

Stretching Leaflet 2



Many sports patients suffer from lower limb injuries that could have been prevented if appropriate stretching of muscles had been carried out prior to exercise. This leaflet aims to prepare and alert sports patients to the most common stretches for several groups of muscles in the lower limb.

This leaflet is a continuation of stretches for the hamstrings and calf muscles from 'Stretching Leaflet 1'.

The Hamstrings

There are 3 muscles that combine and work together as the hamstrings to aid flexion of the lower leg at the knee. They are positioned at the back of the thigh, above the back of the knee. Common injuries include tearing of the muscle fibres, causing pain and inflammation (also referred to as "pulled hamstrings").

Hamstring Stretch 1



Instructions:

- Stand with one leg just in front of the other.
- Bend the back knee; rest your weight on the straight knee.
- Bend forward from the waist and push backward with the straight leg.
- Hold for 20-30 seconds.

- You should feel the pull in the back of the thigh of the straight leg.

Repeat exercise for opposite leg

Hamstring Stretch 1



Instructions:

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet on the floor.
- Lift one leg off the floor, grasping the leg just behind the knee.
- Pull the leg towards your chest, and straighten the leg to a level that is comfortable.
- Keep your back straight at all times.
- Hold for 20-30 seconds.
- You should feel the pull at the backs of the thigh and knee in the straightened leg.

Repeat exercise for opposite leg

The Calf Muscles

The calf muscles at their lower end connect with the Achilles Tendon, which then inserts into the back of the heel bone. These muscles can often be tight, and limit foot movement at the ankle. Tightness of these muscles can often result in injuries being more likely to happen.

Calf Stretch 1



Instructions:

- Using the bottom step, place the front part of your foot on the edge of the step
- Let your heels drop down.
- Keep your back straight always (holding the banister for balance if necessary).
- Hold for 60 seconds.
- You should feel the pull in the calf muscles.

Repeat this stretch twice a day

Calf Stretch 2



Instructions:

- Standing in front of a wall, put both hands and one foot against the wall.
- Take the other foot back as far as is comfortable.
- Bend your elbows and the front knee towards the wall, keeping your back straight.
- Hold for 60 seconds.
- You should feel the stretch in the calf of the back leg.

Repeat exercise for opposite leg

When do I begin these stretches?

Depending on the presenting lower limb complaint, your podiatrist will advise you on which

stretches to perform, the length of time, and how many repetitions per day. Please note that the examples shown are for stretching tight muscles; they are not to be used as warming up or cooling down exercises.

To find out more about injuries of the lower limb, or to have a comprehensive physical examination of the lower limb, **please contact us:**

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