

# take a break series #1



Regular stretching improves your balance, strength and flexibility.

Perform these five 'take a break' office stretches each day and reduce your risk of injury and back pain. Remember:

- Hold a sustained stretch for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Don't bounce when stretching.
- Only stretch to the point of mild discomfort.



## Chest stretch

Tight chest muscles lead to hunched over shoulders and forward head position - a recipe for a sore upper back.

1. Stand with your feet hip width apart.
2. Tighten your abdominals. Your head, neck and shoulders should stay relaxed. Clasp your hands behind your back.
3. Lift your arms behind you until you feel the stretch across your chest. Hold for 15 seconds.



## Hamstring stretch

Hip or knee pain could be due to tight hamstrings. Lengthen your hamstrings for improved movement and pain relief.

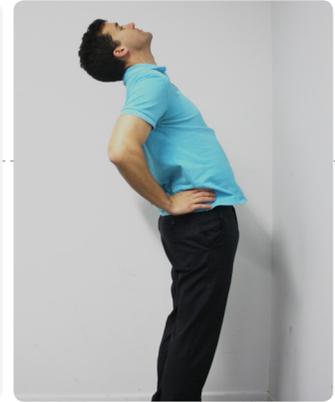
1. Start standing upright, extend one leg forward and rest it on your heel.
2. Slowly lower yourself by bending the opposite leg and poking your backside out until you feel a gentle stretch on the straight leg.
3. Hold for 15-20 seconds.



## Back stretch

After just 15 minutes of holding a stooped over posture the ligaments in your back become stretched increasing your risk of injury.

1. Place your hands on your lower back as support.
2. Slowly arch your back and go only as far as is comfortable.
3. Hold for 15-20 seconds and slowly return to standing upright.



## Quadricep stretch

Soreness in your knee caps could be because your quadriceps are too tight creating tension at the knee cap.

1. Bring the right foot up to the buttocks and hold it with your hands.
2. Extend hips forwards until you feel a stretch in the front of the thigh.
3. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat for opposite leg.



## Neck stretch

Tight neck muscles are a common cause of headaches and can lead to pain in the lower head, top of the head and around the eyes.

1. Tilt your head to one side, as if you are trying to touch your shoulder with your ear. Slightly turn your head as if looking towards the sky.
2. Apply GENTLE pressure to the top of your head with your hand to increase the stretch.
3. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and repeat on the opposite side.



# check - work - break

CHECK YOUR WORKSPACE. WORK SMART. TAKE MOVEMENT BREAKS.



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Reference: [www.ddoctor.com](http://www.ddoctor.com), [www.healthycomputing.com](http://www.healthycomputing.com), [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)