

## Why Stretch?

Stretching is an important part of a good exercise routine. Consistently stretching will improve flexibility and joint movement. Stretching helps your muscles to release, lengthen, and work more efficiently.

## Benefits of Stretching

- Improves flexibility and range of motion.
- Lowers risk of injury.
- Reduces soreness after a workout.
- Increases circulation to various parts of the body.
- Improves coordination.

## Technique Tips

- Warm up before stretching by walking or doing other gentle movement.
- Gradually increase your stretch as you feel your muscles relax.
- Hold each stretch for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Avoid bouncing up and down to deepen the stretch.
- Create a routine. Stretch daily and after each exercise session.
- Breathe. Take slow, rhythmic breaths while you stretch.
- Avoid stretching to the point of pain. Mild discomfort is normal, but stop immediately if it is painful.

## Utah BeWise Program

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Exercise is not without its risks and this or any other exercise program may result in injury. To reduce the risk of injury, talk to your doctor before beginning this exercise program.

The advice presented is in no way intended as a substitute for medical consultation, and the Utah Department of Health disclaims any liability from and in connection with this program. As with any exercise program, if at any point during your workout you begin to feel faint, dizzy, or have physical discomfort, you should stop immediately and talk to a doctor.

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**Stretching Exercises**  
**A Fun and Convenient Way**  
**to Better Flexibility and Health**

## Calf Stretch

While standing with your hands lightly resting on the back of a chair for balance, step your right foot behind you. Place your right heel on the floor and straighten your leg. Keep your forward leg bent. Keeping your arms relaxed, move your pelvis forward to stretch your right calf. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Chest Stretch

While sitting on a chair, open your arms to each side and stretch your chest. Flex your hands back to add a stretch for your arms. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe.



## Forearm Stretch

While sitting on a chair, hold your right arm out with your palm facing out. With the opposite hand, gently pull your fingers back toward your body. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Shoulder Stretch

While sitting on a chair, hold under your right elbow with your left hand. Pull your right arm across your chest. Relax your right shoulder away from your ear. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Triceps Stretch

While sitting on a chair, lift your right arm toward the ceiling, keeping your elbow close to your ear. Walk your right hand down the middle of your back. Gently pull back on your right elbow with the opposite hand to increase the stretch. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Hip Stretch

While sitting on a chair, place your right ankle on your left thigh and lean forward to stretch the right hip. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Hamstring Stretch

While sitting on the edge of a chair, extend your right leg out in front of you and lean forward to stretch the back of your leg. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.



## Spinal Conditioning

While sitting on a chair, place your hands on your thighs. On a long inhale, gently look up, extend your spine and open your chest. Slowly exhale and bring your chin to your chest, scooping your belly in and rounding out your back. Repeat 5-10 times in each direction, breathing with each movement.



## Forward Fold

While sitting on the edge of a chair, spread your feet and knees apart. Slowly exhale and bend forward between your knees as far as you can. Release your arms and let everything hang toward the floor. Hold for a few breaths, then inhale and slowly roll back to sitting.

## Quadriceps Stretch

While standing with your hands lightly resting on the back of a chair for balance, grasp your right foot with your right hand. Pull your heel toward your buttock. Tilt your pelvis forward to increase the stretch in the hip flexors. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax and breathe. Repeat on the other side.

