

**Flexibility** helps to prevent injuries and improve simple motions of everyday life. Being flexible allows for better movement and reduced pain in joints, making it **easier to perform daily activities**. It is important to warm your muscles before stretching. Also, remember to stretch after the cool-down portion of each workout.

- Do not bounce into a stretch or during a stretch. Movements should be slow and steady.
- Mild discomfort when stretching is normal. But you should never feel pain. If you do, it means you are stretching too far and you need to reduce the stretch so it doesn't hurt.
- Always breathe throughout the stretch; never hold your breath.
- Avoid locking your joints in place during stretches. (Example: Try to avoid locking elbows and knees.)
- Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds. Repeat each stretch 2-4 times, trying to extend farther each time.



### ◀ Upper Back and Side Stretch

Lace your fingers and push your hands away from your chest, rolling your shoulders forward. Then, press your hands straight up in the air and to the left and right sides.



### ◀ Calf Stretch

Put both hands on the wall and press one leg back straight, keeping your front knee bent. You should feel a stretch in your calf muscle.

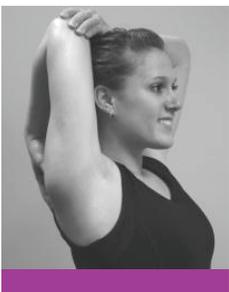
### Shoulder Stretch ▶

Bring your arm across your body and stretch out the back part of your shoulder while keeping the thumb pointed down. Make sure you are not pressing directly on the elbow with the opposite hand. Repeat with the other arm.



### Hamstring Stretch ▶

Hold on to the back of a chair or countertop and bend forward at the hips, keeping your back and shoulders straight and your knees together. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thighs.



### ◀ Triceps Stretch

Lift your arm straight up in the air and bend at the elbow. Gently press the elbow back with the opposite hand. Lift your head and look straight ahead. You should feel a stretch in the back part of the upper arm. Repeat with the other arm.



### ◀ Quadriceps Stretch

Hold on to the back of a chair or countertop and slowly pull your right ankle toward your buttocks, keeping your back and shoulders straight, knees together. You should feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.