

MOBILITY EXERCISES

Flexibility is the ability to move muscles and joints through their normal range of movement. As our bodies change with age we often lose our natural stretch mechanism or flexibility. This can often lead to stiffness, loss of movement and sometimes pain.

These gentle exercises are designed to help lengthen some of the muscles surrounding the spine. Benefits can include reduced muscle soreness, a reduction in joint stiffness as well as improved flexibility.

The exercises are very gentle and are not designed to increase your pain.

You should feel a comfortable stretch when performing these exercises. Begin with a few repetitions of the exercise, little and often (ideally 2-3 times a day initially). You should be able to increase the amount you are able to perform and the duration you hold each exercise, as you improve.



Knee Hugs

Lay on your back.

Bend the leg to be stretched towards your chest holding onto the knee with both arms.

Pull your knee towards your chest without lifting your head up. You should feel a comfortable stretch in the buttock. Hold for about 6 seconds. Repeat on the opposite side.

Repeat x6 -10 repetitions both sides.

Increase the time you hold the leg towards your chest as able. Build up to 30 seconds.



Knee rolls

Lying on your back with your knees bent; place your arms out to the side with your palms turned upwards.

Slowly roll your knees to the right, trying to keep your knees and ankles together. Only move as far as comfortable. Feel a gentle stretch as you move your legs away on the left side of your trunk. Return your knees to the middle. Repeat on the left side, feeling a stretch on the right side of the trunk.

Repeat x6 each side, alternating left then right. Gradually increase the repetitions, or as you find you are able to move further or hold the position for longer.



The Cat

On all fours, arch your spine up towards the ceiling, tucking your bottom under whilst allowing your head to relax between your arms. Try to draw the lower part of your stomach in whilst you are doing this. Hold for a few seconds.

Follow by hollowing out the small of your back lifting your head up to look forward, keep your arms straight. Gently push your bottom out. Hold for a few seconds then relax. Try to keep you stomach tightened until the end of the exercise.

Repeat x6 -10 times. Try to increase the time you hold the position for and the time you hold your stomach in. Try not to hold your breath whilst tightening your stomach.