

Daily stretching exercises help you sleep well and feel refreshed in the morning

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There's no better way to start your day than feeling refreshed, limber, and ready to move. Sure, coffee helps, but stretching is really the best way to really wake up and shake off the stiffness of a sleepless night.

These daily stretches are the ultimate morning warm-up. They loosen tight hips, release tight spines, and wake up your muscles from head to toe. Even better, they help prepare your body for a deeper night's sleep by calming your nervous system and releasing lingering tension.

Stretch: Alternate 90/90



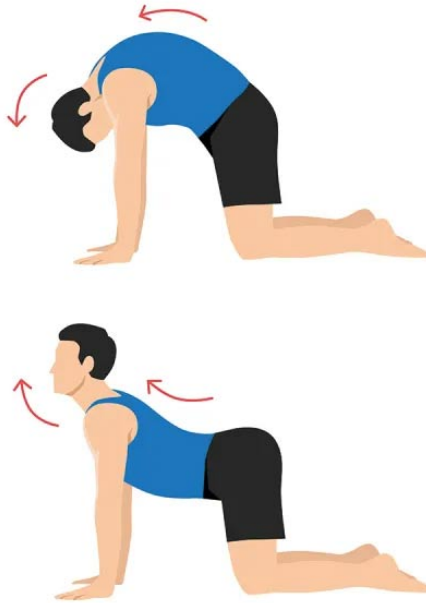
The hips are the crossroads of the body. When they are tight, everything from your lower back to your knees can feel out of whack. The 90/90 rotation exercise is a dynamic movement exercise that targets the internal and external rotation of the hip joint, which often becomes tight when sitting or lifting. This stretch also improves posture and control in the lower body, allowing you to have stronger movement patterns throughout the day.

How to do:

1. Sit upright on the floor with one leg bent in front of you at a 90-degree angle and the other leg at a 90-degree angle.
2. Keep your chest up and shoulders relaxed.
3. Rotate hips and legs to switch sides without using hands if possible.
4. Move slowly and in a controlled manner, aiming for smooth motion.

Recommended number of sets and time: Perform 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 10 repetitions on each side.

Stretch: Cat Cow



Cat Cow is like a wake-up call for your spine. It gently engages each vertebra while syncing the movement with your breath, activating your core and calming your nervous system. It's especially effective in the morning because it combats the stiffness that builds up overnight and brings circulation back to your back, shoulders, and neck. Bonus: It feels great as you move slowly and with control.

How to do:

1. Start in a push-up position with your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips.
2. Inhale and round your back, lower your belly and lift your head and tailbone up (Cow).
3. Exhale and round the spine, pulling the belly up and tucking the chin (Cat).
4. Move with your breath in a slow, steady rhythm.

Recommended number of sets and time: Complete 2 sets of 5 to 8 full reps.

Stretch: Split Front Half



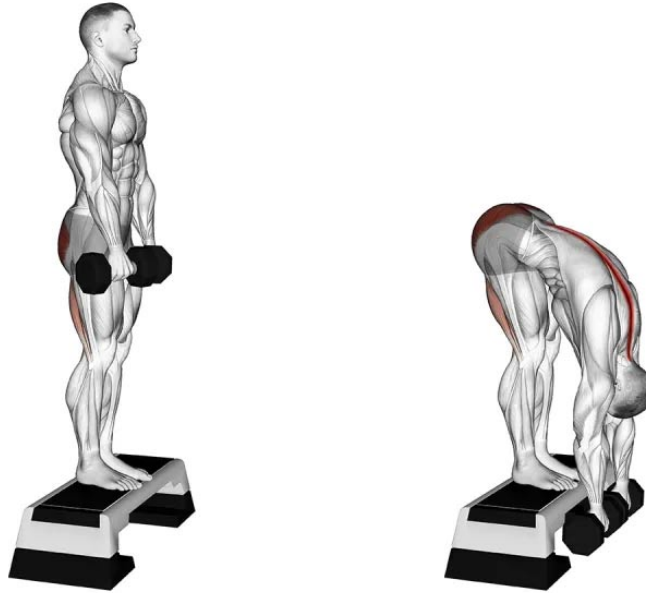
Tight hamstrings and calves are often the root cause of poor posture, sluggish movement, and even lower back pain. The Half-Front Split is a controlled way to stretch the entire back of your leg without increasing flexibility. This exercise increases hamstring mobility from the hips and helps balance the posterior chain, which can improve your walking, running, and weightlifting mechanics.

How to do:

1. Start in a half-kneeling position with one leg forward and the back knee touching the floor.
2. Push your hips back so that your front leg is straight and your hips stack over your back knee.
3. Keep your chest up and bend forward from the hips.
4. You should feel a stretch in the hamstring in your front leg.

Recommended number of sets and time: Do 2 sets of 20 to 30 seconds each on each side.

Stretch: Jefferson Curl



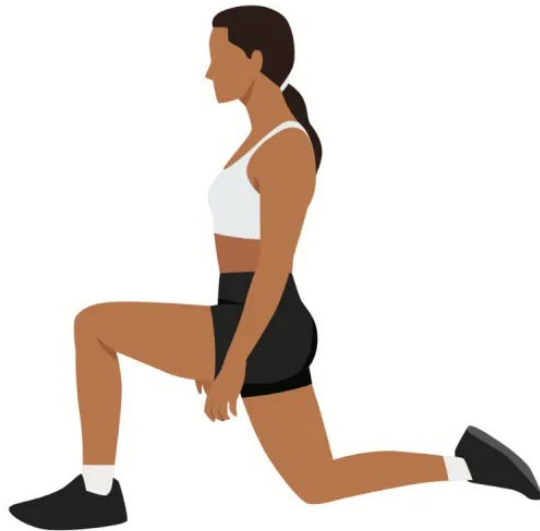
Most people avoid spinal curls, but Jefferson Curl shows you how to do them safely and purposefully. This stretch is a controlled downward roll of the spine that improves segmental mobility, decompresses the vertebrae, and challenges the posterior chain with controlled lengthening. It's like flossing your spine while still providing a deep hamstring stretch. This exercise is great for stiff backs and stiff legs.

How to do:

1. Stand up straight with your feet hip-width apart and your arms hanging down in front of you.
2. Slowly roll down each vertebra, starting at the neck and arching the spine.
3. Relax your arms and reach toward the floor.
4. Pause at the bottom, then slowly reverse the movement to stand up.

Recommended number of sets and time: Perform 2 sets of 5 to 6 slow, controlled repetitions.

Stretch: Half-kneeling hip flexor stretch



If you sit a lot, hip flexion can be difficult. That tightness pulls on your pelvis and spine, leading to poor posture, lower back discomfort, and limited leg mobility. This stretch opens the front of your hips and makes you aware of your pelvic position. It's a game-changer for anyone who wants to move better, squat deeper, or stand up straighter.

How to do:

1. Start in a half-kneeling position with your front knee at a 90-degree angle and your back knee on the floor.
2. Tuck your pelvis down slightly to avoid rounding your back.
3. Shift your weight forward until you feel a stretch in the front of your hips.
4. Keep your torso upright and use your glutes to deepen the stretch.

Recommended number of sets and time: Do 2 sets of 20 to 30 seconds each on each side.

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