

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL STRETCHING

improve your posture and balance.

EXERCISING DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ Exercise 2 – 3 days per week
- ✓ Do not continue to exercise if you feel any sudden, sharp or intense pain.
- ✓ Do not begin an exercise programme if you have been experiencing significant joint or back pain. First seek the guidance from a medical professional.
- ✓ Do exercise to a point where you feel a slight pull in the muscles.
- ✓ Do breathe slowly, rhythmically and under control.

Sitting Posture check

- ✓ Sit towards the front of the chair so that there is a gap between your back and the back of the chair.
- ✓ Make sure that your feet are flat on the floor and they are not tucked back under the chair. Your ankles should be directly below your knees
- ✓ Feet and Knees should be hip width apart.
- ✓ Try to lengthen your spine so that you feel yourself growing taller. Imagine a piece of string attached to the top of your head keeping your neck long and your ribs lifted away from your hips.
- ✓ Try to pull your navel back towards spine (this will help to support your back and improve your posture).
- ✓ Chin should be parallel to the floor and you should try to look straight ahead.
- ✓ Now breathe!

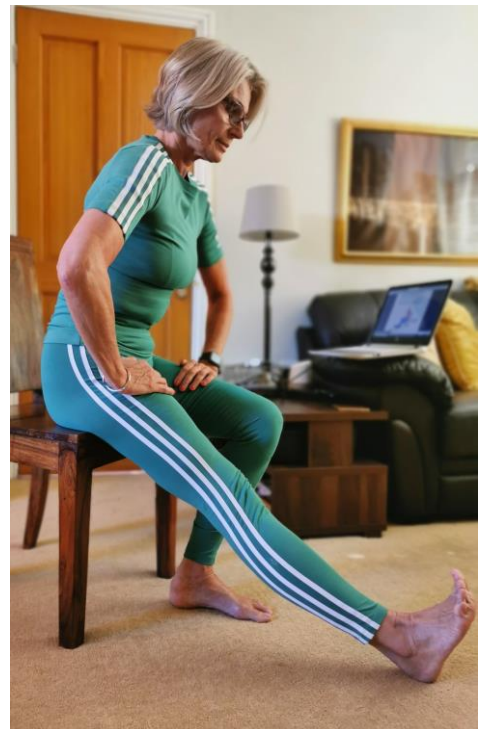
Stretch 1 Hamstring (Back of thigh) Stretch

First check your posture

Sitting forward on your chair (if you feel at all unsteady hold onto the sides of the chair) slide one foot away from you until your leg is as straight as possible and your heel is resting on the floor.

Remembering to keep your back long, lean forwards bending from the hips. Try to support your weight by placing your hands on the opposite thigh. Do once on each leg and hold for about 6 – 8 seconds.

Remember to breathe!



Benefits:

Increases flexibility around the hip. Can help to reduce lower back pain. Helps with reaching down to pick things up from the floor or putting your shoes on. Improves walking and balance

Alternatives:

Straighten the leg as far as possible.

Stretch 2 Chest Stretch

First check your posture

Holding on towards the back of the chair with both hands – squeeze your shoulders together whilst keeping your back straight.

Hold for about 6 – 8 seconds.

Remember to breathe!



Benefits:

Helps to improve posture and helps with breathing. Can also help with digestion

Alternatives:

Squeeze shoulders together and hold. You should feel the stretch across the chest and shoulders.

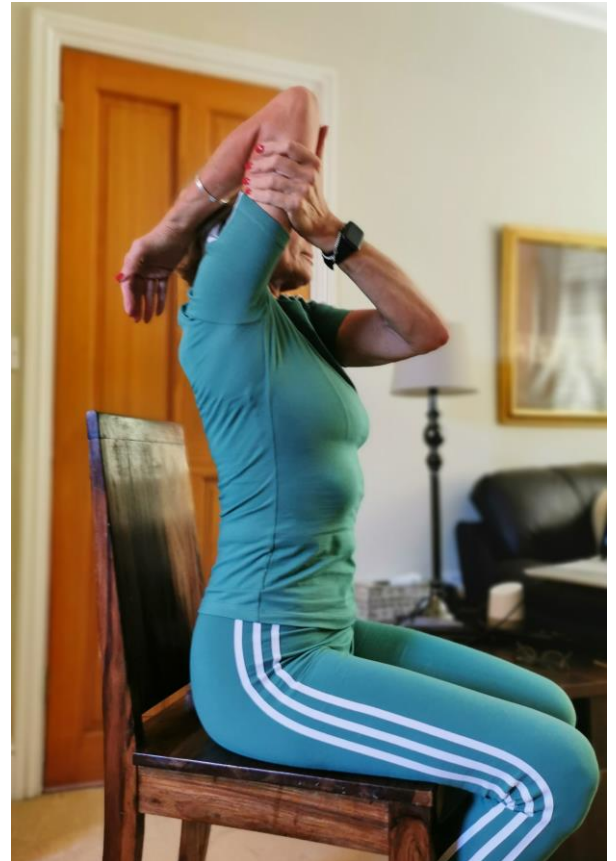
Stretch 3 Back of Arm (Triceps) Stretch

First check your posture

Place one hand on your shoulder. Using the other hand ease the elbow upwards and allow your hand to slide down your back.

Do once on each arm and hold for about 6 – 8 seconds.

Remember to breathe!



Benefits:

Increases flexibility around the shoulder. Helps with activities which involve reaching up or behind

Alternatives:

Ease the arm up as far as you can.

Stretch 4 Calf Stretch

First check your posture

Sitting forward on your chair (if you feel at all unsteady hold onto the sides of the chair) slide one foot away from you until your leg is as straight as possible and your heel is resting on the floor.

Now pull your toes back towards your shins and lean slightly forwards from the hips.

Imagine pushing your heel away from you. Do once on each leg and hold for about 6 – 8 seconds.

Remember to breathe!



Benefits:

Helps to improve walking and bending. Can help to reduce swelling around the ankles.

Alternatives:

Straighten the leg as far as possible and lift toes

Stretch 5 Side Stretch

First check your posture

Holding onto the chair with one hand and reach up towards the ceiling with the other.

Try to lift up as much as you can. Then try to reach a little further over your head.

Imagine you are trying to reach something from a high cupboard that is just out of your reach.

Do once on each arm and hold for about 6 – 8 seconds.

Remember to breathe!



Benefits:

Helps improve flexibility around the shoulder and trunk. Helps with activities which involve reaching up. Helps to improve posture.

Alternatives:

Reach up as far as you can. You should feel the stretch down the side of your trunk.