

Stretching Program – Hand Exercises

Background

Exercise is one of the best ways one can improve posture. A stretching program can be used daily to help keep muscles flexible and strong. Athletes spend a great deal of time stretching before performing sports so that their bodies are prepared for their activities. We should also prepare by integrating exercise into our daily routine. Before beginning any exercise or stretching program consult your health care provider, especially if you have a pre-existing condition that may affect your ability to participate in the program.

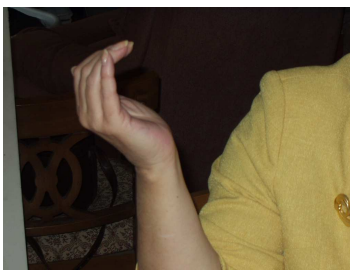
Benefits of a Stretching Program

There are many benefits associated with a stretching program. They include:

- Helps prevent muscular aches, pains, and cramping
- Reduces the possibility of muscular soreness/fatigue over the next day(s)
- Provides a break from static postures
- Increases the muscles efficiency/effectiveness of movement (improving your overall speed, stamina, and form) by:
 - Enhancing the ability of muscles to contract/work more powerfully and economically
 - Improves your overall form
- Great for relaxation

You can do just a few of the following exercises anytime during the day. Hold each stretch for five to ten seconds and repeat each exercise three to five times during one cycle. Holding each exercise a little longer or doing more repetitions will help to improve flexibility, strength, and endurance. When stretching, you will feel a slight pull on the muscle. If this becomes mildly uncomfortable (especially if you feel radiating pain), ease off or stop the stretch. If you have a pre-existing condition, please consult a medical professional before attempting these stretches.

Stretch 1: Wrist Curls



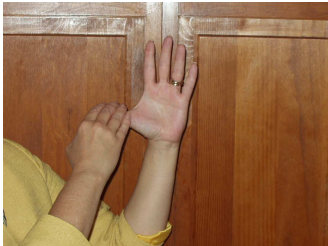
1. While keeping your fingers relaxed, make circles with your hands to stretch the wrist.
2. Do ten (10) circles to the left and ten (10) circles to the right.

Stretch 2: Fingers Stretch



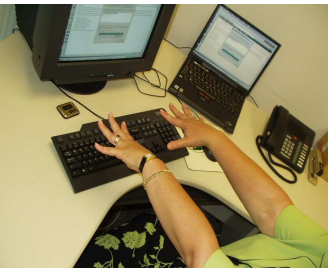
1. Spread your fingers with both hands as wide as you can.
2. Hold in an open position for five (5) seconds and relax.
3. Repeat three (3) times on both hands

Stretch 3: Thumb Stretch



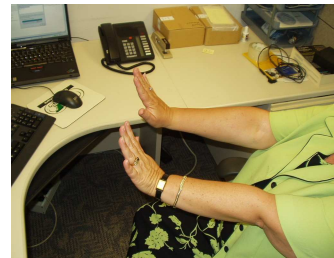
1. With one hand (palm up) gently pull the thumb downward with opposite hand.
2. Hold for five (5) seconds.
3. Repeat three (3) times on the right and three (3) times on the left hand.

Stretch 4: Hand Flex



1. Slowly clench your fists.
2. Slowly open and spread your fingers.
3. Repeat five to ten times.

Stretch 5: Wrist Flex and Extension



1. Extend both arms in front of you, with palms facing down.
2. Slowly bend (extend) both wrists so fingers point to the ceiling and hold for five seconds.
3. Next, bend (flex) both wrists so fingers point to the floor and hold for five seconds.
4. Relax and repeat.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your local PMA Risk Control Consultant.

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