STRETCHING FOR YOUR HEALTH

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Physical activity can help you feel and function better and stretching your muscles can also help improve your overall health. Read about the benefits of regular stretches and commit to a routine that could improve your quality of life.

EVERYDAY STRETCHING

Regular stretching helps to keep your muscles strong and flexible, which can allow your joints to exercise with a greater range of motion. When you don't stretch, your muscles can shorten and tighten. Then when you engage in activity, your muscles may not be able to fully extend which can increase your risk of injury. As you age, it is normal to lose some flexibility, but stretching helps maintain the range of motion in your joints later into your life.

Stretching every day helps reduce body aches, and stress, and can even help improve posture. Stretching is beneficial whether or not you work out regularly and can help with tight hip and back muscles if you have a job where you may sit for long periods of time. Check out **these recommendations** for stretching your main muscle groups.

STRETCHING FOR WORKOUTS

Five to 10 minutes of light activity and a stretching routine before engaging in more intense activity can help lower your risk of injury. You should also cool down and stretch after workouts. If you are an athlete, talk to your healthcare provider or physical trainer about any stretches that could help prevent injuries or enhance performance in your sport of choice.

Dynamic stretches are more active movements where you don't hold the stretch in the end position, and these are usually done before exercise. Static stretches involve holding a stretch for between 10 and 30 seconds, and are most beneficial after you exercise.

STRETCH BREAKS AT WORK

Taking breaks to stretch at work is important whether your job is physically demanding or more sedentary. At Medcor we promote wellness breaks for our advocates to be active and stretch for their health. Try setting a reminder for yourself and taking a **stretch break** consistently to improve your performance at work.

References

1. The importance of stretching - Harvard Health
2. 9 Benefits of Stretching: How to Start, Safety Tips, and More (healthline.com)

GET STARTED

Stretching can help keep you safe and healthy for activities, but you need to do it regularly to experience all the benefits. If you commit to a regular stretching routine it can improve your overall flexibility, which can help prevent injuries at work and during activity, and help you maintain your full range of motion. A physical therapist or athletic trainer can help with a stretching routine that will help you reach your personal goals.