Lower Body Stretching Program

Range of motion is the amount of movement or flexibility you have at each joint. It is common to see a decrease in range of motion after an illness or injury, especially with less activity. Your parent or caregiver can help you with the stretches below to maintain or improve the flexibility in your legs. To get the most benefit from these stretches, we recommend practicing them 2 to 3 times per day.

**Ankle dorsiflexion (toes up) and plantarflexion (toes down)**

1. Start with bed flat and both legs straight.
2. Place 1 hand on the ball of the foot and place the other hand under the heel or ankle.
3. Push the foot up and down through the ankle’s full range of motion.

Repeat 5 to 10 times.
Calf stretch

1. Start with bed flat and both legs straight.

2. Place 1 hand on the ball of the foot and place the other hand under the heel or ankle.

• Alternative hand positioning (see second photo on right): Cup the heel with your hand and press your forearm into the ball of the foot. Place the other hand on top of the knee to keep it straight.

3. Then, push the foot up as far as you can to stretch the calf muscle.

4. Hold it for 30 to 60 seconds.

Repeat 3 times.
Lower Body Stretching Program

**Hip and knee flexion (bend) and extension (straighten)**

1. Start with bed flat and both legs straight.
2. Place 1 hand under the heel and place the other hand under the knee.
3. Bend the knee up toward the chest, moving your hand to the front of the knee as you push into full hip and knee flexion.
4. Straighten the leg back out to the start position, moving your hand back under the knee to support the leg.

Repeat 5 to 10 times.
**Hamstring Stretch**

1. Start with bed flat and both legs straight.
2. Place 1 hand under the heel and place the other hand on top of the knee to help keep it straight.
3. Lift the leg up to stretch the muscle on the back of the thigh.
4. You may need to place 1 knee up on the bed to get close to your child’s leg so you don’t strain your arms or back.
5. You may also rest the stretching leg on your shoulder and use your upper body to push the leg up into a better stretch.
6. Hold it for 30 to 60 seconds.

Repeat 3 times.
**Hip rotation (in and out)**

1. Start with bed flat and legs straight.
2. Place 1 hand under the heel and place the other hand under the knee.
3. Move the leg up until it is bent at 90 degrees at the hip and 90 degrees at the knee.
4. Move your top hand to the top, outside of the knee.
5. Picture a line pointing straight down through the knee. This will be the center point for this exercise.
6. Move the lower leg inward through its full range of motion, keeping the knee in a stable position.
7. Move the lower leg outward through its full range of motion, keeping the knee in a stable position.

Repeat 5 to 10 times.
**Hip abduction (leg out) and hip adduction (leg in)**

1. Start with bed flat and both legs straight.
2. Place 1 hand under the heel and place the other hand under the knee.
3. Move the leg out to the side through its full range of motion.
4. Move the leg back in to the start position.

Repeat 5 to 10 times.

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**To Learn More**
- Occupational / Physical Therapy
  206-987-2113
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

**Free Interpreter Services**
- In the hospital, ask your child’s nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Seattle Children’s offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children’s will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children’s. However, your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider.

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