

# Press Pause for a Stretch Break

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**Y**ou know the feeling. You've been stuck at your desk for hours, and your body is stiff and achy. You're finding it hard to concentrate, and every time you look at the pile of work on your desk you tense up even more. When you do finally get up from your chair your knees creak, your muscles

ache and your first few steps make you want to sit down again. It's an exhausting cycle.

Fortunately, there are some simple stretching exercises you can do at your desk to help you stay loose, relaxed and tension-free. Make a habit of doing these quick and easy stretches every day and your whole body will feel better. They're don't require any equipment or experience to do.

## *Stretching the stress away*

Stretching at your desk combined with deep breathing can help you to relax and concentrate at work. Hold each stretch for at least 10 seconds, or to a point where the tension seems to melt away as the muscle relaxes. Be sure to stretch slowly, avoid bouncing and stretch only as far as you feel comfortable. You should never feel any pain when stretching, but rather a slight pull or mild discomfort. If you have time, try to repeat each stretch at least two times.

## *An easy beginner stretching routine*

Ready to add some stretches to your day? This easy beginner stretching routine will help keep the aches and pains away.

For additional information and helpful hints on how to put physical activity back into your day, visit the Winnipeg *in motion* website at [www.winnipeginmotion.ca](http://www.winnipeginmotion.ca) or call the *in motion* Info line at 940-3648.

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### *Wrist, Hand and Forearm Stretches*

Extend one arm out in front of your body, parallel to the floor with the palm facing up. Apply gentle pressure on the palm of your hand, pulling it gently back towards you to feel a gentle stretch through your wrist.



### *Chest and Shoulder Stretch*

Clasp your hands together behind your head, keeping your head in a neutral position looking straight ahead. Pull your elbows back, while thrusting your chest out.



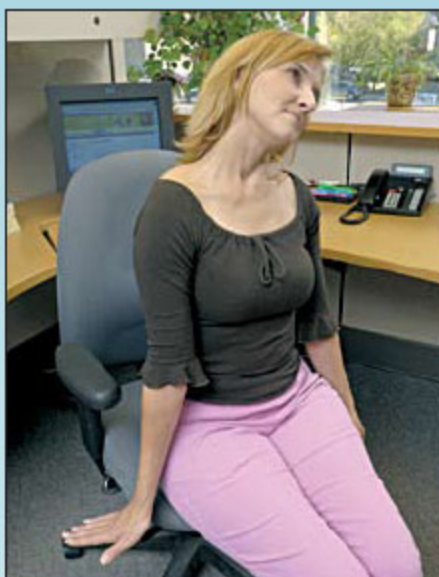
### *Triceps Stretch*

Stretch your triceps by raising your arm up near your head and bending at the elbow. Gently apply pressure with your opposite hand and hold the stretch.



### *Back and Forearm Stretch*

Sitting tall, clasp your hands together and press your arms directly out in front of you. Hold for 10 seconds.



### *Neck Stretch*

Look straight ahead with your shoulders relaxed, not raised. Tilt your head to one side and press your opposite palm towards the floor. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat on the opposite side.



### *Hamstring / Lower Back Stretch*

From a seated position, extend one leg out with your toes pointing straight up towards the ceiling. With a straight back, lean forward from the hips and reach down your leg until you feel a slight pull. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat on both legs.