

FOUR STRETCHES TO MINIMIZE PAIN

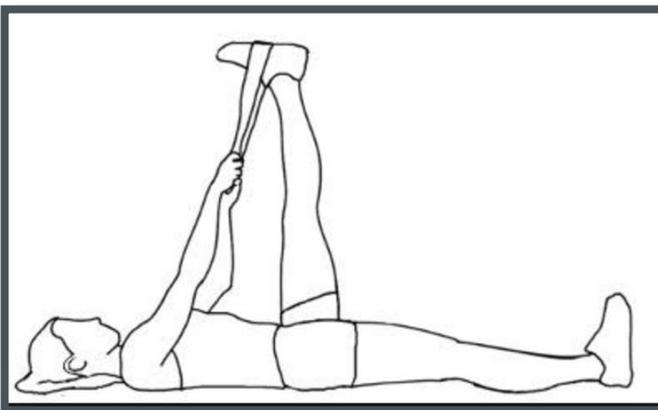
STRETCH # 1: PIRIFORMIS STRETCH



Slowly bring your left knee (and, along with it, your right ankle) towards your chest
If and when your left knee gets close enough to your chest, clasp your hands around your left hamstring muscle, just below your left knee
Use your hands and your left hip flexors to pull your left knee and right ankle towards your chest even more until you feel a firm stretch your right buttocks.

Hold for 30 seconds and repeat for the opposite side. Each piriformis stretch should be held for 5 seconds to start, and gradually increased to hold for 30 seconds, and repeated two times each day. Keep your lower back flat on the ground; do not jerk your body. Move slowly to stretch and to release.

STRETCH # 2: HAMSTRING STRETCH



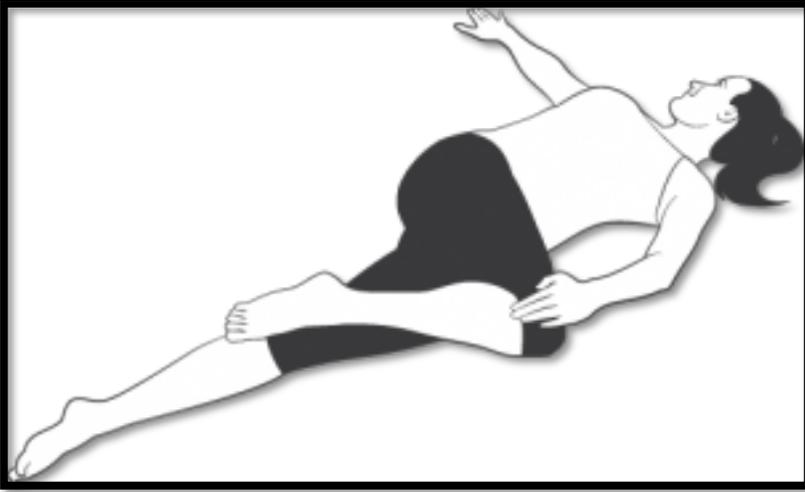
Lie on the back with both legs straight. Pull one leg up and straighten by holding on to a towel that is wrapped behind the foot until a mild stretch along the back of the thigh is felt. Keep your leg straight, your back flat on the floor and your foot flexed. Try to work up to holding each stretch for 30 seconds and repeat two times each day.



Breathing While You Stretch

When holding a stretch, take deep breaths, not shallow ones.
Breathe in through your nose and allow your abdomen to expand.
When you exhale, let the air escape through your mouth.

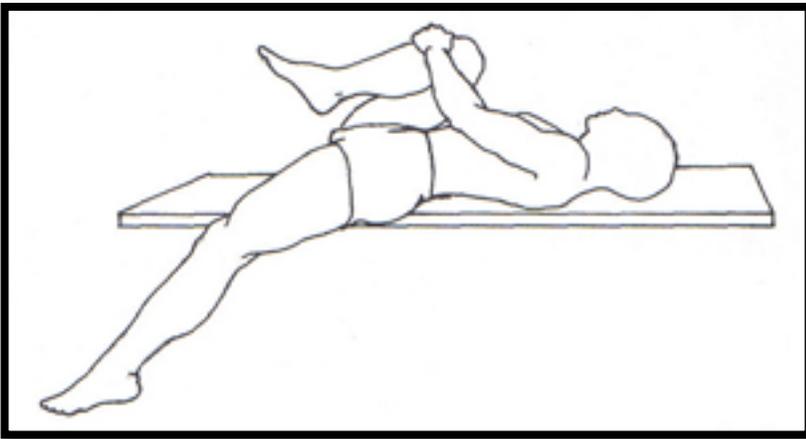
STRETCH # 3: LOW BACK STRETCH



Lie on your back. Hug your knees into your chest. Then, drop both knees over to one side as you twist your torso in the opposite direction. Try to keep your knees and hips in line with each other as you draw them toward the floor, and keep your chest as square to the ceiling as you can. Do not jerk your body. Move slowly to stretch and to release. Take a few deep breaths.

Hold this stretch for 30 seconds to 1 minute and then repeat on the other side.

STRETCH # 4: HIP FLEXOR STRETCH



Lie on your back on your bed. Allow one leg to hang off the side of the bed, as you grab the other knee with both hands. Pull your knee toward your chest as far as you can and hold this for 20-30 seconds. Repeat the stretch on the other side. Repeat this stretch twice a day, as long as you feel no pain. Again, move slowly to stretch and release. Take a few deep breaths.

BEFORE STARTING A NEW EXERCISE ROUTINE IT IS ADVISABLE TO CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR FIRST.