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## Basic Stretches

### Why do we stretch?

- Stretching is useful for both injury prevention and treatment.
- Stretching increases flexibility which directly translates into reduced risk of injury. Stretching allows a greater range of motion, making you less likely to experience an injury.
- Stretching enhances your balance, coordination, and circulation.
- Stretching increases blood flow to your muscles. Improved circulation can speed recovery after muscle injuries.
- Flexible muscles can improve your daily performance on tasks such as lifting and bending.
- Stretching promotes better posture. Frequent stretching keeps your muscles from getting tight, allowing you to maintain proper posture and minimize aches and pains.
- Stretching can relieve stress. It relaxes the tense muscles that often accompany stress.
- Stretching before work-related tasks focuses people on working safely.

### Tips for stretching safely:

- If you are being treated by a medical provider, follow their instructions.
- Stretching is a key part of your exercise program.
- Stretching before work or physical activity can prepare your body for exercise.
- Stretching after work promotes a better range of motion for your joints.
- When you're stretching:
  - Stay within your comfort range. Expect to feel some tension while you're stretching. If you feel pain, you've gone too far.
  - Move slowly and support your body.
  - Hold each stretch for 10-15 seconds.
  - Breathe freely as you hold each stretch; try not to hold your breath.

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### Some stretching essentials:

- **Target major muscle groups:**
  - When you're stretching, focus on your calves, thighs, hips, lower back, neck and shoulders.
  - Stretch muscles and joints that you routinely use, at work or play.
- **Warm up first:**
  - Stretching muscles when they're cold increases your risk of injury, including pulled muscles.
  - Warm up by walking while gently pumping your arms, or do a favorite exercise at low intensity for five minutes.
  - Remember to stretch after you exercise, when your muscles are warm and more receptive to stretching.
- **How often to stretch:**
  - As a general rule, stretch before and after a manual task or exercise, as well as after being in a static posture (e.g., driving).

*Taking a few minutes to do a series of stretches can make your whole body feel better. Stretch spontaneously throughout the day whenever you feel tense.*

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## Basic Stretches

This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_ Trainer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Class Participants:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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