

Do's & Dont's

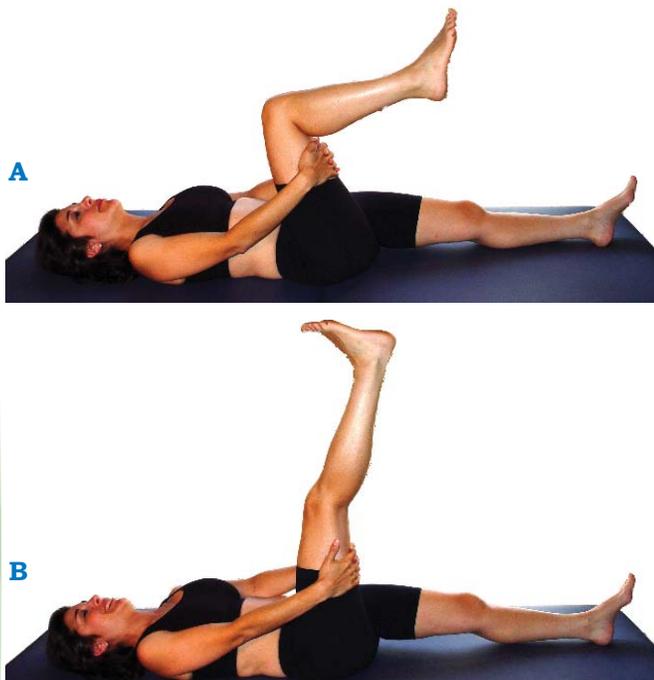
- Avoid swimming the crawl stroke when swimming
- Avoid bicycling with a seat that is too low & doesn't allow you to fully straighten your legs.
- Avoid sitting in a chair that "cuts" or puts pressure on the back of your thighs.
 - A chair that is too high for you will require you to slide forward to put your feet on the ground & this will, in turn, put pressure on the back of your thighs. Use a footrest to avoid this problem.
 - When selecting a chair or sofa for the home make sure that the front edge of the seat is rounded & well padded. Also, make sure that when you are seated in it your feet rest on the floor & your buttocks also rests on its seatback.
- Remember to stretch before & after exercising.
- Specific strengthening exercises for this muscle should only be done once you are free of pain.

One Leg Seated Reach Exercise



Start seated on the floor with one leg straight out in front of you & the other bent with your foot against your inner thigh. Reach your hands as far down your leg as possible. When you can't reach your hands any further, try to push your heel through the floor for 15-30 seconds. Rest for 5 seconds & then repeat this stretch 2-3 times on each side. Repeat this routine 2-3 times a day.

Laying on Your Back Hamstring Stretch



Lay down upon your back with a rolled towel underneath your lower spine for support. Grasp the back of one of your thighs with both hands & pull your leg so that it is at a near right-angle at your hip (figure A). Straighten your knee to the best of your ability & then point your toes to your face (figure B). Try to press your heel toward the ceiling. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds. Repeat this exercise 3 times and then 3 times a day on both sides.

Standing Hamstring Stretch



Using a wall or flat table, place your hands upon it. Your feet should be about 6 inches apart. The goal is to keep your neck, upper & lower back relatively flat & elongated putting your feet beneath your lower abdomen & trying to straighten your legs so that your buttocks goes toward the ceiling. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds. Then, relax and, while keeping your spine straight, bend your knees as if you were going to sit down on something. Repeat this exercise 3 times.

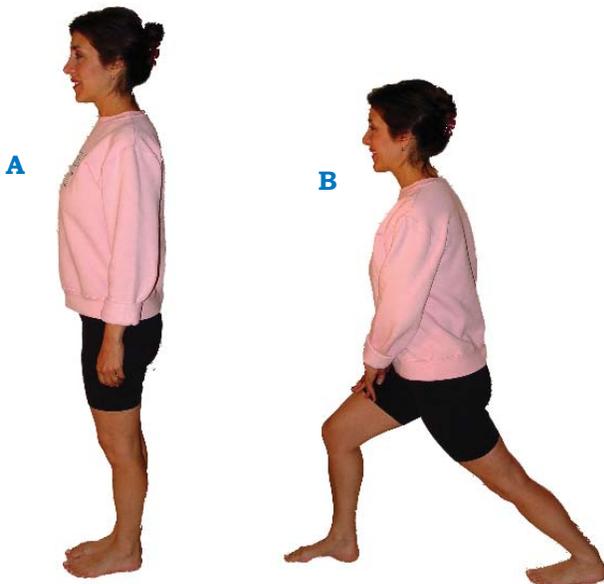
Tennis Ball Acupressure



Lay upon your back. A tennis ball can be used to create pressure on the tender points (figure A). Allow your thigh to dwell upon or to roll the ball beneath the tender points, like a massage, until they disappear or until you think you've had enough! I always recommend a good stretch after this self-massage!

1. Start in the standing position (Figure A).
2. Step forward with one leg & comfortably bend at your knees, while exhaling through your nose (Figure B).
3. Resume the original standing position, while inhaling through your nose (Figure A).
4. Repeat this exercise for the other side & continue for 5-15 repetitions alternating sides.

Lunges



Leg Curls Using a Home Exercise Machine



Sit with your feet in the curl-up bar, figure A. While fully exhaling through your nose, bend your knees as in figure B. Upon inhaling fully, allow your legs to extend into the starting position. Perform this exercise 8-12 times on each side and repeat it 2-3 times each day.

Remember a strengthening program should not be started until you are pain free & cleared by your physician.

The Elliptical Trainer, Walking, Running & Cycling

Probably the best exercise for this muscle group is walking. Make sure that you maintain a good posture while walking and that your hip is able to fully extend when your toe leaves the ground. You should feel your gluteus maximus contract when you are in this fully extended position. If you don't feel it, then stretching the hip flexors, as well as the gluteus maximus, is a must.

Running (figure C) and cycling (figure A), as well as using an elliptical trainer (figure D), are also great exercises to strengthen the quadriceps. **Remember to stretch before & after these exercises to decrease your chance of a recurrence of injuring your quadriceps.**

