

WHS Fact Sheet – Legs and Back Stretches

Legs and Back Stretches

The best thing for your legs and back is to avoid sitting for long periods of time. Incorporating movement by standing and walking regularly will assist in decreasing the risk of muscular tightness and discomfort. To complete any stretches of the legs and back, it is important to remember to:

- Use slow and gentle movements
- Only stretch as far as you feel comfortable
- Breathe normally – do not hold your breath
- Stretch both sides of your body

Note: Seek medical advice prior to starting new stretches if you have an injury or medical condition.

Stretch One

- This stretch can be performed in a standing or sitting position.
- Start in a neutral position – feet shoulder width apart and flat on the floor, arms relaxed down by your side, head facing forward.
- Reach both hands straight up towards the ceiling.
- Slowly bend your trunk to one side. You should feel the stretch on the opposite side.
- Hold this position for 10-15 seconds before returning to the starting position.
- Repeat the stretch on the other side.



Figure 1. Stretch One

Looking after yourself

- Vary tasks

Repetitive movements performed over a long period of time are not the body's best friend. Break up tasks regularly throughout the day to give some muscle groups a break and allow another to be more active. This may mean completing some hardcopy reading for 20 minutes prior to completing an hour of computer based tasks, or packing/unpacking a trolley of boxes varied with a less physical task.

- Take regular breaks – these do not need to be long!

A few minutes to get up and walk around the office and complete 4 x 30 second stretches will not take more than 5 minutes to complete. You may actually be more productive and you will feel a lot better by the end of the day.

- Drink plenty of water

Keep a water bottle or cup on your desk. We tend to notice symptoms of discomfort when we do not drink enough water. This way you can guarantee you will get up and move around to refill your water bottle/cup and go to the bathroom

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Stretch Two

- Sit upright and facing forwards. Feet shoulder width apart.
- Raise one foot off the floor and straighten your leg. The opposite foot remains on the floor.
- Slowly point your toes towards the ceiling as far as you feel comfortable. Hold this position for 10-15 seconds.
- Slowly lower point your toes forward (away from you) as far as you feel comfortable. Hold this position for 10-15 seconds.
- Return to the starting position with both feet on the floor.
- Repeat the stretch on the opposite side.



Figure 2. Stretch Two

If additional information is needed, please contact the [WHS Unit](#)