Stretching Exercises - Below Knee Amputation

Stretching exercises will help keep your hip and leg muscles in good condition and improve your range of motion.

- Do these exercises 2 times each day and repeat each exercise 3 times.
- Do the exercises slowly and with smooth motions to avoid injury to the muscles.
- Hold each stretch for about 30 seconds and then release.
- Be sure to keep breathing while exercising. Do not hold your breath.

Stretching Exercises

Do the checked (✓) exercises below.

☐ Calf Stretch

1. Sit on your bed and loop a towel around your foot just below your toes. You may want to use a towel or small pillow under your heel.

2. Hold the ends of the towel in your hands and keeping your knee straight, pull back on the towel so your feel a stretch in the back of your lower leg.

More on next page ➔
You can also do this stretch sitting in a firm chair.

Soleus and Gastroc Stretch

1. With prosthesis on, stand an arm’s length from the wall and put your hands on the wall.

2. Step your prosthetic foot forward and bend your knee on the sound leg, leaning into the wall. Keep your heel on the ground. You should feel the stretch in your lower leg.

This exercise can also be done without your prosthesis.
- **Hamstring Stretch**
  1. Sit on your bed with your back straight and your leg out straight in front of you.

  2. Reach your hand down towards your foot and lean forward to feel a stretch in the back of your upper leg.

  3. Repeat on your amputated side.

- **Hamstring Stretch with Stool**
  1. With your prosthesis on, sit in a firm chair. Place your prosthetic foot up on a foot stool or low table so your leg is out in front of you.

  2. Lean forward and reach your hand down towards your foot on the stool to feel the stretch in the back of your upper leg or thigh.

  3. Repeat on your sound leg.

- **Cat and Camel Stretch**
  1. Get on your hands and knees and hold your head up looking to the front, like a cat.

  2. Tuck your chin and tighten your stomach muscles as you arch your back up.

  3. Slowly raise your head back up and let your back sway down toward the floor.
- Do this exercise with your prosthesis on.

- Quadratus Lumborum Stretch
  1. Lie on your back with your hips and knees straight.
  2. On your amputated leg, press your hip and leg down towards the end of the bed or mat and feel your hip bones drop.
  3. Hold the stretch and then relax and repeat.

- Abductor Stretch
  1. Lie on your back on the floor or a mat.
  2. Keep your shoulders on the floor and bring your amputated leg across your body while you reach with the opposite hand to the outside of your amputated leg.
  3. Feel the stretch in your hip on the amputated side.
  4. Hold and then repeat.
Hip Flexor Stretch

1. Step forward with sound leg and kneel down on your other knee.
2. With your hands on the knee of your sound leg, move your sound knee forward and feel the stretch.

Elbow Raise (Prone Prop)

1. Lie face down with your elbows under your shoulders. Your legs should be straight out behind you.
2. Keep your hips on the floor and your lower back and buttocks relaxed and lift up onto your elbows, lifting your chest up. You should feel a stretch at the front of your hip.

Place a towel roll under your upper leg to increase the stretch.

Prone Press Up

1. Lie face down with your hands by your shoulders, your legs straight out behind you.
2. Raise your chest off the floor by rising up on your hands until your elbows are straight. Keep your hips on the floor and your buttocks and lower back should be relaxed. You should feel a stretch at the front of your hip.

Place a towel roll under your upper leg to increase the stretch.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.