

Stretches for Runners

Increase Flexibility to Reduce Your Risk of Injury
and Run Longer With Less Fatigue!

©GTS Therapeutics 2007

Lower Body Stretches for Runners:

Hints and tips:

- There are sensors in your muscles which contract your muscles when you go into a stretch, in order to avoid you 'stretching to a tear'. It typically takes 45-60 seconds to work with that element of protection in your nervous system, to actually get a thorough stretch into the muscle.
- Fit in stretches throughout your day, every day, particularly if you are sitting through most of the day, either at a computer or in the car.
- Frequently issues with pain during running comes from a chronic strain from a posture during sleeping or during your work day. Sitting shortens most upper leg muscles. Some of the postures to avoid are on our website.
- If you find you are too busy to fit any stretches in during the day, the hamstring 'leg up' and the glute stretch can be done quite well on your bathroom sink while brushing your teeth before bed!



Hip Flexors and Quads: The 'Kneeling Lunge' is a stretch for your hip flexors. Keep your upper body straight and upright. You should feel this stretch in the crook of the front of your hip (of the BACK leg). Quad stretches are important, they keep the muscles in the lower part of your thigh in the front flexible extended. The suggested stretch for that portion of your leg is the 'heel to butt' stretch. Standing, lift your foot to your bottom, and hold it there.



Hamstrings: The 'leg up' stretch will help the tightness in the hamstrings, which sometimes leads to low back discomfort. The important piece to remember is to bring your shoulders straight forward, NOT DOWN. When you lean toward your knee you are not going to isolate the stretch in the most effective way, because you are bending from your waist.



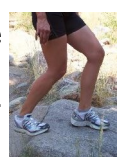
Glutes/Hips: Our 'standing pigeon'. Bring your leg onto a surface as close to perpendicular to your waist as you can, and bend your standing leg until you feel a stretch through the back and side of your bent leg.



IT Band: is a sinister tendon, that frequently causes discomfort in the knee when it is too tight. The 'leaning IT Band Stretch' (stretching the lower leg), and the 'figure four stretch' (stretching the top leg) work to open that muscle up a bit.



Calf Muscles: Most frequently injured muscles in runners. Standing calf stretches can be done on a step or a rock. Important! Do it with BOTH a straight leg AND a bent leg, to stretch ALL the muscles of the calf. The bent leg stretch reaches the deep calf muscles which are frequently involved with posterior shin splints, Achilles tendonitis and plantar fasciitis.



1103 Oak Park Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525
970-225-1140
mail@gststherapeutics.com

www.FortCollins-Massage.com
See our website for more information on running injuries.