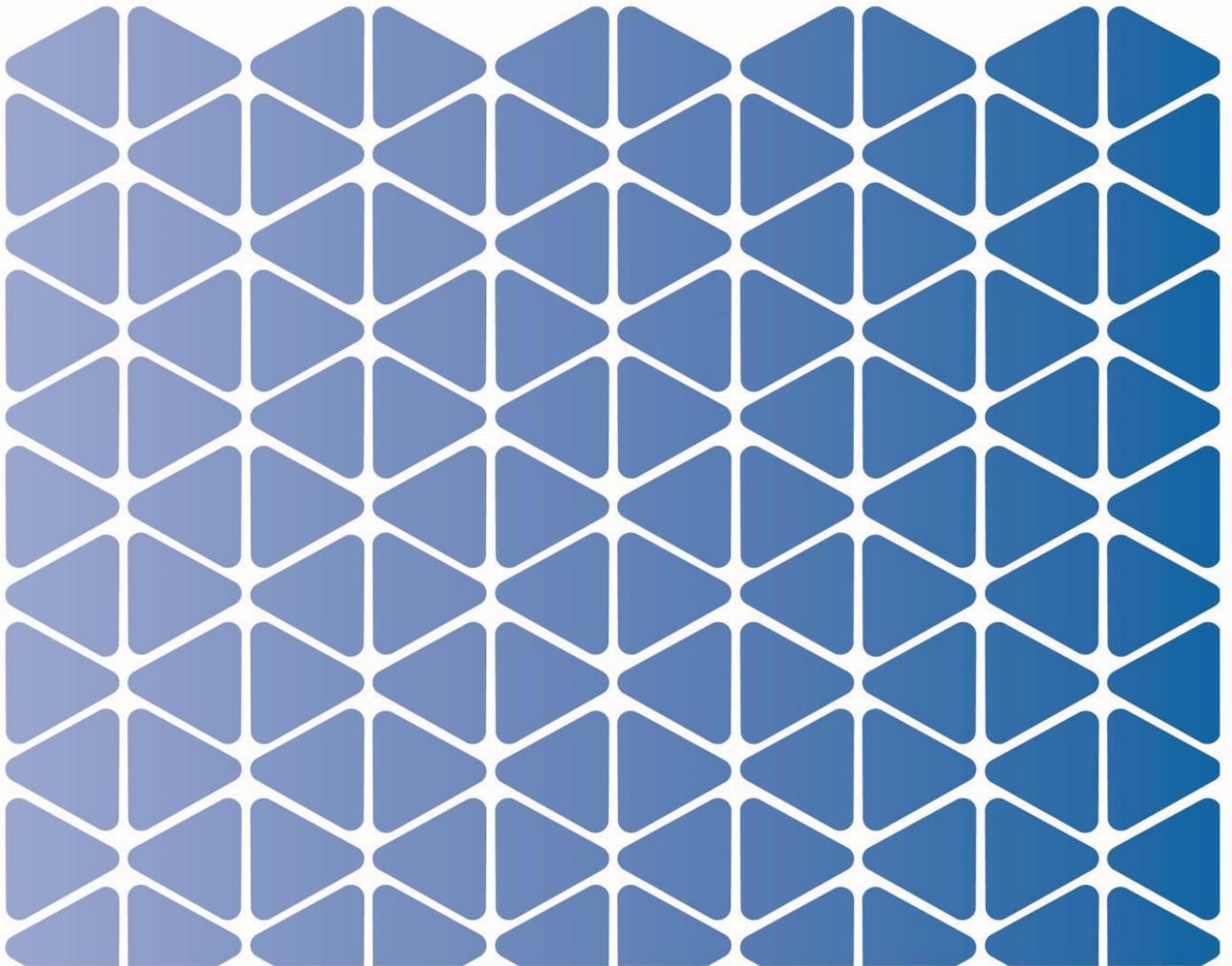




PATIENT INFORMATION
Physiotherapy Department

STRETCHING EXERCISES



STRETCHING

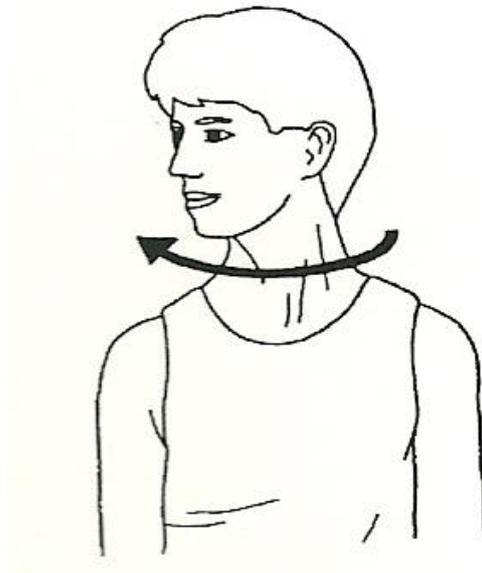
Stretching is important in order to maintain muscle length and joint range. Stretching can help improve your flexibility and ultimately your balance and co-ordination. It can help improve any problems with muscle stiffness.

A stretch must be gradual with a sustained hold at the end of the movement. When stretching, make sure all movements are slow and smooth, and be careful not to apply too much force to the stretch. If a stretch is applied too quickly, the muscle responds with a strong contraction, which can cause an increase in discomfort or spasticity.

Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds to allow the muscle to relax and repeat x3.

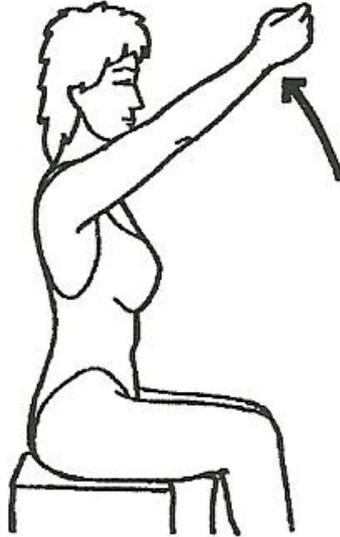
Exercise 1 - Neck Rotations (Sitting or lying)

- Turn your head to one side until you feel a stretch and hold. Use your hand to increase the stretch.
- Repeat to the opposite side.



Exercise 2 - Shoulder Stretch 1 (Sitting or lying)

- Hold the arm you are going to stretch at the wrist.
- Lift your arm up as far as possible and keep your thumb pointing outwards. Hold position.



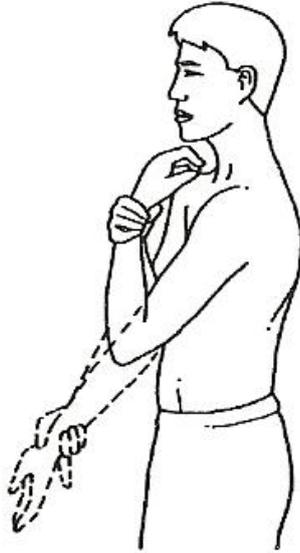
Exercise 3 - Shoulder Stretch 2

- Lying on your back with hands behind your neck and elbows pointing towards the ceiling.
- Move elbows apart and down to touch the bed. As you move elbows apart, take a slow deep breath in.
- Breathe out when you move elbows back up.



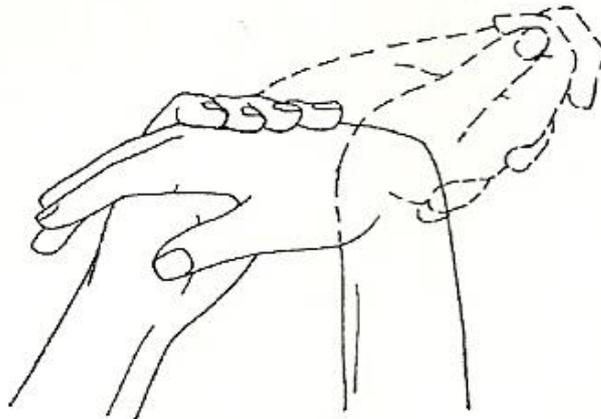
Exercise 4 - Elbow Stretch (sitting or lying)

- Hold the wrist on the arm you want to stretch, and gently straighten your elbow, rotate your forearm so your palm is facing upwards.
- Hold this position.



Exercise 5 - Wrist Stretch (Sitting or lying)

- Hold palm of hand and gently extend the wrist whilst applying some gentle distraction.
- You should feel the stretch at the inside of your forearm. Hold this position.
- Move the wrist the opposite way.



Exercise 6 - Full Body Stretch

- Lie on your back and stretch your arms above your head, flex your feet up and down. Hold this position for at least 30 seconds.



Exercise 7 - Trunk Rotations

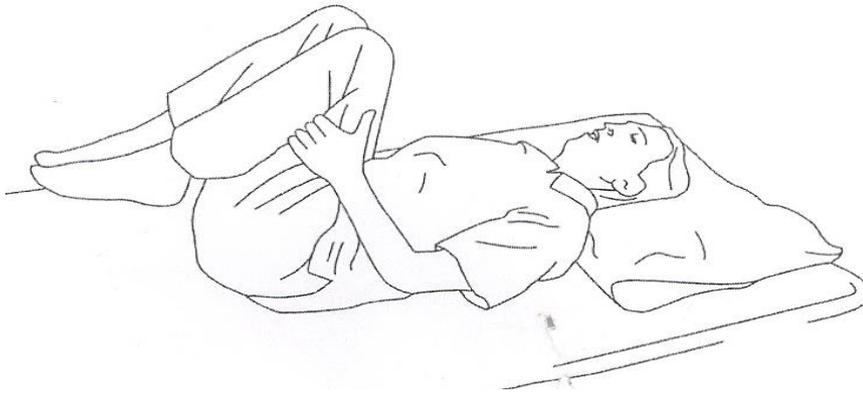
- Lie on your back with your knees together and bent.
- Slowly roll your knees to one side, but keep your upper trunk still. Hold this position.
- Repeat to opposite side.
- To increase the stretch, straighten your top leg.



Exercise 8 - Back Stretch

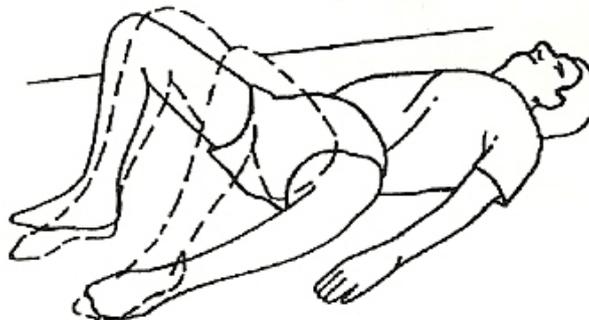
- Lie on your back and bring your knees up towards your chest, use your arms to help.
- You should feel a stretch in your lower back.
- Hold this position.
- To increase the stretch, lift your head up and bring chin towards your chest.

If you are not able to do 2 legs at a time you can do each leg individually.



Exercise 9 – Hip Adductor Stretch

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the bed, hip width apart.
- Turn your soles of your feet to face each other and allow your knees to fall outwards. Hold this position.
- Keep your back flat during the stretch.



Exercise 10 – Hip Flexor Stretch 1

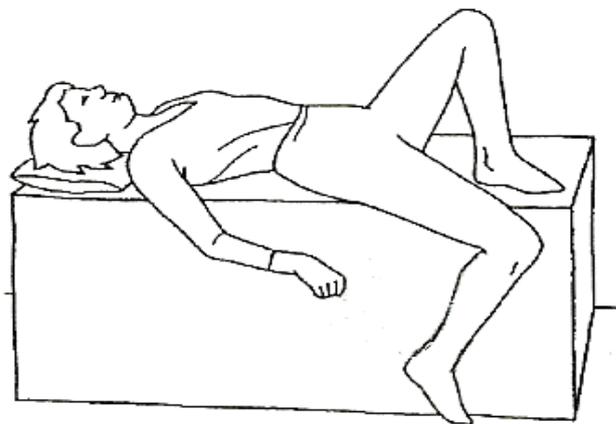
- Lie on your front resting either on your forearms or on a pillow.
- Arch the small of your back by pressing your pelvis & stomach to the floor.
- Now lift your shoulders extending your back, gently push up on your forearms.
- Hold this position.



Exercise 11 – Hip Flexor Stretch 2

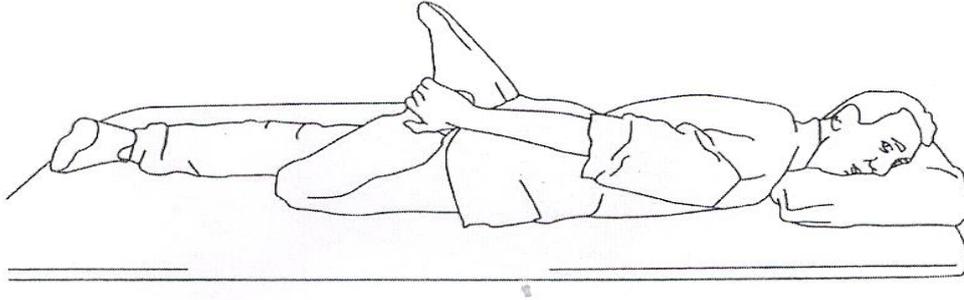
You can also stretch your hip muscles by lying on the edge of the bed.

- Place one leg over the edge of the bed.
- You should feel a stretch in the front of your hip and thigh.
- Try not to let your lower back arch.
- You can also try bending your knee further on the leg you are stretching.



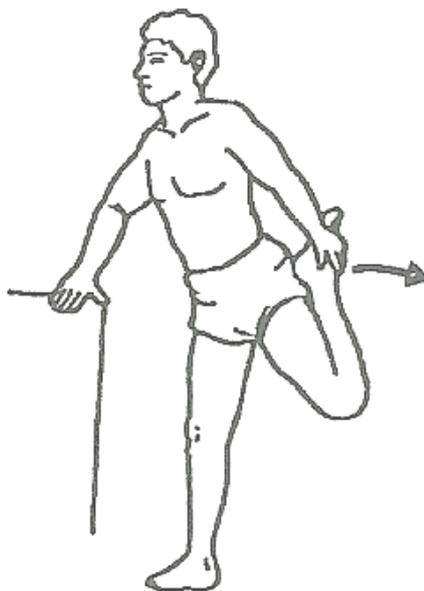
Exercise 12 – Quadriceps Stretch 1

- Lie on your front.
- Press your hips firmly into the bed and bring your foot up towards your buttocks. Take hold of the foot with your hand and ease the foot closer to your buttocks.
- You should feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.
- Hold this position.



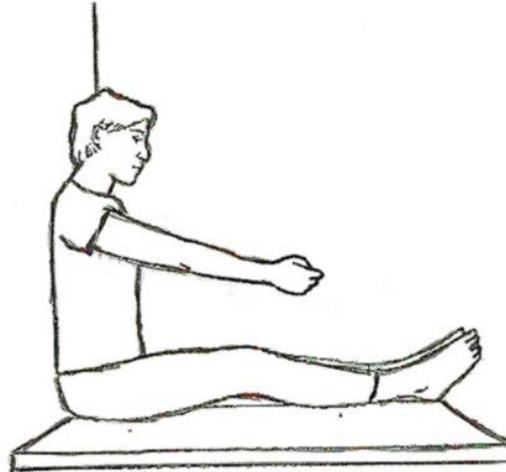
Exercise 13 - Quadriceps Stretch 2

- In standing and holding onto support, hold your ankle with your other hand.
- Pull the ankle towards your bottom and hold position.
- To make the stretch more effective, try and push the front of your hip forwards.



Exercise 14 – Hamstring Stretch 1

- Sit on the bed with back supported and legs out in front of you.
- Keeping the back of your knees flat to the bed, lean forwards, reaching your hands towards your ankles as shown by the arrow. Flex your foot towards you.
- You will feel a stretch in the back of your thigh. Hold this position.



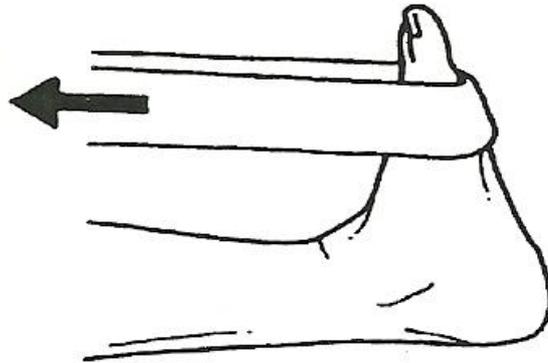
Exercise 15 - Hamstring Stretch 2

- Stand with leg to be stretched on a footstool.
- Flex your ankle and push the heel towards the stool keeping your knee straight.
- Hold position. Then bend your upper body forwards from your hips keeping your back straight.
- You should feel the stretch behind your knee and thigh.



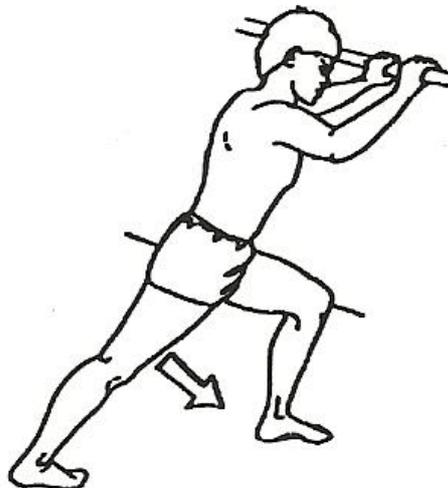
Exercise 16 – Calf Stretch 1 (Gastrocnemius Muscle)

- Sit with one leg out in front of you. Put a towel around the bottom of your foot.
- Gently pull the towel towards you and feel a stretch in your calf. Hold this position.



Exercise 17 – Calf Stretch 2

- Stand with one foot in front of the other, resting your hands on a table or wall for balance.
- Keeping the back leg straight, slowly lean towards the wall, allowing the front knee to bend.
- A comfortable stretch should be felt in the calf of the rear leg. Make sure the heel is in contact with floor throughout the stretch.
- Hold this position.



Advance this stretch by bending the knee of the rear leg and letting the weight of your body stretch your calf without lifting the heel off the floor. Hold this position.

If you are unsure about any of the advice and information given in this leaflet or if you require further advice from a Chartered Physiotherapist:-

Please contact your local Physiotherapy Department between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday on the direct dial numbers below:

Worcestershire Royal Hospital

01905 760622 / 760187

Alexandra Hospital, Redditch

01527 512114

Kidderminster Hospital & Treatment Centre

01562 513214

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.