

GUIDANCE NOTES
WEEK 6

WHAT	Flexibility & Stretching
WHY	<p>Modern living tends to encourage the body to stiffen up and muscles to shorten. Then Parkinson's as a condition often increases muscle stiffness and rigidity, which if allowed to develop, can become debilitating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is also common for people to develop imbalance or lack of symmetry in their bodies and stretching exercises will help to counteract this. - Good flexibility helps improves balance, helps avoid pain and injury, release tension and improve overall function.
HOW	<p>Add a short but effective stretching routine to the end of your cardio and resistance exercise sessions, or your walk...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary goal from this stretching is to hit the bigger muscle groups in the body, and some of the common areas of tightness for people with Parkinson's. • You may find this quite uncomfortable to start with, but it shouldn't be painful, and it will become progressively easier. There is no quick fix, but if you do these stretches on a regular basis, you should notice improvements in your flexibility, mobility and balance quite quickly. • These stretches are also a great opportunity to practice getting down to and up from the floor. If this poses a problem, use whatever safety measures and aids you need to start with, like holding onto chairs or beds, but try to wean yourself off them over time. • At this stage hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds... repeat them 2/4 times each... and breathe! Engage your diaphragmatic, and full breathing, so that your deepest breath coincides with the maximal stretch point. • Avoid bouncing or dynamic/ballistic stretching.

It is important the body is warm and ready to allow the stretches to work and to avoid injury. Deep breathing will help to relax you.

FLEXIBILITY AND STRETCHING

Flexibility Routine

Hamstrings



Stand with feet hip width apart and parallel. Move your right foot forward until its heel is in line with the toes of the left foot. Keeping your back flat and your right leg straight, lean forward, bend your left knee slightly and put both hands on the top of your left knee. Continue leaning forward until you feel the hamstring, or back of the thigh and your right leg stretch. Hold for 30-60 seconds breathing freely, and then stand up and return to start position. Repeat for the other leg.

Quads



Lie face down on the floor with your head resting on both hands. Bend your right knee and reach behind you with your right hand to try to clasp your right ankle. Gently pull your heel towards your bottom and feel the front of the right thigh stretch. Start gently, holding for just 10 seconds, but then over time try to touch the heel to your bottom and hold for 30-60 seconds. Relax, and then repeat for the other leg.

Calf



Stand with feet together facing the wall, with the toes about 30 cm from the wall. Lean forward and place your elbows on the wall at shoulder height. Keep the legs locked straight and push down on your heels. Hold for 30-60 seconds breathing deeply. To increase the stretch move your feet further away from the wall. To feel even more stretch put 1 foot forward so all your weight is on the other leg increasing the stretch in that calf muscle. Repeat for other leg.

Shoulders + Adductors/Groin



Lie on your back on the floor with your knees bent and feet together. Holding a TV remote or similar, raise your arms back over your head. Start gently but over time try to touch your hands to the floor without the elbows bending too much. To add in a stretch for your adductors, or groin, move your knees apart and place the soles of the feet flat together. Gently drop your knees down and relax, allowing gravity to gradually stretch to groin. Breathe deeply and hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Very carefully and slowly bring the knees together, bring the arms back down to your sides and carefully stand up.

Neck



Stand with feet together, knees slightly bent, stomach in, chin parallel to the ground and hands by your sides. Ideally looking in a mirror, gently lean your head over to the right, trying to get your right ear closer to your right shoulder. Use the mirror to ensure your shoulders stay level and do not move, so only the head is moving. Breathe deeply and hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Slowly returned to start position and repeat on the other side.