

Physical Therapy Department

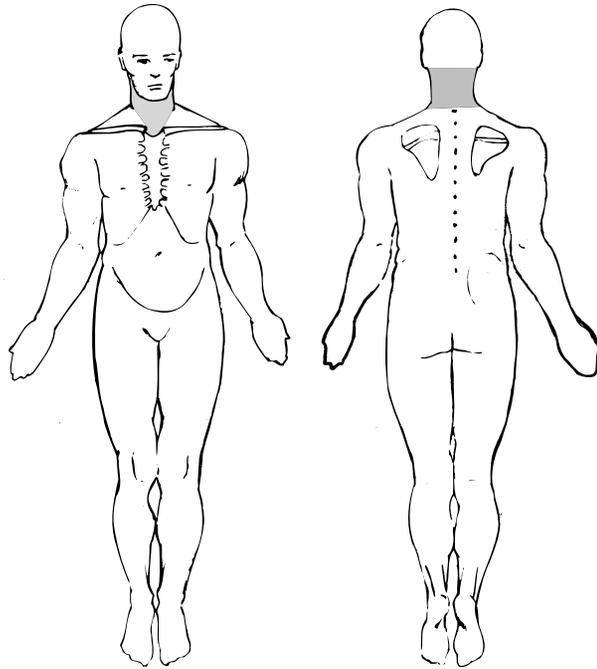
Full Body Flexibility Exercises



GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. It takes time to make a large degree of progress with stretching exercises.
2. The exercises in each group are arranged in order of difficulty. The easiest exercises are at the beginning of each section, and are followed by progressively more difficult exercises. Select the simple exercises to begin stretching a muscle group. The muscles must be conditioned slowly to greater degrees of stretch.
3. Be sure to warm-up the muscles gradually before doing any stretching exercises. Whenever possible, wear sweats to help keep the muscles warm.
4. These exercises are done slowly with no jerking or bouncing movements. One should move into the stretching position slowly, continuing until a good amount of stretch on the muscles is felt. **ONE SHOULD NOT STRETCH TO THE POINT OF PAIN.**
5. After reaching a good stretch position, hold that position. It should be held 10-15 seconds at first and gradually, over a period of weeks, the time should be increased to 45-60 seconds.
6. The muscles being stretched should be as relaxed as possible. Concentrate on relaxing the muscles when they are being stretched.
7. Both sides of the body should be stretched.
8. When stretching exercise is completed, release the body slowly from the position. This is important when doing stretching exercises. Sudden releases can be uncomfortable and sometimes painful.
9. Daily stretching is important in achieving good gains in flexibility.

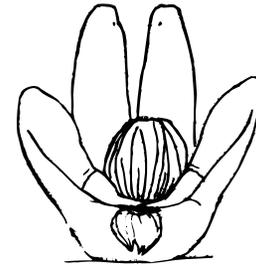
NECK EXERCISES



1. Assume position shown, pull the head to one side until a stretching is felt, and hold. Pull the head to the opposite side of the body until a stretch is felt, and hold.



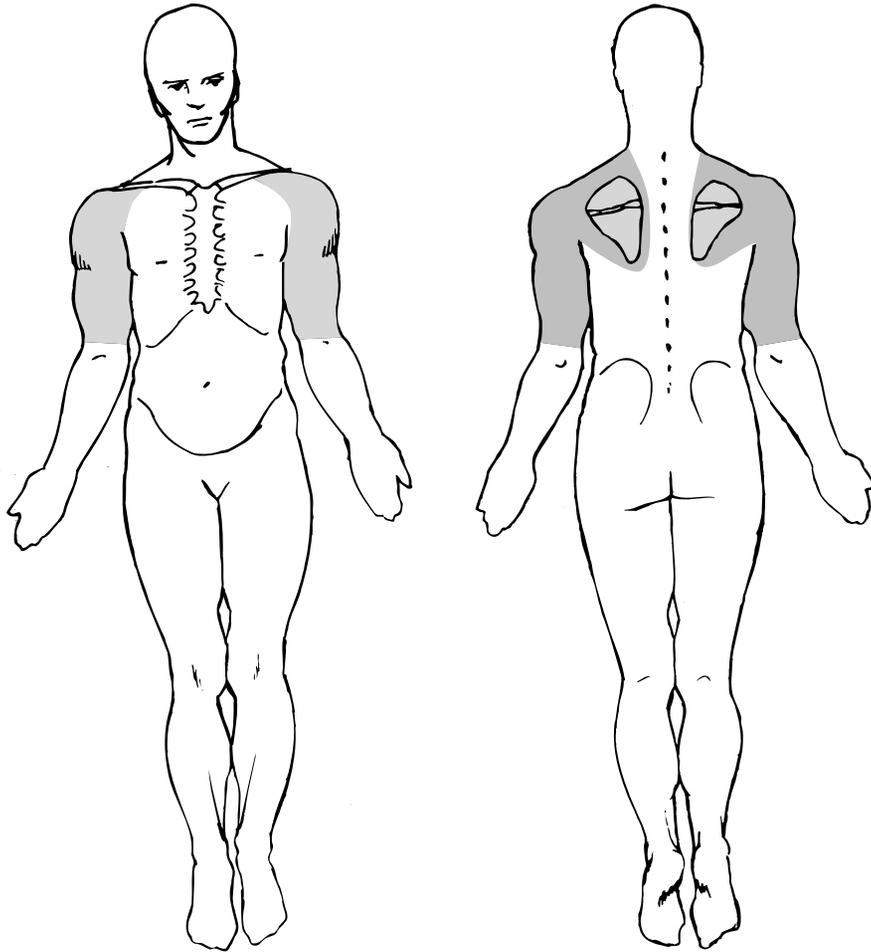
2. From a back lying position, raise the knees and place the hands behind the head as shown. The head is then pulled forward until a stretch is felt, and hold.



3. Assume position shown. Tuck left hand in between thigh and calf to stabilize shoulder. Pull right shoulder until a stretch is felt and hold.



SHOULDER-TRICEPS-BICEPS EXERCISES



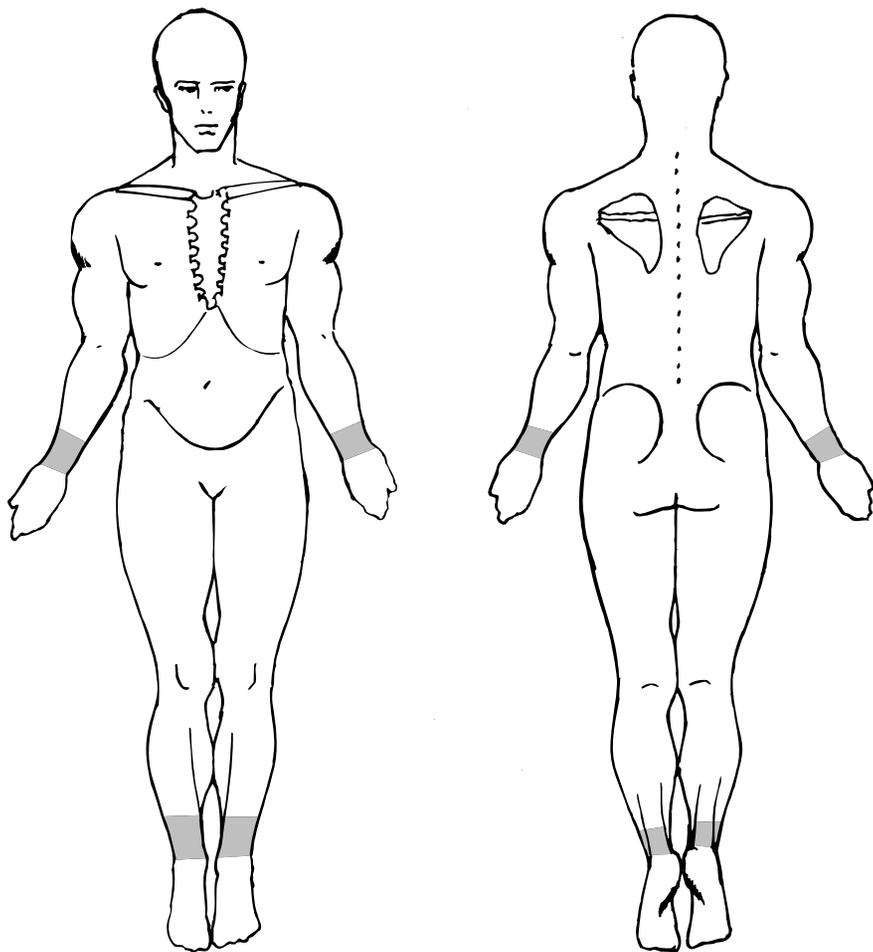
1. Assume position as shown. Place the palms flat on the floor and grip something like a rug with the hands. Now pull the body forward with the hands while pushing the buttocks to the rear over the feet. When a stretch is felt, hold.



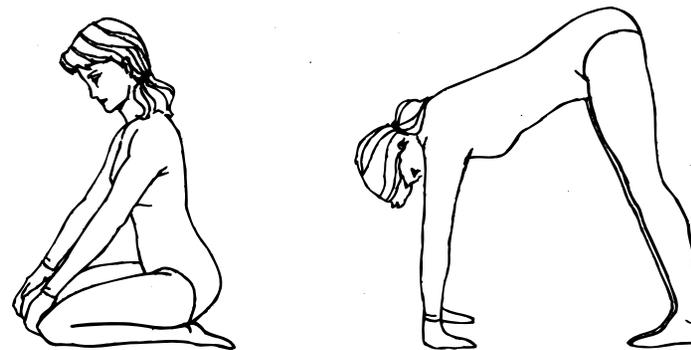
2. Bring the right hand over the head and reach down as far as possible. At the same time, reach around with the left hand, the palm facing out; bring the left hand up and grab the right hand with the fingers. You can use a towel if you have less flexibility.



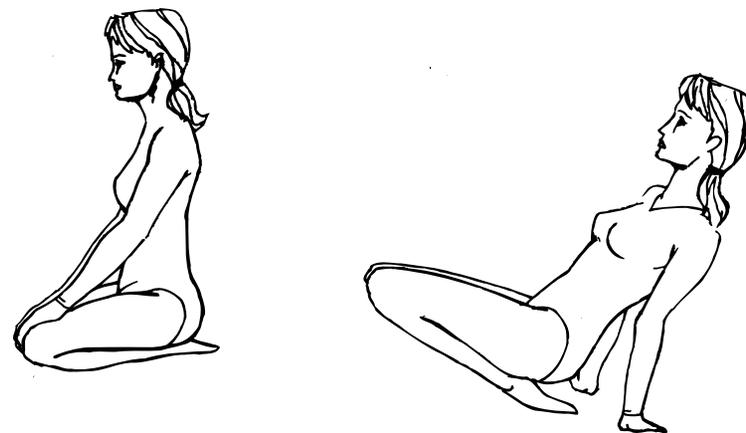
WRIST AND ANKLE EXERCISES



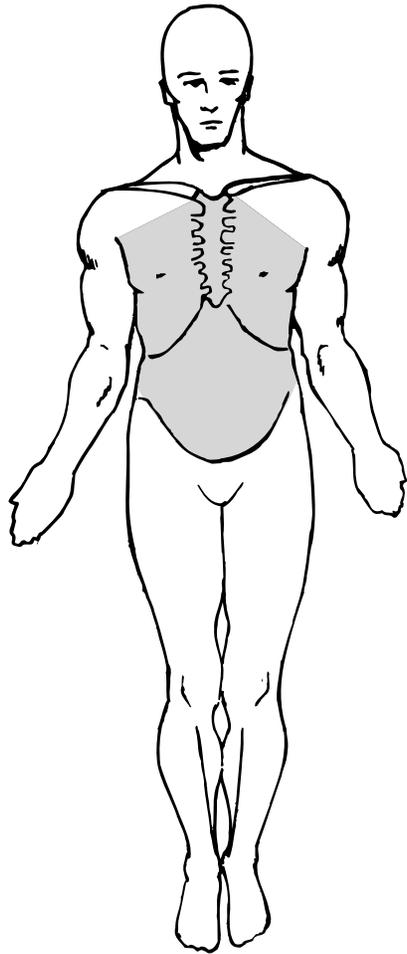
1. Assume position. Place pressure on the wrists until a stretch is felt, and hold. To gain greater flexibility, slowly raise the body as far as possible. Need good flexibility in the hamstrings and lower back.



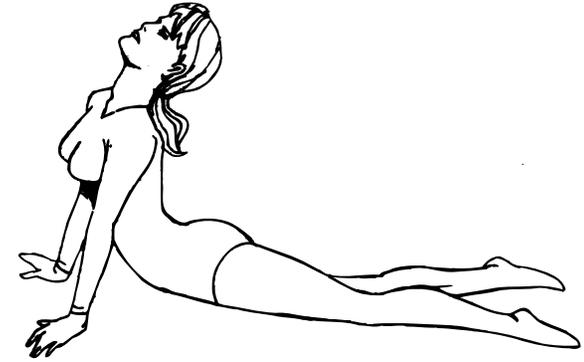
2. From the position as shown, raise the knees off the floor and lift the body back until a stretch is felt, and hold.



ABDOMEN AND CHEST EXERCISES



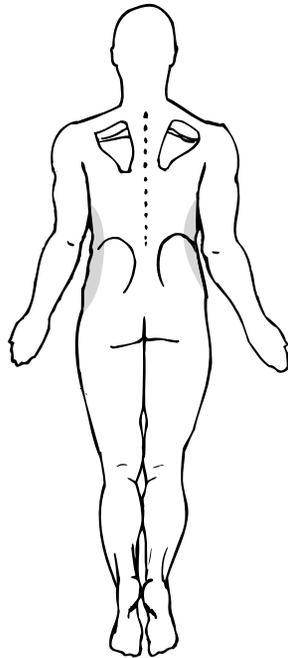
1. Assume the position as shown. Push the upper torso back with the arms until a stretch is felt and hold. Be sure to arch the back and place the head as far back as it will go.



2. In full kneel position, place hands at the small of the back, assume position shown and lower body nearer to the floor, until stretch is felt, and hold.



HIP AND OBLIQUE EXERCISES



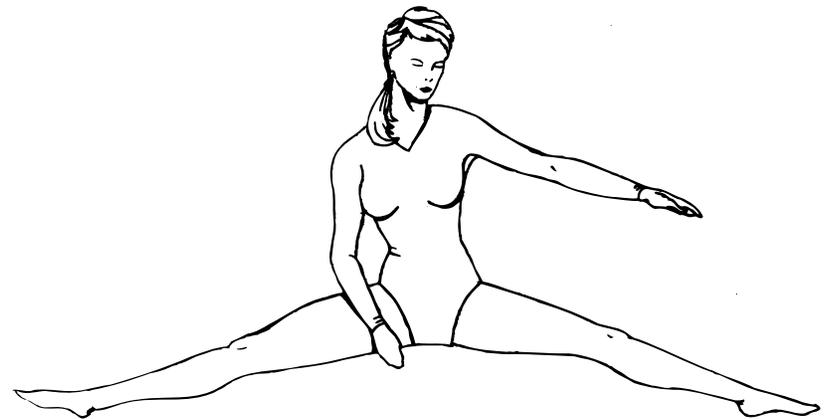
1. From a sitting position, move both feet to one side as shown. When a stretch is felt, hold. Repeat on the other side.



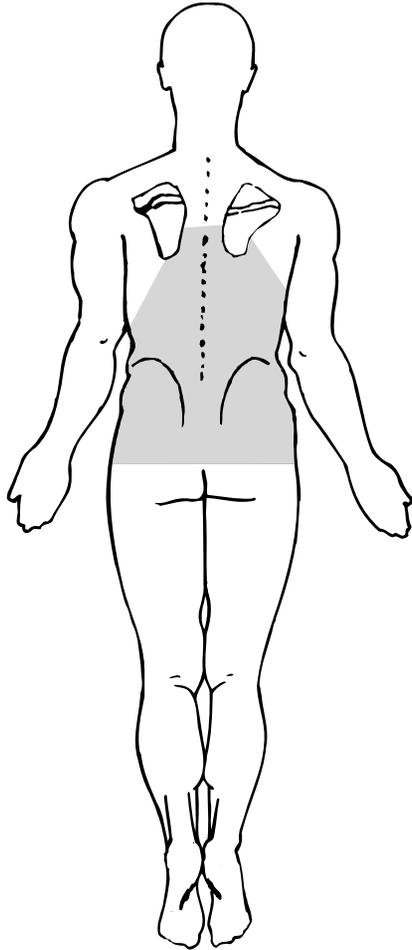
2. Assume position, begin by tucking the leg under the right. Bring the right leg over to the left. Bring the right arm through to the outside of the left leg. Push the left knee with the right arm until a stretch is felt and hold. Be sure the head is turned toward the rear. The left arm is used as support.



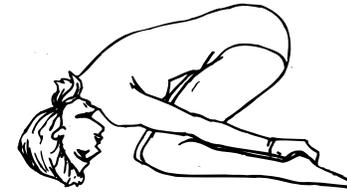
3. Assume position with legs spread as far apart as possible. Now bring the left hand over the head. When a stretch is felt, hold.



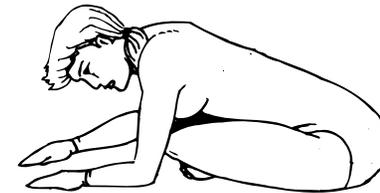
UPPER AND LOWER BACK EXERCISES



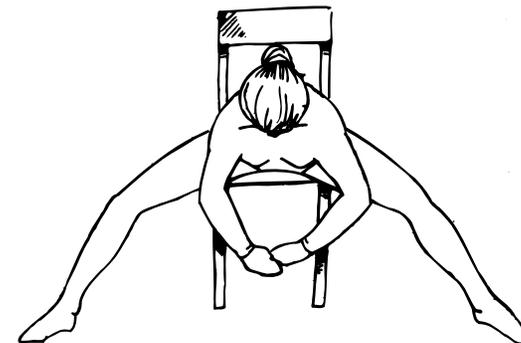
1. This exercise is a mild stretch for the back. Kneel, place the head on the floor, feet together with the hands on the heels. Gently pull the body back onto the heels until the stretch is felt, and hold.



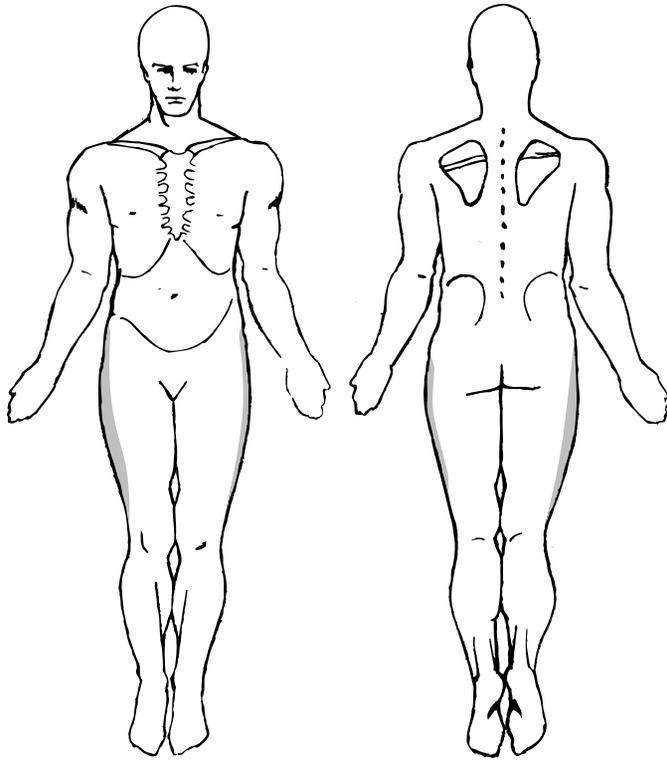
2. Assume a seated position on the floor with the legs crossed. Place the hands on the knees, then pull the body forward and down between the legs until a stretch is felt, and hold. The elbows must be in front of the knees on the outside of the legs.



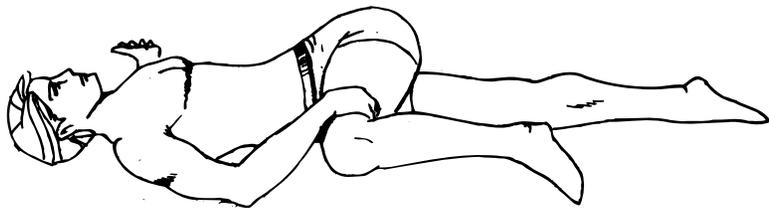
3. Assume seated position in a chair with the knees apart. Tuck chin and bend forward between the knees reaching under the chair with both arms until a stretch is felt and hold.



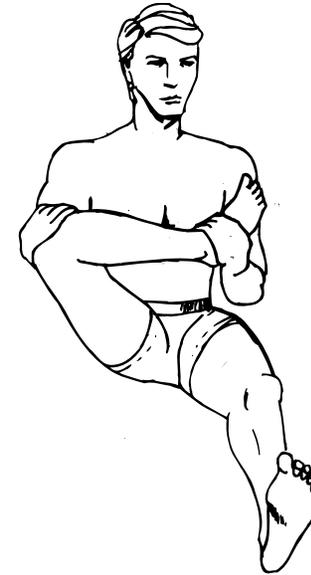
ILIOTIBIAL BAND EXERCISES



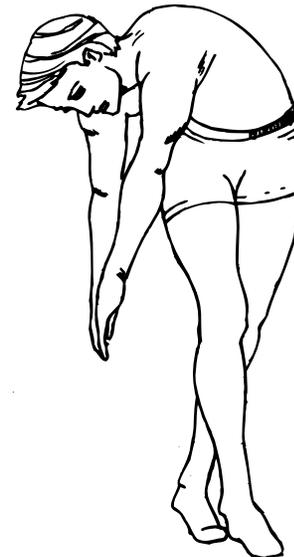
1. Keeping shoulders flat, gently pull knee to floor. When stretch is felt, hold. (Iliotibial band)



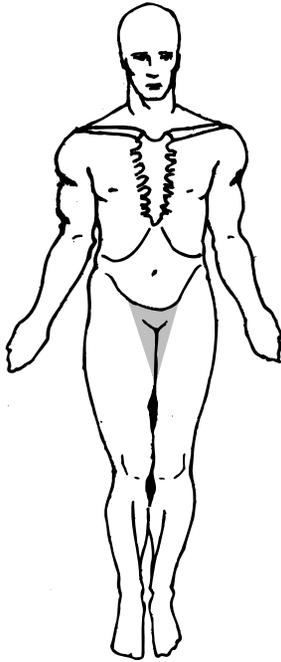
2. From position shown, pull the knee and ankle to the chest until stretch is felt and hold. (Iliotibial band)



3. From position shown, gently reach toward floor until stretch is felt and hold. (Iliotibial band)



GROIN EXERCISES



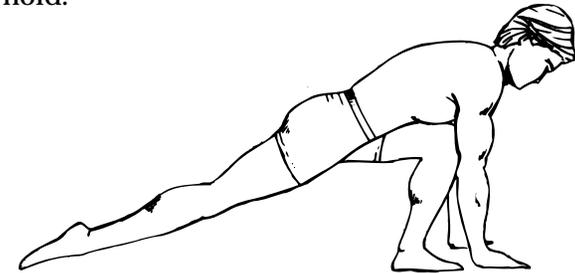
1. With the back against a wall and hands on the knees, assume position shown. Gently push the knees to the floor until a stretch is felt, and hold.



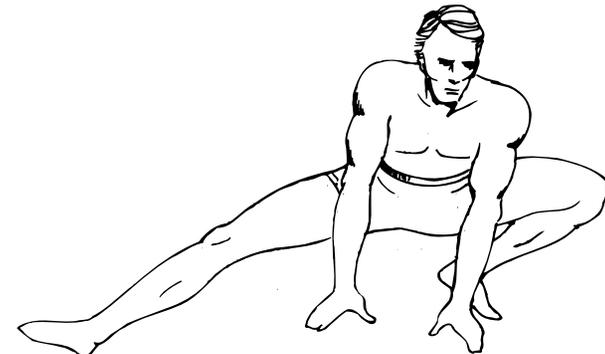
2. Assume position shown by placing the bottoms of the feet together and pulling the heels toward the groin until a stretch is felt, and hold. For increased flexibility pull the upper body forward until a stretch is felt, and hold.



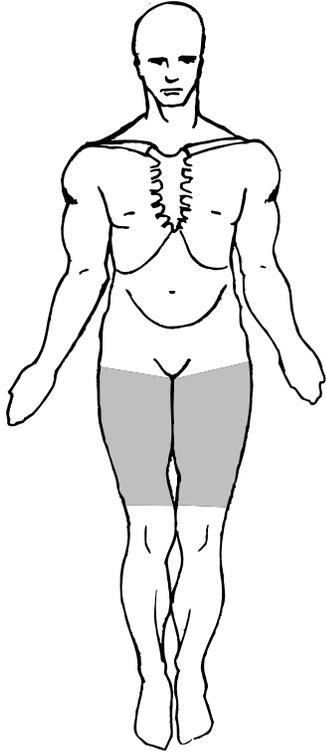
3. Assume the position shown. Slowly slide the right foot back and move the upper body down and forward. When a stretch is felt, hold.



4. Assume the position shown. Raise the toes of the right leg and slowly slide the leg away from the body. The body will move down closer to the floor as the leg is moved away from the body. When a stretch is felt, hold. Repeat with the other leg.



QUADRICEPS



1. Assume the position shown by grabbing the left foot with the right hand. Pull left foot toward the left buttocks and hold. Repeat with the other foot.



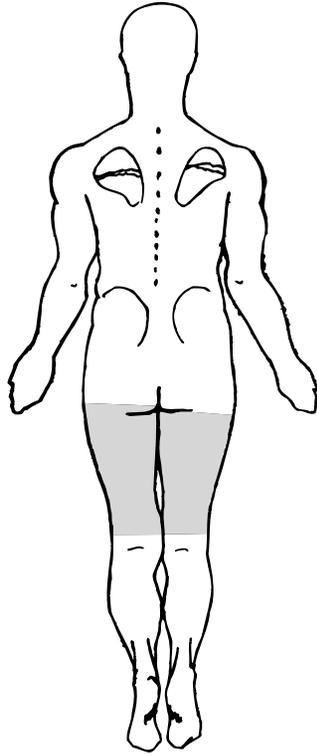
2. From a standing position, grab the right leg at the foot with the right hand. Raise the leg until the stretch is felt, then hold. Repeat with the other leg.



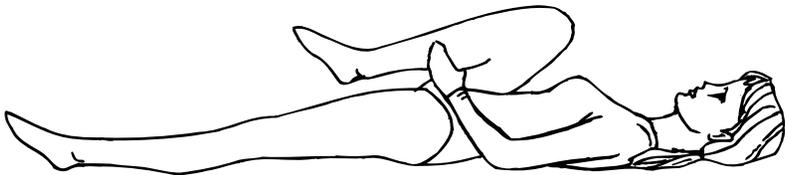
3. Assume position, gently lower the upper portion of the body to the floor or until stretch is felt, and hold. Repeat with the other leg.



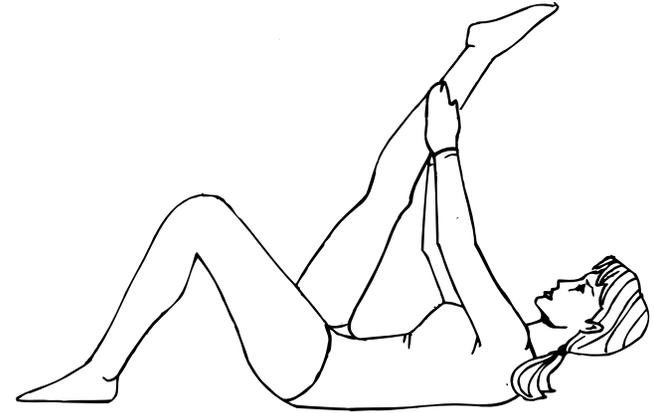
HAMSTRING EXERCISES



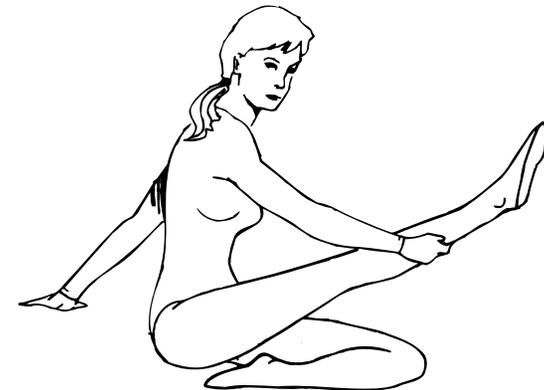
1. Assume position with the thigh pulled up to the chest as far as possible. Keep the thigh to the chest as the lower leg is straightened until a stretch is felt and hold.



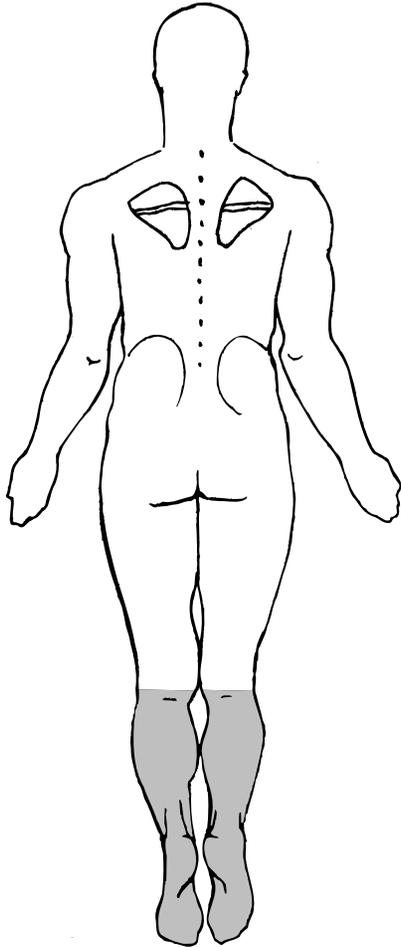
2. Assume position shown and gently pull the right leg toward the head until stretch is felt and hold. The ankle is flexed which provides more stretch. As you pull the leg toward the body point the toes and move the hand up toward the ankle. Straighten the opposite leg and hold for a stretch. Repeat procedure with the opposite leg.



3. Assume position as shown, the left leg should be pulled under the right. Now grab under the right leg with the right hand just below the knee and raise the leg until stretch is felt and hold.



LOWER LEG EXERCISES



1. Assume position shown. Bend the right leg and lower the body. Keep the left leg straight while the body is being lowered and keep the feet flat on the floor throughout the exercise. Repeat with the other leg.



2. Assume the position shown. Be sure the right knee is even with toes of the left foot. Push the left knee forward with the chest until a stretch is felt, and hold.

To obtain more stretch, as you push the knee forward, let the heel come off the floor about an inch. As you push forward with the heel raised, begin to lower the heel to the floor until a stretch is felt, and hold. Repeat on the other side.

