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

#### NECK ROTATION
In a standing position, gently rotate the head, to the left and right, with the chin adjacent to the shoulder.
Repeat 2-4 times.

#### UPPER BACK STRETCH
In a standing position, clasp your hands together, put your hands out in front of you until arms are straight, keeping your back upright, tuck your chin to your chest and keep pushing your hands in front of you. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times.

#### STRAIGHT ARM SHOULDER STRETCH
Raise right arm to shoulder height in front of you. Grasp above right elbow with left hand and pull arm across body. Hold for 20-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

#### WIDE TIP-OVER TUCK
Begin standing with feet in a wide straddle. Bring arms behind you and interlace fingers. Press the heels of your palms together in a double fist. Pull hands away from shoulders to increase the stretch in the chest. Lean chest forward and lift hands up toward the sky as you fold your torso toward the floor. Hold for 5 breaths.

#### SHOULDER CIRCLES
Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart and your arms hanging loosely by your sides. Move your shoulders in a circle-like fashion, bringing them backward, upward, forward, and then downward to the starting position. Repeat for a complete set and then reverse the direction for a complete set.

#### DOOR JAM CHEST STRETCH
Keep left arm straight while grabbing door jam and twist body and head away, toward right side. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times on each side.

### Lower Body

#### STANDING TRUNK EXTENSION STRETCH
Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Place your hands in the small of your back for support. Slowly lean backward increasing the arch of your lower back until you feel a mild stretch in the abdominal muscles and slight pressure in the lower back. You can hold here for 15-20 seconds, then repeating it 3-5 times.

#### STANDING FIGURE FOUR STRETCH
Start by bending your knees slightly and lift one foot, bending your knee to rest your ankle on the thigh of your standing leg. Press your ankle into your thigh and your thigh into your ankle. Press down with your bent knee to open your hip and find your balance. Rest your elbows on your knee and ankle, pressing your palms together or you can hold onto a chair. Hold stretch, then release and repeat with the other foot.

#### STANDING TOE TOUCH
Stand up tall and straight. Hinge at the hips and reach down toward your toes while keeping legs together and your back straight. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-4 times.

#### GLUTEUS STRETCH
In a standing position lift right leg, grasping under thigh, and bend knee toward chest. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
Repeat 2-4 times on each leg.

Questions? Reach out to the Wellness Council of Arizona
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