

Stretching is a key component of your overall treatment plan. Stretching is used to increase the flexibility of the leg and foot muscles including the Achilles and plantar fascia. Tightness in the leg and foot causes stress applied to foot and ankle resulting in pain. Below are some important stretches to be performing throughout the day. Stretching should be done 2-3 times per day. Hold each stretch for 20-30 seconds and repeat each 3 times.

1. Wall Gastrocnemius Stretch

Place both hands on the wall in front of you with one leg back, one forward. The front leg should



have a slight bend, the back leg straight. With a straight back lean forward putting your weight on the front leg. Stretch should be felt in the mid-calf.

5. Eccentric Gastrocnemius Stretch



Stand on the edge of stair with heels hanging off the step. Rise up on your tip toes slowly lowering your heel below the stair. Hold when you feel the stretch in your calves.

2. Soleus Stretch

Use a similar position as for the gastrocnemius wall stretch except both legs are slightly bent.

As you push into the wall shift your weight onto the back leg. Stretch should be felt in the lower calf.



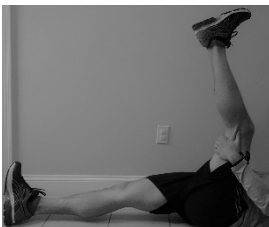
6. Rolling Stretch

Sit on the edge of a chair. With a frozen water bottle, tennis ball or another round object roll the object throughout your arch. Perform for 30-60 seconds, 3 times.



3. Hamstring Stretch

Lie flat on the floor and grab the back of your thigh with your knee bent. Try to get the thigh perpendicular to the ground then straighten your leg so the knee is straight.



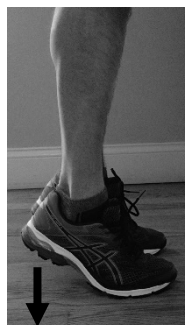
7. Towel Stretch

While seated place a towel or stretching band around the ball of your foot. Use your hands to pull back gently on the towel feeling the stretch in your arch and calf.



4. Morning Gastrocnemius Stretch

When you get out of bed, first stand on your tip toes and slowly lower your heels to the ground. (This will help with the first step out of bed pain.)



8. Towel Curls (strengthening)

Place a towel on the floor with your heel on it. Curl your toes, bunching the towel into your arch. Repeat 10 times. As you get stronger place something weighted on the end of the towel for more resistance.

