

# Home Flexibility Guidelines





Flexibility (stretching) is an important part of your overall health and well-being. Your home flexibility program will instruct you on ways to improve your range of motion through step-by-step stretches.

## Warm-Up

It is important to first warm-up the muscles and increase your heart rate as you begin to exercise. Perform low-intensity exercise by walking on the treadmill or using a sit-down exercise bike before your normal exercise routine. If you do not own any home exercise equipment, take a small walk in your house or outside.

## Breathing Tips

It is important to work on your breathing while warming up, exercising, and cooling down. Here are tips to help your breathing:

- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth
- Breathe out during exertion

Breathing incorrectly can cause stress to your body. It can cause you to get light-headed or faint. Do **not**:

- Breathe too quickly with shallow breaths (not taking deep breaths)
- Hold your breath for any reason



# Cool Down

Perform the below stretching routine after you exercise. Do **not** hold your breath during the stretch. Each stretch may have mild discomfort but should not be painful. Do **not** bounce when you perform these stretches, as it could cause injury.



## Neck Rotation

Turn your head to look over your left shoulder. Hold and count to 10. Turn your head to look over your right shoulder and count to 10. This is one set. Do 3 sets.

## Circle Nose Around the Clock

Rotate your neck around like a clock. Hold your chin down and in a circular motion rotate your head up to the right side and around like the hands of a clock. End with your chin in the starting position. Go the other way by rotating your neck to the left side in a full circular motion. Repeat 3 times.







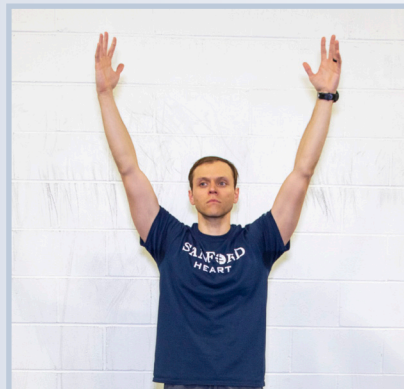
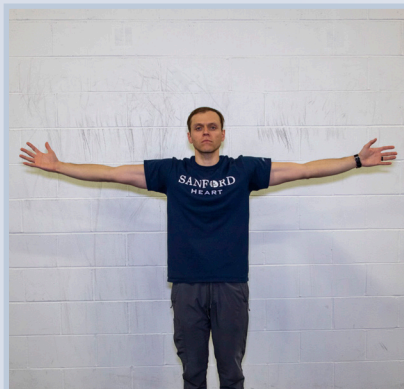
## Shoulder Rolls

Keep your arms straight down along your sides. Lift shoulders as high as possible and roll your shoulder to the back in a circle motion. Then roll to the front. Repeat 3 times.



## Arms Over Head (Front of Body)

Keeping arms straight out in front of you with palms facing each other, raise your hands above your head as high as you can without pain. Slowly lower your arms down and in front of you. Do this 3 times and hold for 10 seconds.



## Arms Out to Side Up Over Head

Keep arms straight. Bring arms out to your sides and raise your arms above your head. Slowly lower them back to your sides. Do this 10 times.



## Hip Flexion

Stand and hold onto a counter. Raise your right leg forward with knee straight and bring it back to a standing position. Do this 3 times and hold for 10 seconds each. Switch to left leg repeat.



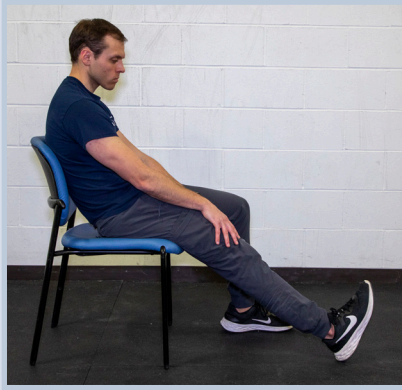
## Hip Extension

Stand and hold onto a counter or chair with no wheels. Keep your knee slightly bent or straight and bring your leg backward so the heel of your foot is towards your backside and then bring back to a standing position. Do this 3 times while holding for 10 seconds. Switch to left leg repeat.



## Hip Knee Stretch

Stand a foot away from the wall or counter. Lean your hands on the wall. Keep your left leg in place and step back with your right leg placing your heel on the floor. Bend your left knee. Feel the stretch in your right calf. Hold and Count to 10. Switch sides and repeat 3 times



## Ankle Stretch

First stretch is if you want to sit in a chair, second stretch is for standing. **Do one.**

- Sit on a chair that does not rock or have wheels. Place your feet on the floor. Raise your right toes to the ceiling while keeping your heel on the floor. Put your right toes on the floor and now raise your heel off the ground, keeping your toes down. Do this 10 times and switch ankles.
- Only do this one if you are told you can: Stand and hold on to counter, have your feet a few inches apart. Raise up on toes with knees straight hold and count to 3. Repeat 10 times.

# Safety Reminders

Safety is the highest priority when warming up, exercising and cooling down. You can decrease your risk with exercise by following these recommendations:

- Continue to take your medications your care team has prescribed.
- Do not walk if your resting heart rate is 120 beats per minute or higher.
- Wear shoes and clothing that are appropriate to exercise in.
- Wait one hour after a meal.
- Do not work so hard you are not able to talk.
- Follow each exercise plan.
- Use your best digression when exercise outside when it is too hot or cold. Check the weather before walking outside. Ask your cardiac rehab staff member about recommendations of when to exercise outside.
- Walk on a level surface. Walking up hill makes your heart work harder.
- If you are overly tired, have a cold, flu, fever, or infection, do not exercise.
- Use your rescue inhaler 5-10 minutes before you exercise. Do not take again for 2 hours.
- Use your oxygen as ordered. You may need to adjust oxygen from rest to exercise.

At any time, if you feel chest pain, chest tightness, or trouble with your breathing stop exercising and sit down. If you have been prescribed the medication nitroglycerin (nitro) place a tab under the tongue. **If your symptoms do not go away, call 911.**



