

Stretches

A brief stretch before walking, skiing, or any activity can decrease the risk of injury and get your body ready to move. These stretches from the [Fitness for Falls Prevention](#) program are ideal for older adults on their way out the door to participate in Walk to Tuk!

Standing Leg Stretch



Stand near a support, step forward with the left foot, and keep both heels flat on the floor. Press the back leg straight while bending the front knee. Hold the stretch for 15-20 seconds, then release. Switch legs.

Quadriceps (Top Thigh Muscles) Stretch



Stand tall and hold onto a support. Flex the right knee, bringing the heel toward the buttocks, and grab the right foot with the right hand. Hold for 15-20 seconds, then release. Repeat with the other foot.

*Note: If you cannot reach the foot, you can grab the back of the shoe or pant leg.

Seated Glute (Buttock Muscles) Stretch



Sit tall in a chair with feet flat on the floor. Wrap hands around the right leg just above the knee and bring the knee up toward the chest. Lift as far as comfortable and hold for 15-20 seconds. Release the leg to the ground, relax, and then repeat with the other leg.

Seated Tibia Touch



Sit on the edge of a chair. Extend the left leg out to the front and point the toes of the left foot up. Bend the right knee to a 90-degree angle and plant the right foot firmly on the floor. Reach for the left leg with the left hand. Hold for 15-20 seconds, then release. Repeat the stretch on the right side.

*Note: If you cannot reach your foot, try to reach as close to it as you can.

Side Lunge Stretch



Stand with feet wider than hip width apart and feet parallel. Shift weight to the right, bending the right knee. As your weight sinks down through the right heel, make sure the knee does not go past the toes. Keep the left leg extended and feet parallel. You may place hands on the right thigh for support. Hold for 15-20 seconds, then repeat with the opposite leg.

*Note: This can also be done seated at the edge of a chair.

Bear Hug Stretch



Sit or stand tall with shoulders relaxed and arms at sides. Cross arms across chest (right over left), grabbing the outside of the opposite shoulder with each hand. Bring the chin to the chest and hold for 15-20 seconds. Repeat with the left arm on top of the right.

Deep Breathing with Lateral Arm Raise



Sit or stand tall in mountain pose (feet shoulder width apart). For more of a balance challenge, stand tall in tandem stance (feet close together, as illustrated). Ensure weight is spread evenly over both feet. Begin with arms relaxed at the sides and take a deep breath in while sweeping arms laterally above the head. Exhale and release arms back to sides. Repeat 3-5x or as desired.