

HAMSTRING STRETCHING

The data tells us that one of the best ways to reduce the risk of hamstring injury is to maintain flexibility in the muscles around the lower back, gluteals and upper leg (hamstrings and quadriceps). These exercises are designed to help you achieve this goal.

SUPINE LUMBAR TWIST STRETCH

Lying flat on your back, cross one leg over the other by twisting your hips and spine. Keep your opposite arm outstretched. You can hold on to your knee to make the stretch stronger if you feel comfortable.

Repeat 3 times

Hold for 20 seconds



Video:

<http://youtu.be/BzYBkAvdCJY>

DOUBLE LEG BACK STRETCH

Lie flat on your back, and bend your knees towards your chest. Hold this position and feel a gentle stretch in your back. If you get any groin pain while doing this exercise, stop and inform your therapist. Relax, and repeat as necessary.

Repeat 3 times

Hold for 20 seconds



Video:

<http://youtu.be/ZEz80zvUv4>

LUMBAR AND THORACIC SIDE FLEXION SITTING

Sitting with good upright posture, run your arm down the side of the chair leg by side-bending your spine. Repeat to the other side. This is a good mobility exercise for the upper and lower back while sat down, if you feel your back is starting to get stiff.

Repeat 3 times

Hold for 20 seconds

Perform both sides



Video:

<http://youtu.be/Rze6cxfJpOQ>

GLUTE STRETCH SUPINE 3

Lie on your back, and bend your knee to 90 degrees (i.e. pointing straight up). Place your ankle across your opposite knee and pull your knee towards your chest to feel a stretch in your bottom. You can also use a towel to assist you.

Repeat 3 times

Perform both sides



Video:

<http://youtu.be/zpaExOK4S8M>

EXTERNAL ROTATION TABLE GLUTE STRETCH

This is an alternate to lying on the floor. Place your foot on a table, with your leg turned inwards. Lean forwards slightly to feel a stretch in your buttock. Hold the stretch.

Repeat 3 times

Hold for 20 seconds

Perform both sides



Video:

http://youtu.be/Nh3gloc_x4I

FOAM ROLLER HAMSTRING STRETCH

Sit down placing a foam roller under your Hamstrings (back of the legs). Your feet should be off the ground, and you can balance using your arms. Roll the roller up and down your Hamstrings to create a stretch. You can cross your legs to emphasise the stretch on one side.



SETS

REPS

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HAMSTRING CONDITIONING

After ensuring that the muscles and tissues around the low back, gluteals and upper leg are flexible, the most important aspect of preventing hamstring injury is to build hamstring strength and ensure there is no neural tension in the nerves running from your spine, down your leg. These exercises will help achieve this.

SCIATIC NERVE GLIDE FLOSS 3

Sit with good posture, and straighten your affected leg and bend your ankle towards you, as you extend your neck. Then bring your neck towards your chest as you relax the ankle. This will glide the sciatic nerve.



SETS REPS

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/HkXkUjffCYw>

SHOULDER BRIDGE 3

Start position is shoulder bridge level one, with a neutral pelvis and the spine rolled away from the mat. Inhale to prepare, exhale to lengthen and straighten your leg. Avoid tilting the pelvis. Inhale and fold your leg back to the mat, ready to repeat on the opposite leg. Exhale, as you roll the spine down vertebra by vertebra to finish.



Repeat 5 times | Perform both sides

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/R7yrLIC0uJs>

LEG SWING

Hold on to a table, and swing your leg in front of you and then behind you in a controlled way. It's a great way to dynamically warm up your leg and hip, but also used to gain more mobility to your hip joint. As you swing your leg forward in front of you, pull your foot upwards and slouch your back and tuck chin to chest. (slump) Then as you swing leg back behind you straighten your back up. This is a dynamic nerve stretch.



Repeat 5 times | Perform both sides

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/Rze6cxfJpOQ>

FULL SQUAT SINGLE LEG CUP REACH

Place 5 cups in front of you, and stand in the middle of them. Squat down (on one leg), and reach for one cup then come up, then repeat with the second cup, etc. Be careful to maintain control to the leg, and do not perform the exercise too quickly. Always keep your foot flat on the ground, do not let your heel raise from the floor.



Repeat 5 times | Perform both sides

 **Video:**
<http://youtu.be/FslkTrYqdcS>

ROMANIAN DEAD LIFT

Keep your knees just slightly bent, shoulder width apart, and place a dowel rod or barbell on the blocks. Keep your back straight/flat as you bend your knees more towards the bar. Hold the bar shoulder width apart or slightly narrower, with one palm facing up, one palm down (or both palms facing down). Lift the bar up by straightening the legs and extending the back at the same time. Keep the bar close to your shins during the movement. If you lack flexibility you may need to bend your knees a little. Squeeze the shoulder blades at the top of the movement. Return to the start position.



Repeat 5 times | Perform both sides

 **Video:**
http://youtu.be/Nh3gioc_x4I

NORDIC HAMSTRING CURL

This exercise is best done with a training partner who anchors your feet. But it can be done at home if you can find something heavy to secure your feet under. Kneel on the ground—it's best if it's padded, anchor your feet and lower your body to the ground as slowly as possible keeping your back straight ie. rigid. When your hamstrings can no longer support your weight, let yourself fall to the ground, and catch yourself in a push-up position. Your goal is to control the descent for as long as possible. Start with very low repetitions ie. 2-4 repetitions a day and only build on this if and when you're not too sore.



SETS 1 REPS 2-4

 **Video:**
<http://spxj.nl/2iDFKaQ>

Video courtesy of Physiotutors



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