

# Make Micro-Breaks Part of Your Daily Routine

## Review These Important Guidelines Prior to Stretching

### Micro-Breaks

- Reduce discomfort of impinged soft tissue.
- Reduce muscle tension and stress.
- Relax and refresh the mind.
- Improve alertness.

### Things to Think About

- When was the last time you took a micro-break?
- Would stretching help you better manage stress?
- Would a micro-break help you feel more alert?

### Stretching Tips

- Hold each stretch for at least 15 seconds.
- Breathe in a relaxed manner.
- Do not strain or bounce.

Stop stretching immediately if you experience any sharp pain.



Shoulder Shrugs

Place hands at your side. Lift the shoulders up and down, holding briefly.

*Tip: Go slowly. This exercise is a great way to relieve stress and muscle tension in the neck and shoulders.*



Upper Back Stretch

Stand with back straight, feet placed shoulder-width apart, extend arms forward at chest level and clasp hands in front of body.

*Tip: Keep abdominal muscles contracted and lower hands from chest level to midway between chest and hips to change the stretch slightly.*



Scapular Retraction

Stand with elbows bent 90 degrees, pinch shoulder blades together as you rotate your arms outward.



Neck Rotation

Look straight ahead, arms at your sides. Turn head slowly to look over the shoulder. Return to starting position and then turn to look over right side.



Chin Tuck

Looking straight ahead, tuck chin and hold that position for 5-10 seconds.



Back Extension Stretch

Stand upright with feet shoulder-width apart. Place both hands on the small of your back, lift your rib cage, and arch your back.

*Tip: Do not tip your head backward. Keep your neck in line with your spine.*



Forearms Extensor Muscles

Place one hand palm down, out in front, and use the opposite hand to gently pull the hand down so the fingers point toward the floor. Repeat with the other hand.

*Tip: For a deeper stretch, make a fist and rotate the hand outward.*



Palm Press Stretch

Place your palms together with fingers at chin level. While keeping your palms together, press and lower your hands until you feel the stretch.

*Tip: Apply downward pressure until a good stretch is felt throughout the wrists and forearms, while keeping the palms together.*



Forearm Flexor Muscles

Place one hand palm up, and gently pull the fingers toward the floor. Repeat with the other hand.

*Tip: For an effective forearm stretch, keep the elbow straight and rotate the hand outward.*



Hand Stretch

Place palm flat with fingers away and down. Pull thumb back with opposite hand.



Hamstrings

Stand straight, with your feet slightly apart. Slightly bend your left leg, putting hands on your left knee. Extend your right leg, putting hands on mid thigh, keeping your heel on the floor.

*Tip: Increase stretch by bending your opposite knee more and pointing the toes of your right leg toward chin.*



Chest and Shoulders

Place hands behind base of the head. Press both elbows back as far as possible.

*Tip: Do not push your head forward.*