

Hip/Buttock Stretch

Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet on your bed. Grasp your shin or the back of one of your legs and bring that leg in towards your chest until you feel a stretch in your hip or buttock. Come out of the stretch slowly and return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.



Back of Leg Stretch

Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet on your bed. Loop a towel or belt (something that does not stretch) around one foot. Slowly lift that leg and straighten your knee until you feel a gentle stretch along the back of your leg. Come out of the stretch slowly and return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.



Chest Stretch

Place a rolled up pillow or towel on your bed and lie down next to it on your side (the pillow should be behind you). Roll on to your back so that the pillow is under you, in line with your spine. Rest your arms out to your sides. You should feel a gentle stretch across your chest. Come out of the stretch slowly by rolling to your side.



Stretching

Neuromuscular diseases may cause muscle weakness. As muscle weakness progresses, it can become difficult to move your joints through their full, normal range of motion. When you do not move as much, your muscles become less flexible. This can make it more difficult for you to do daily activities, like getting dressed or getting out of bed. Stretching can help keep your muscles flexible so you can do these activities. Stretching can also help with the stiffness and pain that can come with poor flexibility. These exercises are meant to help keep your joints moving on a daily basis.

Stretching Tips

Stretching should always be pain-free. If you aren't sure how to perform a stretch, or don't know if it is a safe stretch for you, stop immediately, and talk to your Physical Therapist before continuing.

If it is not safe for you to stand without assistance, do not do the standing stretches.

Move into and out of each stretch slowly.

Always do these stretches on a safe and stable surface.

Make sure your neck is relaxed when you are lying down. Use a pillow if needed.

Hold each stretch for 30 seconds to 1 minute unless otherwise indicated.

Perform each stretch 2-3 times every day.

Questions?

Contact your physical therapist or bring this brochure with you to your next clinic appointment.

Forward Shoulder Stretch – Standing

Stand facing a wall (see below for a seated version of this stretch). Slide the palm of your hand up the wall until you feel a gentle stretch in your shoulder. Come out of the stretch slowly and return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.



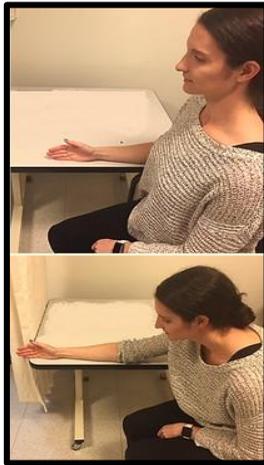
Sideways Shoulder Stretch – Standing

Stand next to a wall (see below for a seated version of this stretch). Slide the pinky side of your hand up the wall until you feel a gentle stretch in your trunk. Come out of the stretch slowly and return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.



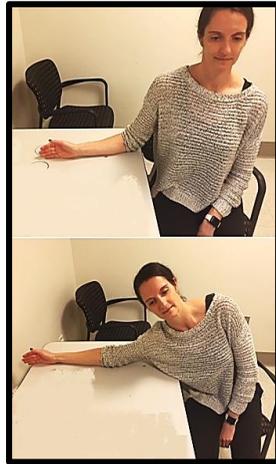
Forward Shoulder Stretch – Sitting

Sit at a table (see above for a standing version of this stretch). Place your hand on the table with your thumb pointing up. Slide it forward until you feel a gentle stretch in your shoulder. Come out of the stretch by slowly sitting back up. Repeat on the other side.



Sideways Shoulder Stretch – Sitting

Sit with your side at a table (see above for a standing version of this stretch). Place your hand on the table with your thumb pointing up. Slide your arm sideways until you feel a gentle stretch in your trunk. Slowly sit back upright. Repeat on the other side.



Calf Stretch

Stand 2-3 feet away from a wall. Step forward with one leg and bend your front knee. Point both feet toward the wall (don't let your toes point out to the side). Keeping your back heel on the ground and your back knee straight, shift forward until you feel a gentle stretch in the calf of your back leg. Come out of the stretch slowly and return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.



Trunk and Back Stretch

Sit in a chair. Place your hands on a table or on a chair back in front of you. Inhale as you lift your head and chest to lengthen your back. Exhale as you look to the floor and round your back. Move back and forth slowly between these two poses 10 times.

