

Stretch Your Way to Great Health

Stretching exercises are simple ways to increase your fitness level and prevent injury. The following stretches can be done almost anytime, anywhere. In between regular exercise sessions, try these stretches as part of your daily exercise routine.

- While sitting at your desk (or at home), do side bends by reaching down to the floor with your right hand and then your left. Do several repetitions several times during the day. This is not only a good waist exercise; it also helps relieve the tension of sitting all day.
- At your desk, while watching TV or anytime you are sitting: hold your legs straight out in front of you, count to ten with pointed feet, then ten with feet flexed. Do this several times during the day. Try this stretch while holding in your abdominal muscles.
- Anytime you are sitting or standing, squeeze your buttocks for a count of ten then release. Do several repetitions. This is a great exercise for firming up those muscles.
- Try starting your day with a few minutes of stretching exercises. Put your arms straight up over your head and stretch with right arm reaching toward the ceiling. Repeat with your left arm. Do ten repetitions on each side. Bend at waist and reach towards floor with little bounces ten times. Then stretch out to each side (ten times each). It won't work up a sweat, but will help give you a little extra energy and stretch muscles that are tight from sleeping.

