

DO YOU KNOW THE
BENEFITS OF

STRETCHING?



- 1) **Increased Flexibility & Joint Range of Motion:** Flexible muscles can improve your daily performance. Tasks such as lifting packages or bending to tie your shoes become easier and less tiring. Flexibility tends to diminish as you get older, but you can regain and maintain it.
- 2) **Improved Circulation:** Stretching increases blood flow to your muscles. Blood flowing to your muscles brings nourishment and gets rid of waste in the muscle tissue. Improved circulation can also help shorten recovery time if you've had any muscle injuries.
- 3) **Better Posture:** Frequent stretching can help keep your muscles from getting tight, allowing you to maintain proper posture. Good posture can minimize discomfort and keep aches and pains at a minimum.
- 4) **Stress Relief:** Stretching relaxes tight, tense muscles that often accompany stress. Taking slow, deep breaths while stretching also helps to calm your body down.
- 5) **Enhanced Coordination:** Maintaining the full range-of-motion through your joints keeps you in better balance. Coordination and balance will help keep you mobile and less prone to injury from falls, especially as you get older. **-MAYO CLINIC**

"Do It Right" Tips

WARM UP FIRST

Stretching cold muscles increases your risk of pulling them. Warm-up by walking while gently pumping your arms, or do your favorite exercise at low intensity for 5 minutes.

HOLD FOR AT LEAST 30 SECONDS

It takes time to lengthen tissues safely. Hold your stretches for at least 30 seconds, 60 for a really tight muscle or problem area.

DON'T BOUNCE

Bouncing as you stretch can cause small tears in the muscle which leaves scar tissue as the muscle heals. The scar tissue tightens the muscle even further, making you even less flexible – and prone to pain.

FOCUS ON A PAIN-FREE STRETCH

If you feel pain as you stretch, you've gone too far. Back off to the point when you don't feel any pain, then hold in that position.