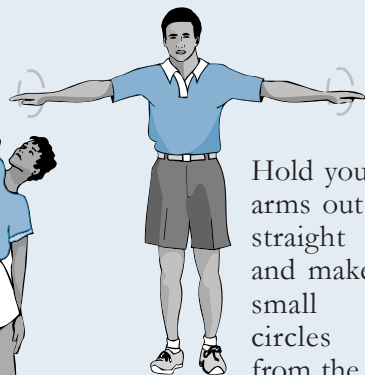
Move your head slowly from side to side.



Move your head slowly from back to front.

### Stretches for the shoulders, chest, and upper back

Reach straight up toward the ceiling, one arm at a time.



Hold your arms out straight and make small circles from the shoulder.

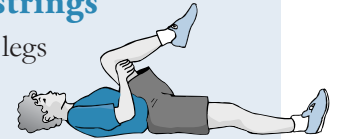
### Stretches for thighs, quadriceps, and hips

Stand on one leg and lift the other foot behind you with the knee bent. Pull your foot up gently with same side hand. Repeat with the other leg. You may need to steady yourself against a wall or chair with your free hand.



### Stretches for the lower back, abdominals, and hamstrings

Lie on your back with your legs straight, lift one leg with your knee bent and pull it toward your chest.

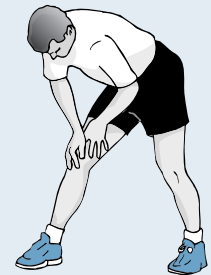


*Repeat with the other leg.*



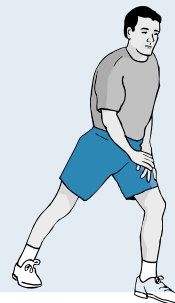
Sit on the floor with one knee bent outward and gently lean forward. *Repeat with the other knee bent.*

Stand with one leg ahead of other with your hands on the knee of the front leg.



Straighten your rear knee until you feel the stretch in your hamstring (back of your upper leg) of the rear leg.

*Repeat with the other leg forward.*



Stand with one leg directly in front of the other. Bend your knees and put both hands on your front knee.

Slowly lean forward putting weight on your front leg. *Repeat with the other leg forward.*

### Stretches for calves and ankles

Stand facing a wall with one foot in front of the other, 18 to 24 inches from the wall. Put both hands flat against the wall and lean toward the wall until you can feel the calf stretch on your rear leg.

*Repeat with the other leg.*



*To build strength you should complete enough exercise repetitions to fatigue, but not injure, the muscle.*

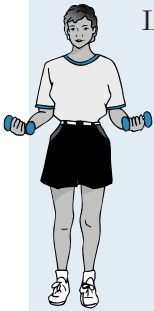
## Building Muscular Strength

Along with endurance and flexibility it is important to maintain and build muscular strength. Muscles become stronger by working against resistance such as in doing push ups, sit ups, lifting weights, or hard physical labor. Strong muscles hold your body in proper alignment and reduce the risk of injury.

When doing strength exercises you should complete enough repetitions with enough resistance to fatigue (but not injure) the muscle.

### Simple strengthening exercises

*With light weights (2 to 5 pounds)*



Let arms hang at your side then lift both hands toward your shoulders with your elbows bent. *Repeat until the biceps are tired.*

Hold one hand with a light weight behind head with your elbow pointed toward the ceiling, lift the weight straight up and down until your arm is tired. *Repeat with the other arm.*



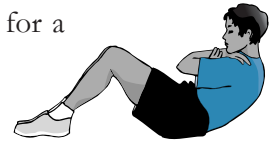
With weights in each hand, hold both hands at your side and then shrug your shoulders.



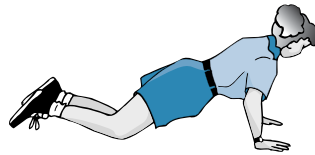
*If you join a fitness center or gym, be sure you get thorough instruction in the use of the equipment and machinery. It is easy to injure yourself by using exercise machinery incorrectly.*

### Strengthening exercises without weights

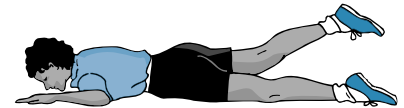
Lie on your back with your knees bent. Cross your arms on your chest. Lift your head and upper back off the floor, hold for a few seconds and lay down again. *Repeat until the abdominal (stomach) muscles are tired.*



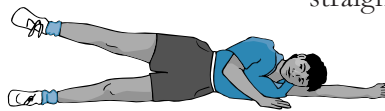
Push ups can be done from the toes, knees, or leaning on the arms of a large chair. Hold your weight on your arms and let your body down until your chest touches the floor (or you are level with the arms of the chair). *Repeat until your arms and abdomen are tired.*



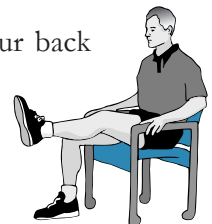
Lie on your stomach and with your legs straight lift one leg off the floor as far as you can and hold 15 seconds. *Repeat with the other leg.*



Lie on your side and with your legs straight, lift the upper leg as high as possible and hold 15 seconds. *Repeat on the other side.*



Sit on a straight back chair with your back straight. Lift one leg at a time, keeping it straight, until the entire leg is off the chair. Hold for 15 seconds and then *repeat with the other leg.*



Use a six to eight inch step for stair stepping. Step up onto the step with your right foot and then your left foot. Step down with your right foot and then your left foot. Alternate the lead foot. *Repeat until your legs are tired.*