

## Calf Stretches

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After an injury or surgery, exercises can help you return to daily activities and enjoy a more active, healthy lifestyle. Following a well-structured program can also help you return to sports and other activities.

**Flexibility:** Stretching muscles is important for restoring a range of motion and preventing injury. Gentle stretching after strengthening exercises can help reduce muscle soreness and keep your muscles long and flexible.

**Getting Started:** Warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of low impact activity, like walking before performing these stretches. Do not ignore pain: You should not feel pain during an exercise and it is advisable to talk to your health care professional if you have pain while performing these stretches.

### 1. Heel Cord Stretch

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Repetitions
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2 sets of 10
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Days per week
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6 to 7
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**Main muscles worked:** Gastrocnemius-soleus complex  
You should feel this stretch in your calf and into your heel

**Equipment needed:** None

#### Step-by-step directions

- Stand facing a wall with your unaffected leg forward with a slight bend at the knee. Your affected leg is straight and behind you, with the heel flat and the toes pointed in slightly.
- Keep both heels flat on the floor and press your hips forward toward the wall.
- Hold this stretch for 30 seconds and then relax for 30 seconds. Repeat.

Tip	Do not arch your back.
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### 2. Heel Cord Stretch with Bent Knee

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Repetitions
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2 sets of 10
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Days per week
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6 to 7
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**Main muscles worked:** Soleus  
You should feel this stretch in your calf, the sides of your ankle, and into your heel

**Equipment needed:** None

#### Step-by-step directions

- Stand facing a wall with your unaffected leg forward with a slight bend at the knee. Your affected leg is behind you, with the knee bent and the toes pointed in slightly.
- Keep both heels flat on the floor and press your hips forward toward the wall.
- Hold the stretch for 30 seconds and then relax for 30 seconds. Repeat.

Tip	Keep your hips centered over both feet.
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