

Myofit Massage Therapy

Stretches for Cycling



Guidelines for Stretching

Always assume the stretch start position and comfortably apply the stretch as directed.

Think Yoga - gently and slowly, no ballistic actions or bouncing at joint end range.

Once you can feel the stretch is sufficient for you (generally a tension through the target muscle/s), hold the position for 15-20 seconds then gently reverse the action to release the muscle/s.

An effective stretch session will involve completing each stretch about 3 times, and making sure you stretch bilaterally (on both sides of your body equally).

Never stretch an injury, or damaged muscles, tendons, etc.

Warm-up prior to stretching.

Stretch before and after exercise or heavy physical activity.

Breathe slowly and easily during the stretches.

Stretch only to the point of tension - never 'bounce' or apply ballistic aspects to your stretches.

Stretch all major muscles, and their opposing muscles, gently and slowly.

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4 Step Ilio Tibial Band Stretch (side lying)



STEP 1 Move your knee slightly forward & bring your heel towards your gluteals.

Grab your foot



STEP 2 Raise knee up until you feel a stretch and then as far back as you can.

Remember to keep your hip to the floor.



STEP 3 Lower your knee from position 2 towards the floor



STEP 4 Place the opposite ankle on top of the knee and pull down towards floor to the point of stretch and hold for 30 seconds. You can then slowly untangle yourself.

THIS STRETCH SHOULD BE DONE TO BOTH LEGS 3 TIMES A DAY.

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL TO FEEL PAIN AROUND THE KNEE, QUADRICEPS & HAMSTRINGS WHEN COMING OUT OF THIS STRETCH.

IF THIS STRETCH IS TOO PAINFUL THEN REDUCE THE LEVEL OF STRETCH IN STEP'S 2, 3 & 4.

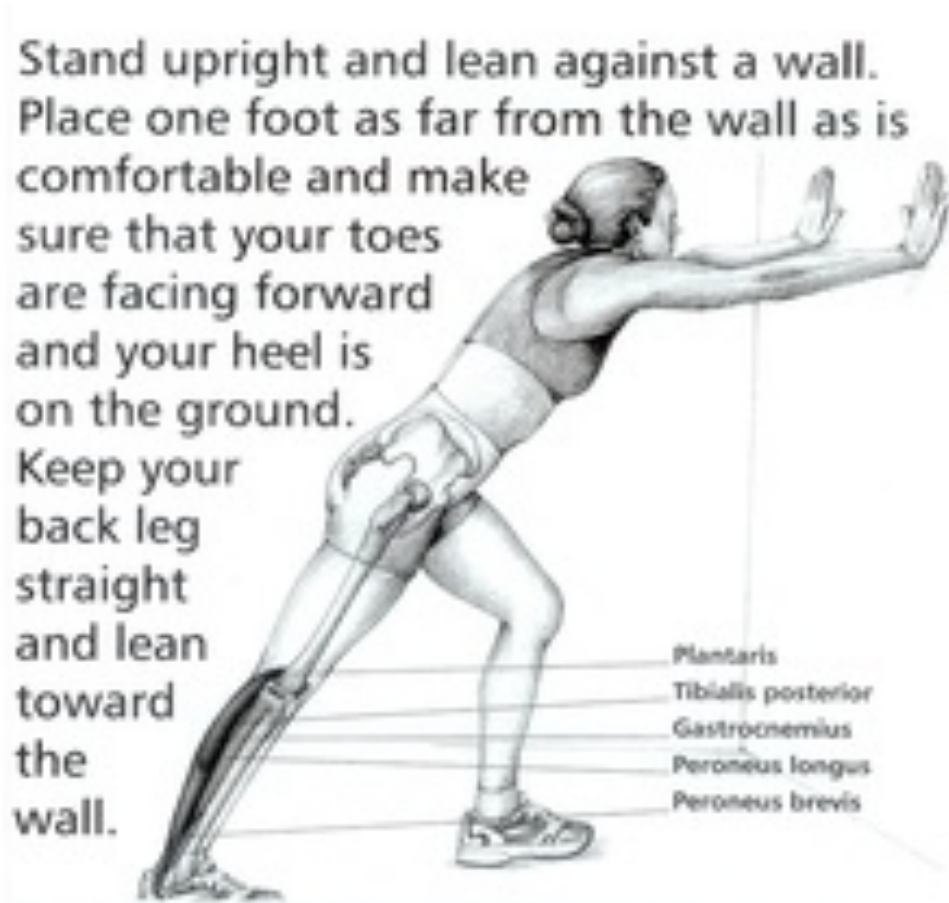
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Leaning Heel Back Calf Stretch

This focuses on the Tibialis Posterior and Gastrocnemius. Make sure your arms are about shoulder width apart and that your heel remains on the ground. It is also important to make sure that your toes are both facing forwards to gain the most out of the stretch.



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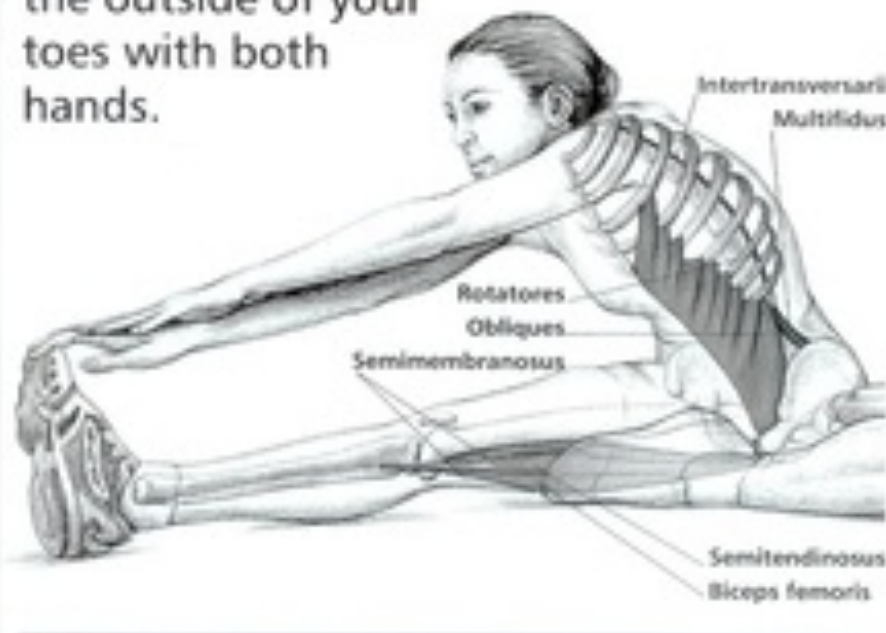


Sitting Side Reach Stretch

This stretch will focus on the hamstrings as well as some muscles through the back which are important for balance on a bike.

It is important to make sure the leg being stretched is straight and completely on the ground and that you reach forward with both hands, not just one.

Sit with one leg straight out to the side and your toes pointing up. Then bring your other foot up to your knee and let your head fall forward. Reach towards the outside of your toes with both hands.



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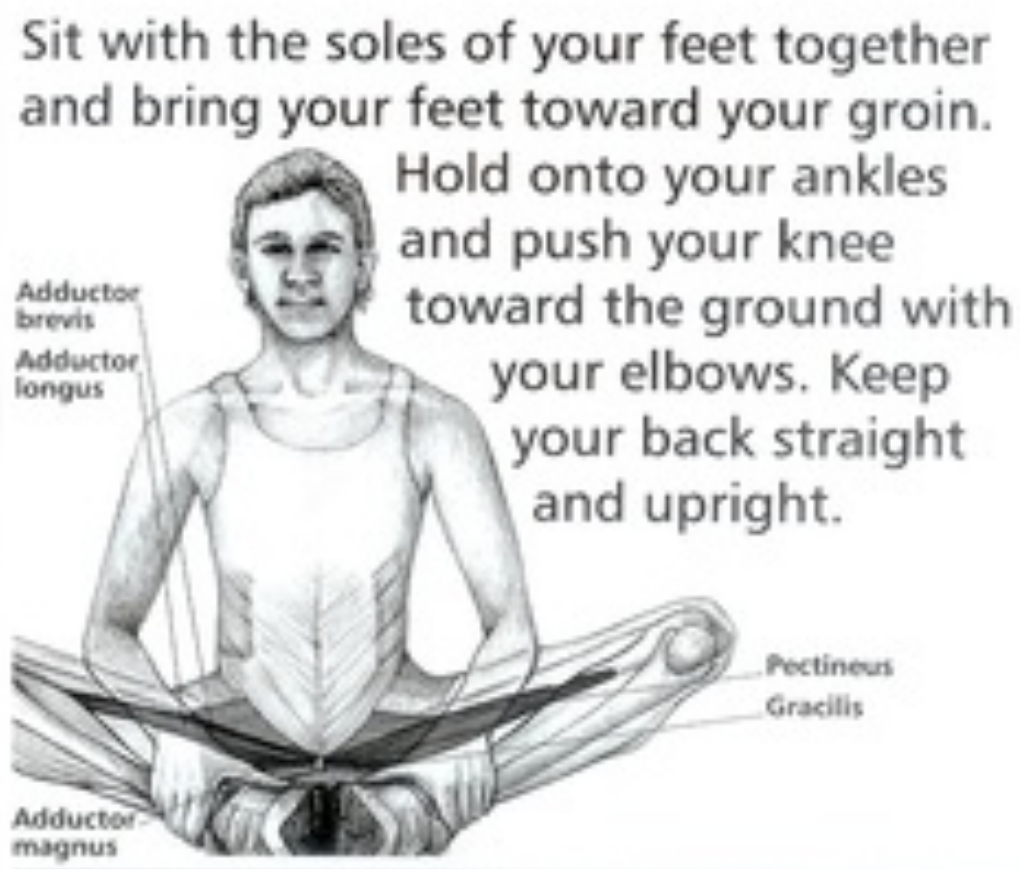


Sitting Feet Together Adductor Stretch

To do this stretch stay on the ground and put the soles of your feet together and bring them as close to your groin as comfortable.

Maintain a straight back throughout this stretch for optimal stretching.

Do not bounce your legs downwards.



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Tibialis Anterior Stretch

The stretcher lies on front and points their toes using their calf muscle; this lengthens the tibialis anterior to its end of range.

Cup the right heel with your right hand and hold the top of the foot. The stretcher should slowly attempt to pull their foot back towards their knee and ultimately to their Gluteals.

This isometric pull through of the tibialis anterior is followed by relaxation and deep breathing.

On an exhale the stretcher should contract their calf muscle and increase their plantarflexion (deepening the tibialis stretch).

This stretch is also a good one for your quads especially using PNF (Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation) techniques.



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PNF (Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation)

PNF in short involves bringing your muscles to the point of stretch, holding for 10 seconds, resisting in the opposite direction for 8 seconds and then rest for 2 seconds. You can do this 3 times, each time taking the stretch a little deeper but being careful not to over stretch.

How to do PNF stretching

1. Stretcher actively lengthens the muscle to be stretched to it's maximum pain-free end range
2. Position yourself to offer resistance for the stretcher to isometrically contract the muscle.
3. Direct the stretcher to begin slowly pushing or pulling the isometrically contracted muscle as you provide resistance
4. The stretcher relaxes the contracted muscle and inhales deeply as the limb is in the starting position
5. On exhale the stretcher contracts the antagonist muscle (opposite) which pulls the target muscle into a deeper stretch.

THESE STRETCHES SHOULD ALWAYS BE PAIN FREE!!

PNF stretches are best done with a partner.

Remember with PNF stretching to always;

- Keep spine lengthened
- Keep your lower back area flattened to reduce pressure on your lumbar spine and decrease lower back pain
- Avoid unnecessary twisting or bending
- STOP immediately if either person has pain

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Standing Leg Cross Adductor Stretch

The key to this stretch is adduction of the hip or side bending at the hip.

It can feel like your not stretching anything at all so with this stretch you might just need to perform the stretch and believe you are stretching.

It might help to stand beside a post or door way and hold on with your 'inside' arm, cross your 'outside' leg behind the other, then gently push your hip away .

Standing Leg Cross Abductor Stretch

Stand upright and cross one foot behind the other. Lean toward the foot that is behind the other. If necessary, hold onto something for balance.



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Lying Knee to Chest Stretch

Lying on a flat surface slowly bring one leg up towards your chest and grip with your hands.

Pull that leg as close to your chest as you can get it and you should feel the stretch adequately down that glute, from about half way down the your hamstring to the back of your pelvis.

Remember to keep your back and non-stretched leg flat on the ground for optimal stretch of the gluteus maximus.

Avoid the temptation to raise your head and look at the stretch as this will put strain on your neck and other muscle in your back.

Lie on your back and keep one leg flat on the ground. Use your hands to bring your other knee into your chest.



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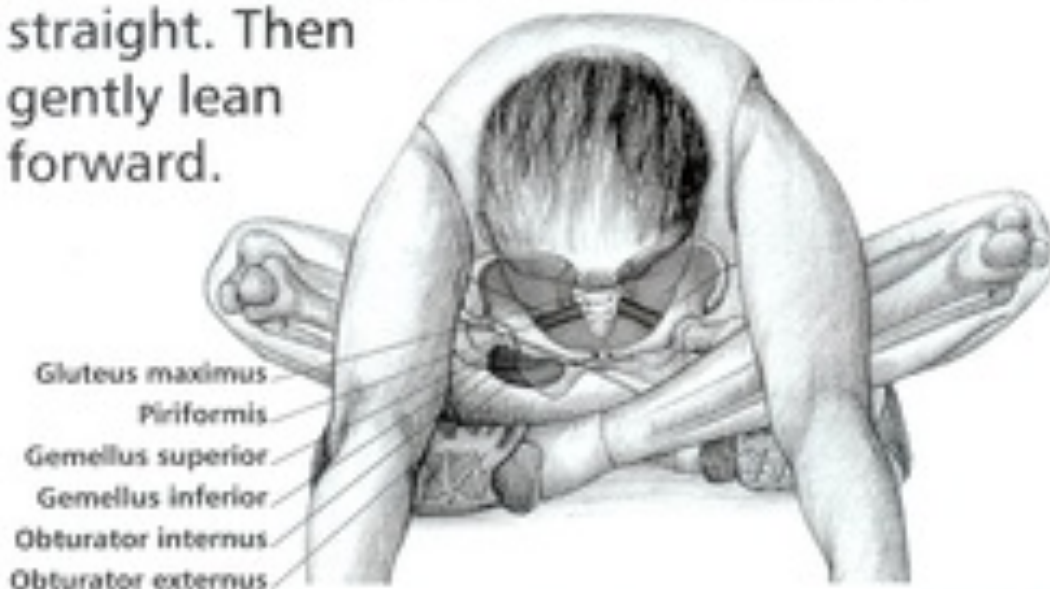


Sitting Cross Legged Reach Forward Stretch

Sitting feet together reach forward. This stretch decreases tension by stretching the gluteus maximus and the piriformis as well as the gemellus superior & inferior and the obturator internus and externus.

Whist doing this stretch is it important to be aware of the circulation in your legs. A lot of people find it uncomfortable to sit cross-legged because it interrupts the blood flow to the lower half of their legs, so it important to monitor this.

Sit cross-legged and keep your back straight. Then gently lean forward.



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Kneeling Quad Stretch

This stretch aims to lengthen out the four quadricep muscles as well as stretching some hip flexors.

This is done by kneeling on one knee and pushing forward with your hips and you should feel the stretch down the front of your leg.



REFERENCES

- McAtee, R. & Charland, J. (1993) Facilitated Stretching
Walker, B. (2007) The Anatomy of Stretching