

**Worksite International Stretch-Time Program** is designed for healthy people. If you have an injury or medical condition consult your health care provider before beginning this program.

Stretching is critical to a healthy body. It lengthens muscle and soft tissues while increasing flexibility and circulation through the body. Stretching is thought to reduce the likelihood of muscle strain, sprain and cumulative trauma when performed properly. It can help reduce muscle spasms and keep muscles warmed and ready to work, keeping you more active and productive through the day.

**Remember:** If you develop pain or discomfort beyond the level experienced with stretching or have a current or previous injury, please consult your doctor or your supervisor prior to stretching.

Best time to stretch is upon rising, before vigorous work, during breaks, lunch time or at the end of a long day.

Follow these instructions for proper technique.

1. Breathe deeply and relax while stretching. Work slowly and control your stretch through the movements. Don't overexert yourself.
2. Perform each stretch as instructed in this brochure.
3. Do not bounce while holding the stretch.
4. Stretching may feel uncomfortable but it shouldn't feel painful.
5. While stretching, you may feel a pulling or tight sensation. Hold the position and stretch to your tolerance, don't over stretch.

**Static Stretch:** Hold the stretch just beyond the muscle's normal range of motion for 10 seconds. Go slowly and with control. Breathe through the stretch.

**Dynamic Stretch:** Active, controlled repeated movements of the body bringing muscles through their functional range of motion without exceeding it.

Stretches shown should be performed in standing positions.



### Marching In Place

Raise your opposite arm and leg while marching in place. Duration: 1 minute  
**Dynamic stretch**



### Spine and Trunk

Lift one arm over head and the other to your side. Bend side to side. Hold stretch 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times each side.  
**Dynamic or static stretch**



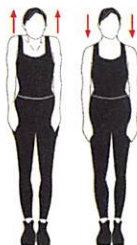
### Lower Back

Put both hands in the small of your back and bend backwards as far as comfortable. Hold briefly and return to upright. Repeat 10 times.  
**Dynamic stretch**



### Neck and Shoulders

Bend your ear to your shoulder while holding your hand on your head. Keep shoulders relaxed. Hold 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.  
**Static stretch**



### Neck and Mid-back

Shrug both shoulders up. Hold 3 seconds. Pull both shoulders down. Hold 3 seconds. Now roll your shoulders clockwise 5 times; counter clockwise 5 times.  
**Dynamic stretch**



### Rotator Cuff

Pull the elbow across the body using your other hand to stretch your shoulder. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.  
**Static stretch**



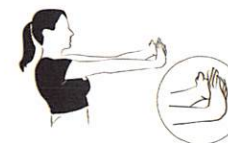
### Mid-back Row

Lift arms up. Pull back like rowing a boat. Drop arms to side. Start again. Repeat 10 times.  
**Dynamic stretch**



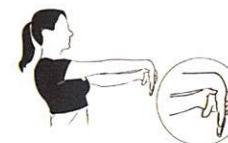
### Chest and Mid-back

Grasp both hands together behind your back. Lift them back to stretch your chest. Hold 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.  
**Static stretch**



### Forearm Flexors

Straighten elbow out in front, pull fingers and hand back, hold 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times each side.  
**Static stretch**



### Forearm Extensors

Keep elbow straight out in front, bend hand down till you feel the stretch in your forearm, hold 10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times each side.  
**Static stretch**

**Do you have a fixed height desk? Take a standing break!** Stand up at your workstation for 15 seconds 4 times an hour for a quick break from sitting!



## Self-Care Program

By Alison Heller-Ono MSPT, CDA, CASp, CIE, CPE

*The following tips may assist you in managing discomfort as it occurs at work and home. If you are currently receiving medical care, we encourage you to review these guidelines with your healthcare provider. For self-care, select the tips that will best help you and evaluate each for its benefit after trying the suggestion. If your symptoms worsens, seek medical advice.*

### Wrist/Hand Splint Management

1. Minimize the use of your splint while typing and performing work with your hand, especially if it is a full profile splint that limits your wrist, hand and finger motion. You may actually increase the amount of work your muscles are doing in the splint and cause more pain as you are trying to perform an activity in a confined or restricted position.
2. Wear the splint on an on/off cycle. Put it on while on the phone or during meetings, while in the car or when you are using your hand the least amount. Wear it for 15 minutes to 2 hours, then take it off. Do this 8-10 times/day.
3. Recognize early signs of muscle fatigue such as cramping, tightness, pressure and a tired feeling. Burning, spasms and increased pain indicates fatigue has occurred and you should have stopped sooner. This is the time to rest (apply your splint), stretch or change your activity. Icing or in some cases, heating the involved area may be appropriate as well.
4. Make sure your splint is comfortable and not too tight. It should not dig or cause swelling. Make sure it provides support in the involved areas.
5. A rest break can be a time for rest, change in activity, icing/heating or stretches and exercise.
6. The best time to wear the splint is at night while you sleep, especially if you have numbness or tingling.
7. If you have any additional questions or concerns, contact your doctor or healthcare provider immediately.

### Heat or Ice Technique:

Deciding between ice or heat can be difficult. We suggest trying ice first for mild soft tissue discomfort. Use ice to reduce inflammation, pain and spasms to the involved area. Joints however, may respond better to heat.

### Types of Ice Packs

1. Purchase a (blue) gel pack at the local drug store that is usually used for first aide. It should freeze soft and pliable. Keep this in your freezer ready for use.
2. Fill a ziplock bag with 1/3 rubbing alcohol and 2/3 water. It will freeze as a slush and be malleable to your body part.
3. A bag of frozen vegetables can work well as an ice pack.
4. Freeze water in a cup and put a popsicle stick in it for direct ice technique.

### Application of Ice and Heat

Ice packs should be applied to the involved area for at least 15-30 minutes/session. If you are sensitive to putting the pack directly to your skin, cover the pack with a thin towel (dish, wash cloth or small Teri-cloth) to protect the skin. If the area is boney, you may want to cool it down slowly to improve the tolerance. Apply the ice in 15-second increments, on/off until the skin surface cools enough to leave the ice on. You can apply the ice on/off throughout the day in 15-30 minute increments. Ice packs are excellent for use on swollen, tight, spasmed muscles, trigger points or areas that are burning or very sore and achy.

To perform direct ice technique, use the freezer cup of ice and massage the ice over the involved area in circular or lateral strokes quickly for 5-7 minutes. Direct ice is excellent for acute and chronic tendinitis and directly applied to isolated trigger points to the neck and back areas.

### Your Expectations

Although ice can be uncomfortable to apply because it is cold, it is one of the most effective methods to relieve acute and chronic pain (and swelling). It does not matter if the injury occurred today or 5 years ago, you can use it at any time. You will feel discomfort and possibly some pain the first 2-5 minutes of icing until the area is numb. After that, you should not feel discomfort. Check your skin after 5 minutes to be sure it is bright pink. It should not turn white or be mottled. If it is, you have likely over cooled the skin. Some people are allergic to ice technique and develop a rash as a result of the ice. If this develops, discontinue use immediately.

You may want to heat the area. Heating may actually irritate the area and make it worse as it is already inflamed. A hot bath or soak is acceptable, followed by icing the area. You may also do contrast baths of hot water and ice water for 15-30 seconds each for about 10 minutes.

### Self-Massage (Accupressure)

Using pressure techniques can help to reduce tight muscles. This includes using massage therapy or self-massaging with the use of a tennis ball or other slightly larger balls made of pliable material such as "Miracle Balls" or other products. Using a **Theracane self-massager (www.theracane.com)** or a tennis ball on your tight muscles will help to increase blood flow, reduce localized pain and tightness and get the muscles to relax. Use pressure technique for 15-30 seconds for up to 1-2 minutes or just roll on the ball for 1-2 minutes in the area needed most. Follow this with stretching and icing as needed.

### Medications

Your doctor may prescribe medication for your condition. We encourage you to take them as prescribed. If you are managing your pain on your own, there are numerous over-the-counter medications that can be purchased today to relieve pain and inflammation. Some of these are Aleve, Ibuprofen, Motrin IB, etc. Be wary that these products can sometimes cause upset stomach, stomach bleeding and indigestion or constipation. If you have other medical problems, discuss these medications with your doctor before taking them. Consider trying Arnica, Tiger Balm or other anti-inflammatory topical creams as well.

### Self-Care Routine

If you have acute or chronic pain, it is critical to actively participate in your rehabilitation. There is no time to delay in applying these tips to manage your pain. If you wait, your pain will likely worsen. The sooner you intervene in your own care, the sooner you will be pain minimal or pain free. It is the person that practices good self-care and self-responsibility that minimizes their symptoms and resumes an active and healthy lifestyle with or without discomfort.

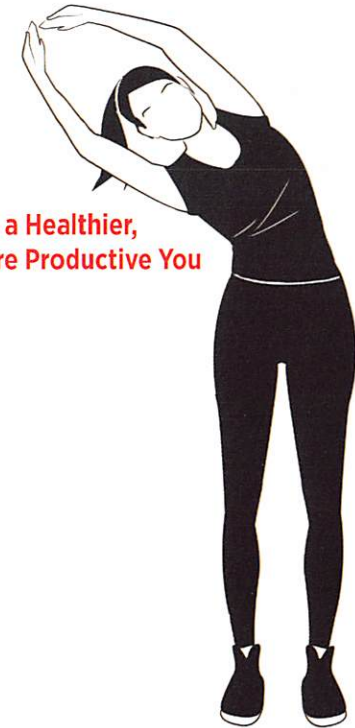
For your self-care, begin with icing the area and an active stretching program combined with task interruption/rotation at work. Request an ergonomic analysis of your work area, as this may have significant benefit as well. If pain continues, progress by adding the medication and splinting. If you are not relieved with this routine within 2 weeks or a reasonable time frame, or your symptoms worsen, please seek medical advice. Do not delay any longer. When you see the physician, discuss your self-care routine with them.

### For Healthcare Provider Use

Special Instructions:



## Stretch-Time On-Site Stretching and Self-Care Program



For a Healthier,  
More Productive You

worksiteinternational.com

831-648-8724

info@worksiteinternational.com