

# TIPS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

## STRETCHING

Stretching first thing in the morning is a good way to waken up tired muscles. Incorporating this activity into your daily routine will help lengthen tight muscles and prevent injuries. During the eight hour work day muscles can become tight and stiff, especially if your job entails sitting at a desk. Start your morning with these three easy stretching exercises! **Remember to always consult your doctor before starting a stretching and chair exercise routine.**

### Morning Stretch

- 1) Sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you
- 2) Reach forward toward your toes as far as you can
- 3) Continue until a gentle stretch is felt behind your knees
- 4) Hold the position for 15 seconds
- 5) Repeat 3 times

## Chair Exercises

### Legs

Extend either one of your lower legs straight out from the knee, pulling the toes back toward your body as you do so. Make sure to flex your toes to the point where you feel a significant stretch in the calf muscle. After about five seconds, bring the leg back down and allow it to relax. Repeat the process with the other leg. Continue alternating in this way to achieve four sets on each side. This exercise will improve flexibility in the calf muscles, protecting against unnecessary cramping.

### Chair Stands

Chair stands help you develop your leg muscles while having the support of a chair to reduce your risk of injury. Sit in your chair with your feet flat on the floor, your back straight and your hands in your lap. Use your leg muscles to lift your body out of your chair. Extend your arms out in front of you for balance. Avoid using your hands to help lift yourself out of the chair. Stand straight up and then slowly lower yourself back down into your chair. Repeat 10 to 15 times as part of your chair exercise routine.

### Hamstring Contractions

Hamstring contractions work the group of muscles on the back of your thigh that are used to flex the knee joint. Sit in a chair with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor with your back straight and flat against the chair. Extend both of your legs so that your heels are resting on the floor. Without moving your heels, contract the back of your thighs to pull back on your heels as if you were going to bend your knee. Hold the contraction for 10 seconds and then relax. Complete this exercise five times.

### **Inner Thigh Squeeze**

The inner thigh squeeze strengthens the muscle of the inner thigh, called the adductor muscles, which work to stabilize the inside of the hip. To begin the inner thigh squeeze, sit up tall on the front of a sturdy chair and place a small ball or a rolled up towel between your knees. Keeping your back straight, slowly attempt to draw your knees closer to one another. Hold 1 to 2 seconds, then slowly release. Repeat 10 to 15 times.

### **Rolls**

You can do some shoulder rolls to keep the blood flowing to your shoulders and arms. Shoulder rolls will also keep your shoulder joints and muscles fluid. Sit up as straight as possible in your chair. Move your right shoulder to the front, then up, back and down. You will be making a circular motion. Make certain you do not move your back while rolling your shoulder. Do four shoulder circles. Rest for a few seconds. Repeat this exercise with your left shoulder. After you have exercised each shoulder separately, do four shoulder rolls with both shoulders at the same time.

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/19317-chair-exercises-senior-citizens/#ixzz1CGbC0te3>