

EXERCISE FOR STRESS RELIEF

WORKSHOP



1. Identifying Your Stressors

Identify your stressors: Place a check mark in the box to the left of any things in your life that cause stress, and/or write in your own stressors on the lines labeled "Other."

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caretaking responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Moving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic pain or fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death of a friend or family member | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce | <input type="checkbox"/> Upcoming wedding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job loss or change | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money challenges | |

2. Exercise Ideas, Barriers and Solutions

Sample exercise activities

- Biking
- Body weight exercises
- Dancing
- Exercise classes
- Hiking
- Rolling
- Running
- Sports

- Strength training
- Swimming
- Tai chi
- Walking
- Yoga

Types of exercise I'd like to continue doing or try

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Exercise barriers and solutions

Barrier	Solution

3. Deep Breathing Directions



1. Sit comfortably with both feet on the floor and your hands in your lap.
2. Close your eyes and notice the pattern of your breath as you inhale and exhale. Is it soft or loud, slow or quick, shallow or deep?
3. Next, pay attention to the muscles in your face, upper back and neck. Are they tight? Is your jaw tight? Are your shoulders raised? Let them relax. Soften the muscles in your face, and lengthen your neck as if an invisible string is attached to the top of your head and pulling it upwards.
4. Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly. Inhale slowly through your nose for a count of 2 to 4 seconds. Then purse your lips and exhale for a count of 4 to 6 seconds. Continue this pattern. Notice the feeling of the air entering your body and filling your lungs and then the feeling of exhaling.
5. Feel your belly push out toward your hand as you inhale and pull in toward your spine as you exhale. Work on finding a pattern that works for you while making sure you exhale for a longer time than you inhale.
6. Continue for 1 to 3 minutes.

4. Stretching Exercises To Do at Home

Following are directions for 3 easy stretching exercises you can do at home.

Seated chest stretch

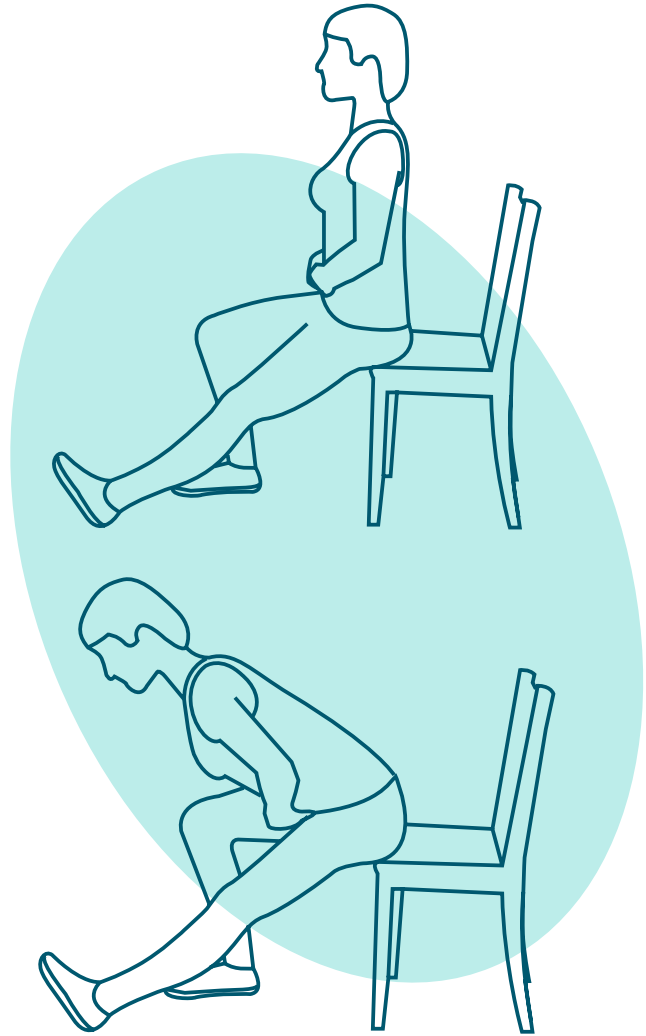
This exercise, which stretches the chest muscles, is also good for your posture. You can do this stretch while standing, or sitting in a sturdy, armless chair.

1. Keep your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold arms to your sides at shoulder height, with palms facing forward.
3. Slowly move your arms back, while squeezing your shoulder blades together. Stop when you feel a stretch or slight discomfort.
4. Hold the position for 10 to 30 seconds.
5. Repeat 3 to 5 times.



Seated hamstring stretch

1. Position yourself toward the front of a chair with your feet hip-width apart.
2. Sit upright and tighten your stomach muscles.
3. Stretch your right leg forward, leaving a slight bend at the knee, and point your toes up.
4. Place your hands on the thigh of your left leg.
5. Keep your back flat and lean forward from the hip at no more than 45 degrees.
6. Stop when you feel a stretch in the back of the right leg. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
7. Repeat with the other leg.



TIP: _____

This exercise can also be done in a standing position. Keep back flat for duration of exercise.

Seated hip flexors/quadriceps stretch

Precaution: If you've had recent joint surgery, check with your doctor before doing this exercise.

1. Sit sideways on the edge of a stable chair, bench or other low, firm surface.
2. Gently move your right leg back behind you. Make sure your leg is beside the chair or bench, not under it.
3. Tuck your buttocks tightly under your hips.
4. You will feel a stretch on the front of your right hip and upper thigh. Hold the stretch.
5. Repeat with your left leg.

