



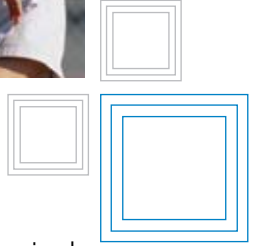
MASSACHUSETTS

# Physical Activity





MASSACHUSETTS



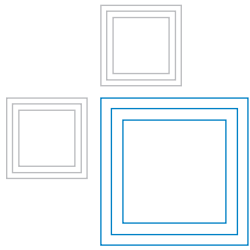
## Exercising for Better Health

According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health, regular physical activity substantially reduces the risk of heart disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S. It also decreases the risks of stroke, colon cancer, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure. In addition, it helps control weight; keeps bones, muscles, and joints healthy; reduces falls among older adults; helps to relieve arthritis pain; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and helps manage stress.

A good exercise program incorporates cardiovascular activity, strength training, and flexibility activities, but regular exercise doesn't have to be strenuous to be beneficial.

- Cardiovascular exercise (walking or jogging, for example) can help you get a better night's sleep and give you more energy.
- Cardiovascular exercise can help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol level.
- Strength training is good for your muscles and bones, and can reduce your risk of injury.
- Walking regularly can reduce your risk of obesity by as much as 30 percent.
- Stretching improves blood flow to muscles and reduces your risk of injury.
- Physical activity helps your body convert fat better, allowing you to generate more lean muscle mass.

For more information on the benefits of exercise, talk to your doctor or visit [www.bluecrossma.com](http://www.bluecrossma.com) for great interactive walking programs.



# Physical Fitness

Keep in mind that a good exercise program has three components:

- Cardiovascular activity
- Strength training
- Flexibility exercises

Cardiovascular exercise is the foundation of fitness. It increases your heart rate for the entire duration of the activity by using large muscle groups at a regular, even pace. And, raising your heart rate helps make your heart stronger and more efficient. Remember different programs and fitness levels call for different exercises (e.g., walking, jogging, running) so make sure to exercise at a pace that's right for you.

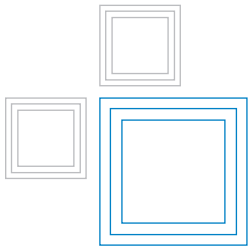
If you're a beginner or haven't exercised in a while, start exercising three days a week (every other day will help you adjust to your new routine). If you already exercise regularly—keep it up! And remember your goal—to get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. Don't have 30 minutes? No problem. Try 10 minutes in the morning, 10 minutes at lunch, and 10 minutes after dinner. It adds up to 30 minutes, and gives you the same benefits.

Strength training is good for your muscles and bones, and can reduce your risk of injury. Flexibility exercises improve blood flow to muscles, can reduce exercise-related muscle soreness, and can reduce your risk of injury.

Remember to warm up. Warming up does just that—it helps warm your muscles before you exercise. This helps you prevent injury by directing needed blood flow to your muscles, preparing your body for exercise. Warm up before aerobic exercise and strength training by walking for five minutes.

Stretching should always be part of your cooldown, and will help you increase flexibility and prevent muscle soreness. Cool down afterward by moving at a slower pace for five minutes. For example, if you just rode your bike for 30 minutes, pedal easily for five minutes to relax your muscles and let your body recover.

Remember, it's always a good idea to consult your doctor before increasing your physical activity.



## Physical Fitness *(continued)*

### Cardiovascular

When it comes to cardiovascular activity, it's all about options. Choose activities that interest you, and incorporate them into your exercise program.

If you can't find your favorite activity in the list below, just add it.

- aerobic dancing
- tennis
- in-line skating
- basketball
- running
- dancing
- skiing
- treadmill, elliptical, or stationary bike
- swimming
- ice skating
- jogging
- water aerobics
- karate
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Strength

Strength training is an important part of your overall fitness plan. Increasing your muscle mass will help you burn calories, increase bone density, feel strong and energized, get a better night's sleep, lose weight, and improve your balance, coordination, and mobility.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends supplementing cardiovascular activity with strength training at least twice a week.

You won't believe the results!

### Flexibility

You can develop flexibility at any age. Simple stretching exercises take only a few minutes to do, but will help you increase flexibility, decrease muscle soreness and joint stiffness, and increase your energy.

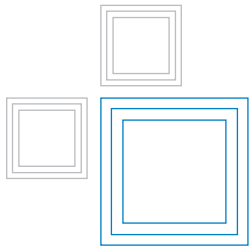
You should stretch after warming up and cooling down for cardiovascular exercises and strength training. Of course, you might like the benefits of stretching so much that you choose to do it every day. Yoga and tai chi are great ways to increase your flexibility.



MASSACHUSETTS

# Education

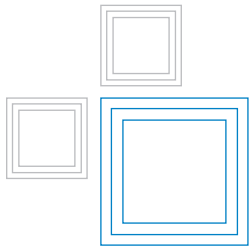




# Tips to Make Your Exercise Plan Stick

For many people, starting an exercise program is easy. However, sticking with it often proves challenging. The tips below don't necessarily apply to everyone, so be aware, make a plan, and stick to it.

- Exercise on your lunch-hour. Walk to and from errands. Slip small, five- to 10-minute walks into your day whenever you can.
- If you need to talk business with someone or need time to think something through, do it while walking.
- Try exercising early in the morning. The extra energy you get will make it all worthwhile. In addition, studies show that people who exercise in the morning are more likely to stick to their fitness routines.
- Buy new athletic shoes to motivate you to start and keep going.
- Always bring your gym shoes to work, so you can be ready to exercise at a moment's notice.
- When the weather doesn't cooperate, have a backup plan. Walk in a mall or join a fitness center with treadmills or a basketball court.
- Find a friend to exercise with. You can keep each other motivated.
- Get your friends or family together, and go for a walk before or after dinner.
- If you're walking alone, try bringing some music along. Just make sure that you can still hear what's going on around you.
- Treat yourself to some scenery. Try new routes, beaches, parks, or trails.
- Take advantage of the Appalachian Mountain Club discount available through your health plan, and save 20 percent on a one-year individual or family membership.
- When you park your car, park far away and walk to your destination.
- For a little extra motivation, reward yourself for completing short- and long-term goals. Goals could include walking two miles without resting, losing five pounds this month, lowering your cholesterol or blood pressure, or signing up for a 5K road race.
- Nothing motivates better than being able to see your progress, so keep an exercise log. Next time you need that extra bit of inspiration, just look how far you've come so far.
- Make sure you choose an activity that you enjoy and that suits you. If you're not enjoying your activity, you are less likely to stick with it.



# Activities, Intensity, and You

## Light-intensity Activities

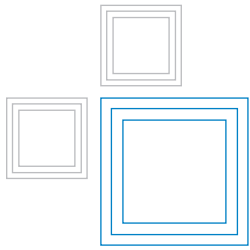
- Walking slowly
- Golfing in a powered cart
- Swimming with very light effort
- Gardening or pruning
- Bicycling with very light effort
- Dusting or vacuuming
- Light stretching or warm-up exercises

## Moderate-intensity Activities

- Walking briskly
- Golfing while pulling or carrying clubs
- Swimming recreationally
- Mowing lawn with a power mower
- Playing tennis (doubles)
- Bicycling five to nine miles per hour on level terrain with few hills
- Scrubbing floors or washing windows
- Lifting weights with machines or free weights

## Vigorous-intensity Activities

- Racewalking, jogging, or running
- Swimming laps
- Mowing lawn with a hand mower
- Playing tennis (singles)
- Bicycling more than 10 miles per hour or on steep, uphill terrain
- Moving or pushing furniture
- Jumping rope



# Adult Fitness and Physical Activity Resources

Exercise and regular physical activity are an important part of maintaining a healthy weight. The following resources can help you get moving.

## Aim for a Healthy Weight

The National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute can help you get motivated and stay active. For more information, please visit [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/index.htm#obesity](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/index.htm#obesity) or call the NHLBI Health Information center at **1-301-592-8573**.

## National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

This area of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website includes information on physical fitness and nutrition in one online location. You'll have access to guidelines and handouts, as well as information on physical activity campaigns, U.S. fitness statistics, bone health, and obesity. For more information, please visit [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/) or call the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at **1-800-VCDC-INFO (323-4636)**.

## American Obesity Association

This website features both educational and advocacy information related to obesity. For more information, please visit [www.obesity.org](http://www.obesity.org) or call the American Obesity Association at **1-301-563-6526**.

## AHealthyMe.com

**A Healthy Me!**<sup>®</sup> (available in Spanish at [www.paramisalud.com](http://www.paramisalud.com)) features online **Self-Care Centers** for 18 different conditions—including one on weight control— where you can read about the latest weight-control news and studies, how to calculate your BMI, calorie needs, access tools, and much more. Most importantly, we update the information on **AHealthyMe.com** continually, giving you the most up-to-date resources available. To learn more, visit [www.ahealthyme.com](http://www.ahealthyme.com).

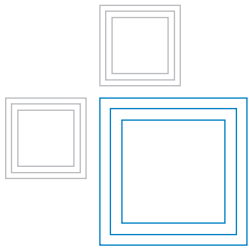




MASSACHUSETTS

# Planning



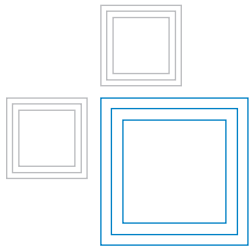


# What's Your Fitness IQ?

You probably already know that exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight, build strong bones, reduce your risk of heart disease, fend off depression, and boost your immune system. You have plenty of reasons to get out there and just do it. But are you doing it right? See if you can tell which of the following statements are true.

- 1. You should start every workout by stretching your muscles.
  - True
  - False
- 2. Getting thirsty is your first signal to drink water.
  - True
  - False
- 3. Lifting weights can help you shed excess pounds.
  - True
  - False
- 4. Stomach crunches are the quickest route to a flat tummy.
  - True
  - False
- 5. To get any benefit from cardiovascular exercise, you need to keep it up for 30 minutes straight.
  - True
  - False
- 6. You shouldn't try to exercise your way through a bad cold, flu, or other illness.
  - True
  - False

*continued*



## What's Your Fitness IQ Answer Key

### 1. You should start every workout by stretching your muscles.

**False:** Warm up first with at least five minutes of light exercise. Stretching while your muscles are cold will not make you more flexible and could result in a pulled muscle.

### 2. Getting thirsty is your first signal to drink water.

**False:** If you feel thirsty, you're already on your way to dehydration. Drink one cup of water before you start your workout, one every 20 minutes during exercise, and one after.

### 3. Lifting weights can help you shed excess pounds.

**True:** Lifting weights builds muscle. Getting stronger will also make aerobic exercise easier and more fun. You're more likely to stick with your exercise and your weight-loss plan.

### 4. Stomach crunches are the quickest route to a flat tummy.

**False:** The only way to melt the fat around your middle (or anywhere else) is by burning calories. Crunches will strengthen your abs, though, which can improve your posture and protect your lower back from injury.

### 5. To get any benefit from cardiovascular exercise, you need to keep it up for 30 minutes straight.

**False:** Experts do recommend getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, but breaking up your workout into 10-minute segments will do the trick just fine.

### 6. You shouldn't try to exercise your way through a bad cold, flu, or other illness.

**True:** Exercise will only further stress an immune system already under siege. Give yourself some time off and you'll recover faster.

## References

*Stretching: A Key to Avoiding Athletic Injuries*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

*Weight Training: More Than Just a Hard Body*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

"ACSM Revises Guidelines for Exercise to Maintain Fitness," *American Family Physician*, Jan. 15, 1999; <http://www.aafp.org/afp/990115ap/special.html>.

Sparling PB, Millard-Stafford M., "Keeping Sports Participants Safe in Hot Weather," *The Physician and Sports Medicine*, Vol. 27, No. 7, July 1999.

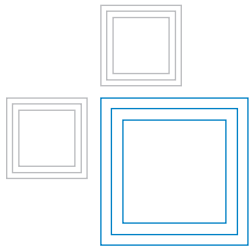
Reviewed by Lisa Tartamella, M.S., R.D., an ambulatory nutrition specialist at Yale-New Haven Hospital in Connecticut and a contributing author to *The Yale Guide to Children's Nutrition*.

Our reviewers are members of Consumer Health Interactive's medical advisory board.

First published September 30, 1998.

Last updated November 12, 2003.

Copyright © 1998 Consumer Health Interactive.

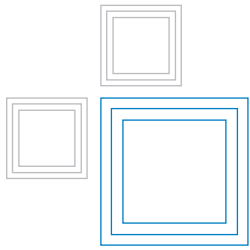


# What Keeps You From Being More Active?

Listed below are reasons that people give to describe why they do not get as much physical activity as they think they should. Please read each statement and indicate how likely you are to say each of the following statements:

How likely are you to say...	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
1. My day is so busy now, I just don't think I can make the time to include physical activity in my regular schedule.	3	2	1	0
2. None of my family members or friends like to do anything active, so I don't have a chance to exercise.	3	2	1	0
3. I'm just too tired after work to exercise.	3	2	1	0
4. I've been thinking about getting more exercise, but I just can't seem to get started.	3	2	1	0
5. I'm getting older so exercise can be risky.	3	2	1	0
6. I don't get enough exercise because I have never learned skills for any sport.	3	2	1	0
7. I don't have access to jogging trails, swimming pools, bike paths, etc.	3	2	1	0
8. Physical activity takes too much time away from other commitments—work, family, etc.	3	2	1	0
9. I'm embarrassed about how I will look when I exercise with others.	3	2	1	0
10. I don't get enough sleep as it is. I just couldn't get up early or stay up late to get some exercise.	3	2	1	0
11. It's easier for me to find excuses not to exercise than to go out and do something.	3	2	1	0
12. I know of too many people who have hurt themselves by overdoing it with exercise.	3	2	1	0
13. I really can't see learning a new sport at my age.	3	2	1	0
14. It's just too expensive. You have to take a class, join a club, or buy the right equipment.	3	2	1	0
15. My free times during the day are too short to include exercise.	3	2	1	0
16. My usual social activities with family or friends do not include physical activity.	3	2	1	0

© Registered Marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. © 2008 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts HMO Blue, Inc.



## What Keeps You From Being More Active? *(continued)*

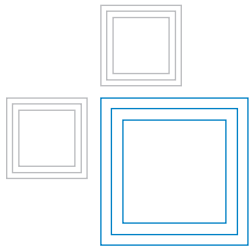
How likely are you to say...	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
17. I'm too tired during the week and I need the weekend to catch up on my rest.	3	2	1	0
18. I want to get more exercise, but I just can't seem to make myself stick to anything.	3	2	1	0
19. I'm afraid I might injure myself or have a heart attack.	3	2	1	0
20. I'm not good enough at any physical activity to make it fun.	3	2	1	0
21. If we had exercise facilities and showers at work, then I would be more likely to exercise.	3	2	1	0

### Score Yourself

- Enter the circled number in the spaces provided, putting the number for statement 1 on line 1, statement 2 on line 2, and so on.
- Add the three scores on each line. Your barriers to physical activity fall into one or more of seven categories: lack of time, social influences, lack of energy, lack of willpower, fear of injury, lack of skill, and lack of resources. A score of 5 or above in any category shows that this is an important barrier for you to overcome.

$\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{8} + \frac{\quad}{15} = \frac{\quad}{\text{lack of time}}$	$\frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{12} + \frac{\quad}{19} = \frac{\quad}{\text{fear of injury}}$
$\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{9} + \frac{\quad}{16} = \frac{\quad}{\text{social influences}}$	$\frac{\quad}{6} + \frac{\quad}{13} + \frac{\quad}{20} = \frac{\quad}{\text{lack of skill}}$
$\frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{10} + \frac{\quad}{17} = \frac{\quad}{\text{lack of energy}}$	$\frac{\quad}{7} + \frac{\quad}{14} + \frac{\quad}{21} = \frac{\quad}{\text{lack of resources}}$
$\frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{11} + \frac{\quad}{18} = \frac{\quad}{\text{lack of willpower}}$	

Content provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



# Suggestions for Overcoming Barriers

## Lack of Time

- Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least one 30-minute or three 10 minute time slots within your day that you could use for physical activity.
- Add physical activity to your daily routine. For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize school activities around physical activity, walk the dog, exercise while you watch TV, park farther away from your destination, etc.
- Make time for physical activity. For example, walk, jog, or swim during your lunch hour, or take fitness breaks instead of coffee breaks.
- Select activities requiring minimal time, such as walking, jogging, or stair climbing.

## Social Influences

- Explain your interest in physical activity to friends and family. Ask them to support your efforts.
- Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise.
- Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a fitness facility, such as the YMCA, or a group, like a hiking club.

## Lack of Energy

- Schedule physical activity during times of the day or week when you feel energetic.
- Convince yourself that if you give it a chance, physical activity will increase your energy level. Then, try it.

## Lack of Willpower

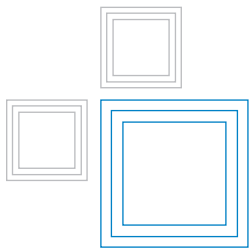
- Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule and write it on your calendar.
- Invite a friend to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars.
- Join an exercise group or class.

## Fear of Injury

- Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury.
- Learn how to exercise appropriately considering your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status.
- Choose activities involving minimum risk.

## Lack of Skill

- Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging.
- Exercise with friends who are at the same skill level as you are.
- Find a friend who is willing to teach you some new skills.
- Take a class to develop new skills.



## Suggestions for Overcoming Barriers *(continued)*

### Lack of Resources

- Select activities that require minimal facilities or equipment, such as walking, jogging, jumping rope, or calisthenics.
- Identify inexpensive, convenient resources available in your community (community education programs, park and recreation programs, worksite programs, etc.)

### Weather Conditions

- Develop a set of regular activities that are always available regardless of weather (indoor cycling, aerobic dance, indoor swimming, stair climbing, jumping rope, mall walking, dancing, gymnasium games, etc.)
- Consider outdoor activities that depend on weather conditions (cross-country skiing, outdoor swimming, outdoor tennis, etc.) as “bonuses”—extra activities possible when weather and circumstances permit.

### Travel

- Put a jump rope in your suitcase and jump rope.
- Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels.
- Stay in places with swimming pools or exercise facilities.
- Join a fitness facility, such as the YMCA or YWCA, allowing access privileges while away from home.
- Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.
- Bring portable music selections so you can listen while you walk.

### Family Obligations

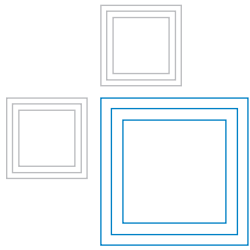
- Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has children.
- Exercise with the kids—go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids and exercise together. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.
- Hire a babysitter and look at the cost as a worthwhile investment in your physical and mental health.
- Jump rope, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids are busy playing or sleeping.
- Try to exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).
- Encourage exercise facilities to provide child care or babysitting services.

### Retirement Years

- Look upon your retirement as an opportunity to become more active instead of less. Spend more time gardening, walking the dog, and playing with your grandchildren. Children with short legs and grandparents with slower gaits are often great walking partners.
- Learn a new skill you’ve always been interested in, such as ballroom dancing, square dancing, or swimming.
- Now that you have the time, make regular physical activity a part of every day. Go for a walk every morning or every evening before dinner. Treat yourself to an exercise bike and ride every day while reading a favorite book or magazine.

Content provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

© Registered Marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. © 2008 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts HMO Blue, Inc.



# My Exercise Plan

What Days, Time, Activities Will Work For Me:

	Time	Activity
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Filling out the table above and writing your answers to the questions below will help you stay committed to your exercise plan and help you get and stay in shape. Consider making a copy of your exercise plan and giving it to someone that will be supportive as you take steps to get healthier (e.g., doctor, partner, a physically active friend).

What barriers might get in the way of my exercise plan? (e.g., too busy, bad weather) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What strategies can I use to overcome these barriers? (e.g., exercise first thing in the morning before the day gets too hectic, have jump rope handy in case of bad weather) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My short-term goals (one week to three weeks) are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My long-term goals (one month and longer) are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I achieve a short-term goal, I'll reward myself with: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I achieve a long-term goal, I'll reward myself with: \_\_\_\_\_

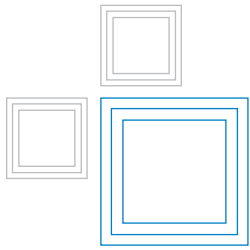
\_\_\_\_\_



MASSACHUSETTS

# Activities





# Stretching and Strength Training

Getting regular physical activity is one of the best things you can do to live a healthier life. And, when you add strength and flexibility to whatever activity you already enjoy, you'll get even more out of being active and fit.

Stretching is a great way to prevent injury. When done properly, stretching increases flexibility by creating a greater range of motion around a joint.

Strength training (sometimes referred to as weight training) helps build muscle strength. The key to making your muscles stronger is working them against resistance, such as weight or gravity. Strength training can help improve your overall fitness level and build strength. In some cases, weight training can help rehabilitate or prevent sports injuries that are common, such as tennis elbow.

To help you add strength and flexibility to your daily routine, review the following exercises carefully. Start out slowly, and then make all of them a regular part of your physical activity.

## Stretching and Strength Training for the Lower Body

### Quadriceps Stretch

This excellent stretch should be a regular part of your cooldown. Strength training exercises such as squats, step-ups, and knee extensions focus on strengthening the quadriceps (thigh) muscles. This stretch will help these muscles relax and make them more flexible.

1. Stand next to a counter or sturdy chair with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees straight—but not locked.

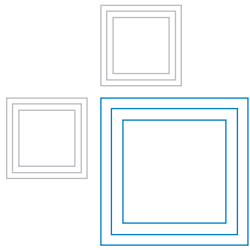
2. Hold a chair or counter for balance with your left hand. Bend your right leg back and grab your right foot or ankle in your right hand until your thigh is perpendicular to the ground. Make sure you stand up straight—don't lean forward. (If you can't grab your ankle in your hand, just keep your leg as close to perpendicular as possible and hold the bend.) You should feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.
3. Hold the stretch for a slow count of 20 to 30 seconds, breathing throughout.
4. Release your right ankle and repeat the stretch with the other leg.



### Make Sure You:

Breathe throughout the stretch and concentrate on relaxing. Stand up straight and look ahead. Don't lock your supporting knee.

*continued*



## Stretching and Strength Training *(continued)*

### Hamstring/Calf Stretch

If touching your toes with straight legs seems too difficult, you're not alone. Many people have tight muscles in the back of the legs. This stretch will give these muscles more flexibility and make it easier for you to bend and reach.

1. Stand facing a sturdy chair.
2. Slowly bend forward at the hip, keeping your legs straight without locking your knees. Rest your hands on the seat of the chair with your elbows slightly bent, feeling a stretch in the back of your upper and lower leg. Keep your back flat.
3. Hold the stretch for a slow count of 20 to 30 seconds, breathing throughout.
4. Release the stretch and repeat.

**Note:** If this stretch is too easy and you're not feeling a comfortable pull in the back of your legs, try bending your elbows more. Try going as far as to rest your forearms and elbows on the seat of the chair. Just make sure you are bending at the hips and keeping your back straight.



#### Make Sure You:

Breathe throughout the stretch and concentrate on relaxing. Keep your back straight as you bend toward the chair.

### Squats

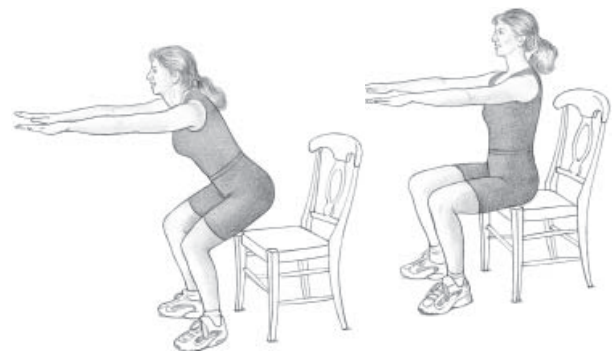
A great exercise for strengthening hips, thighs, and buttocks. Before long, you'll find that walking, jogging, and climbing stairs are a snap!

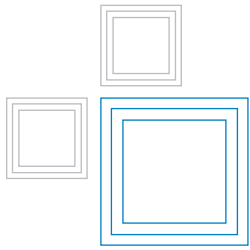
1. Stand directly in front of a sturdy chair. Your feet should be slightly more than shoulder-width apart. Extend your arms so that they are parallel to the ground.
2. Place your weight more on your heels than on the balls of your feet. Bend your knees as you lower your buttocks toward the chair in a slow, controlled motion, while you count to four.
3. Pause. Then, slowly rise back up to a standing position as you count to two. Keep your knees over your ankles and your back straight.
4. Repeat the squat 10 times. This equals one set. Rest for about one minute. Then complete a second set of 10 squats.



#### Make Sure You:

Don't sit down too quickly. Don't lean your weight too far forward or onto your toes when standing up.



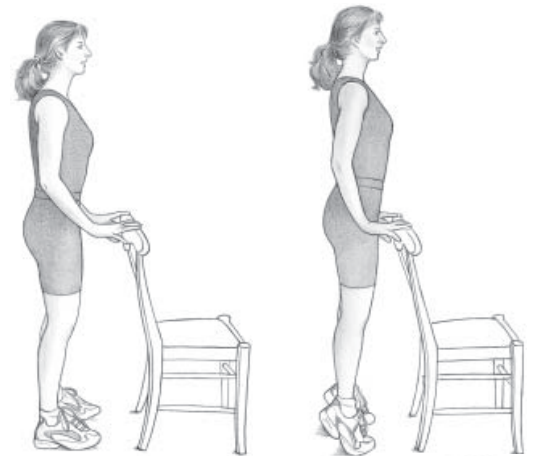


## Stretching and Strength Training *(continued)*

### Calf Raises

If a walk in the park no longer seems easy or enjoyable, the calf raise exercise is for you! It will help make that stroll in the park fun and relaxing by strengthening your calves and ankles and restoring stability and balance.

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart near a counter or sturdy chair. Use the chair or counter for balance.
2. Slowly push up as far as you can onto the balls of your feet as you count to four. Hold this position for two to four seconds.
3. Then, slowly lower your heels back to the floor as you count to four.
4. Complete 10 calf raises for the first set. Rest for about one minute. Then complete a second set of 10 calf raises.



### Make Sure You:

Don't lean on the counter or chair—use it for balance only. Breathe regularly throughout the exercise.



### Advanced Move:

Doing this calf raise exercise on a staircase will increase its intensity.

### Stretching for the Upper Body

#### Neck, Upper Back, and Shoulder Stretch

This easy stretch targets another group of muscles that are easily tensed and stressed—the neck, back, and shoulders. Stretch after strength training and during any activity that makes you feel stiff, such as sitting at a desk. You'll find it will give you energy.

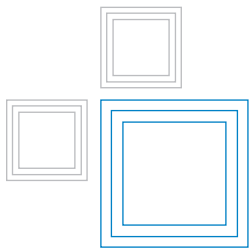
1. Stand (or sit) with your feet shoulder-width apart, your knees straight but not locked, and your hands clasped in front of you. Rotate your hands so that your palms face the ground. Then raise your arms to about chest height.
2. Press your palms away from your body and feel a stretch in your neck and upper back, and along your shoulders.
3. Hold the stretch for a slow count of 20 to 30 seconds, breathing throughout.
4. Release the stretch and repeat.



### Make Sure You:

Breathe throughout the stretch. Don't curve or arch your back.

*continued*

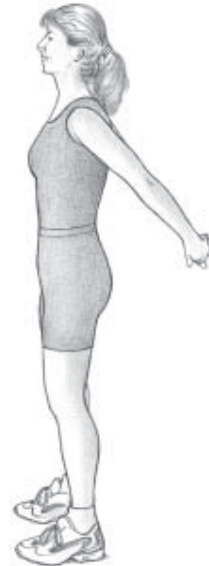


## Stretching and Strength Training *(continued)*

### Chest and Arm Stretch

This simple reaching stretch will improve the flexibility in your arms and chest and in the front of your shoulders.

1. Stand with your arms at your sides and your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Extend both arms behind your back and clasp your hands together. Retract your shoulders if possible.
3. Hold the stretch for a slow count of 20 to 30 seconds, breathing throughout.
4. Release the stretch and repeat.



#### Make Sure You:

Breathe throughout the stretch.

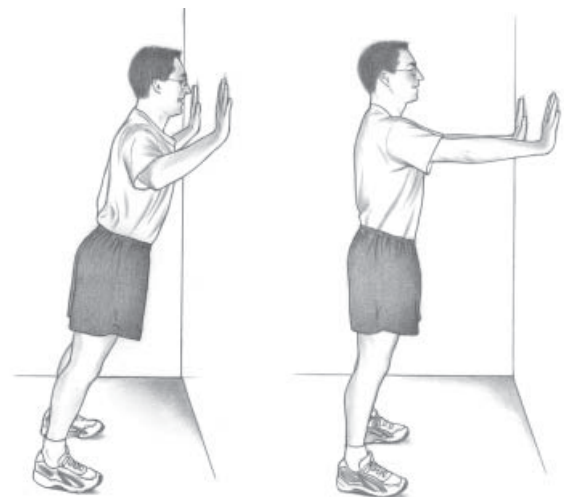
Keep your back straight, relax your shoulders, and look straight ahead.

### Strength Training for the Upper Body

#### Wall Pushups

This exercise is a modified version of the pushup you may have done years ago in physical education classes. It is easier than a pushup and you don't need to get down on the floor—but it will help to strengthen your arms, shoulders, and chest.

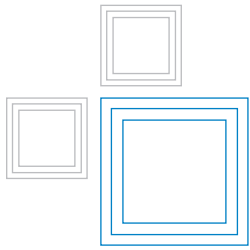
1. Find a wall that is clear of any objects such as wall hangings and windows. Stand a little farther than arm's length from the wall. Face the wall, lean your body forward, and place your palms flat against the wall at shoulder height and shoulder-width apart.
2. Bend your elbows as you lower your upper body toward the wall in a slow, controlled motion as you count to four. Keep your feet planted.
3. Pause. Then, slowly push yourself back until your arms are straight as you count to four. Make sure you don't lock your elbows.
4. Repeat the wall pushup 10 times for one set. Rest for about one minute. Then do a second set of 10 wall pushups.



#### Make Sure You:

Keep your hands planted on the wall for each set. Don't round or arch your back.

*continued*



## Stretching and Strength Training *(continued)*

### Biceps Curl

Does a gallon of milk feel a lot heavier than it used to? After a few weeks of doing the biceps curl, lifting that eight-pound jug will be a cinch!

1. Stand or sit in a chair with a dumbbell in each hand. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart with your arms at your sides and your palms facing your thighs.
2. Rotate your forearms and slowly lift the weights as you count to two. Your palms should be facing in toward your shoulders. Keep your upper arms and elbows close to your sides—as if you had a newspaper tucked under your arm.
3. Pause. Then, slowly lower the dumbbells back toward your thighs as you count to four. Rotate your forearms so that your arms are again at your sides, palms facing your thighs.
4. Repeat 10 times for one set. Rest for about one minute. Then complete a second set of 10 repetitions.
5. Make sure to start with light weights—two to five pounds. When the weight feels easy to lift throughout all of the repetitions, you can increase it by one to two pounds.



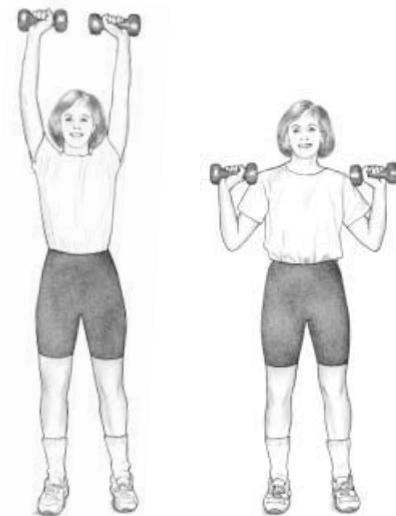
### Make Sure You:

Don't let your upper arms or elbows move away from the sides of your body. Keep your wrists straight.

### Overhead Shoulder Press

This useful exercise targets several muscles in the arms, upper back, and shoulders. It can also help firm the back of your upper arms and make reaching for objects in high cupboards easier.

1. Stand or sit in a chair with feet shoulder-width apart. Pick up a dumbbell in each hand. Raise your hands with your palms and forearms facing forward, until the dumbbells are level with your shoulders and parallel to the floor.
2. Slowly push the dumbbells up over your head until your arms are fully extended as you count to two. Make sure you don't lock your elbows.
3. Pause. Then, slowly lower the dumbbells back to shoulder level as you count to four, bringing your elbows down close to your sides.
4. Repeat 10 times for one set. Rest for about one minute. Then complete a second set of 10 repetitions.
5. Make sure to start with light weights—two to five pounds. When the weight feels easy to lift, you can increase it by one to two pounds.



### Make Sure You:

Don't let your upper arms or elbows move away from the sides of your body. Keep your wrists straight.



MASSACHUSETTS