The Stretch Don’t Strain Program is an on-site 10-15 minute daily stretching routine. The stretches diagrammed can prepare the body for everyday work stresses. This is done by stretching and strengthening specific muscles commonly associated with strains, sprains and ergonomic injuries. If performed correctly and on a regular basis, these simple stretches may reduce the incidences of common muscle injuries.

Initially, your safety officer/coordinator should conduct an introduction to the program and overview of strains and sprains. Subsequently, a designated Trainer should then lead the daily stretching program, at the start of the shift, by using the examples provided.

**Stretching Guidelines**

- If you have questions about your ability to perform any stretch, consult your physician or Health Coach.
- Make sure muscles are appropriately warmed up before you stretch.
- Stretch at least 5–7 days per week and stretch all major muscle groups.
- Don’t bounce. Stretch in a smooth movement to avoid injury. Minimize movement of other body parts during stretching.
- Stretch to the limit of movement, not the point of pain.
- Keep your breathing slow and rhythmic while holding stretches.
- Stretch the muscles in various positions to improve range of motion.
- Maintain soft joints. Do not lock knees, elbows, etc.
### Upper Body

#### LEVATOR SCAPULAE STRETCH
While standing, raise right arm to your side, bending elbow so fingers point up and palm faces forward. Lift elbow slightly above shoulder. In this position, rest the elbow against a door jamb or other surface. This action rotates the outside of the shoulder blade up and the inside of it down. Next, turn the head to the left and bring the chin down, stretching the back of the neck. Hold this for about 30-60 seconds. Repeat on other side.

#### OVERHEAD TRICEPS AND SHOULDER STRETCH
Start standing or sitting tall. Bring one arm overhead and drop your forearm behind you, resting it on your back between your shoulder blades. With your other hand, grab right above your bent elbow and pull gently, until you feel a stretch in your shoulder and the back of your arm. Try to keep your biceps close to your ear, and don’t force it past. Hold for at least 30 seconds and then repeat on the other side.

#### CHEST STRETCH
Standing with legs hip distance apart, interlace fingers behind back. Slowly lift arms away from body. Hold for 15-30 seconds repeat 2-4 times.

#### WRIST FLEXION
Extend left arm in front of you with wrist bent, fingers pointed down. Grasp fingers of left hand with right hand. Gently pull left hand toward body while keeping left arm straight. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

#### WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH
Extend left arm with wrist bent, fingers pointing up. Grasp fingers of left hand with right hand. Gently pull left hand toward body while keeping left arm straight. Hold for 20-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

### Lower Body

#### STANDING QUADRICEPS STRETCH
In a standing position, keeping thighs together, bend right leg at knee and hold ankle or foot behind you with right hand. Keep body and hips straight while pulling right heel toward buttocks. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

#### SEATED FIGURE FOUR STRETCH
Seated in a chair, cross one leg on top of the other so that your ankle is sitting over the opposite knee. Place one hand on the knee of the crossed leg. Gently lean your trunk forward while pressing gently on the crossed knee until you feel a mild to moderate stretch in the hip and buttock area. Hold the stretch for 15-20 seconds, then repeat 3-5 times on each side.

#### IT BAND STRETCH
In a standing position, cross right foot in front of left. Lean toward right side and hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

#### STANDING CALF STRETCH
Standing with toes pointed straight, bring right leg back. Bend left leg until a stretch is felt in the calf. Hold 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

Questions? Reach out to the Wellness Council of Arizona challenges@welcoaz.org | (520) 293-3369