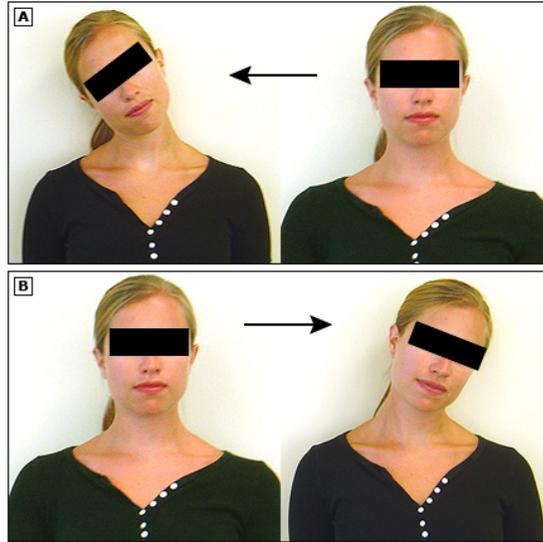


Arthritis: Exercises to help reduce morning stiffness

Lateral neck flexion



Sit or stand. Look straight ahead. Slowly tilt the head toward the right shoulder until you feel a stretch along the left side of the neck. Hold for 5 seconds. Straighten the neck then tilt the head towards the left shoulder. Hold for a count of 5. Repeat this sequence 10 times.

Knee chest stretch



Lie on the back on a bed or on a towel on the floor. Bring knees up to chest. Place the hands behind the knees and pull toward the chest until you feel a stretch in the lower back and buttocks. Hold for 5 seconds. Rest. Repeat 10 times.

Hamstring stretch



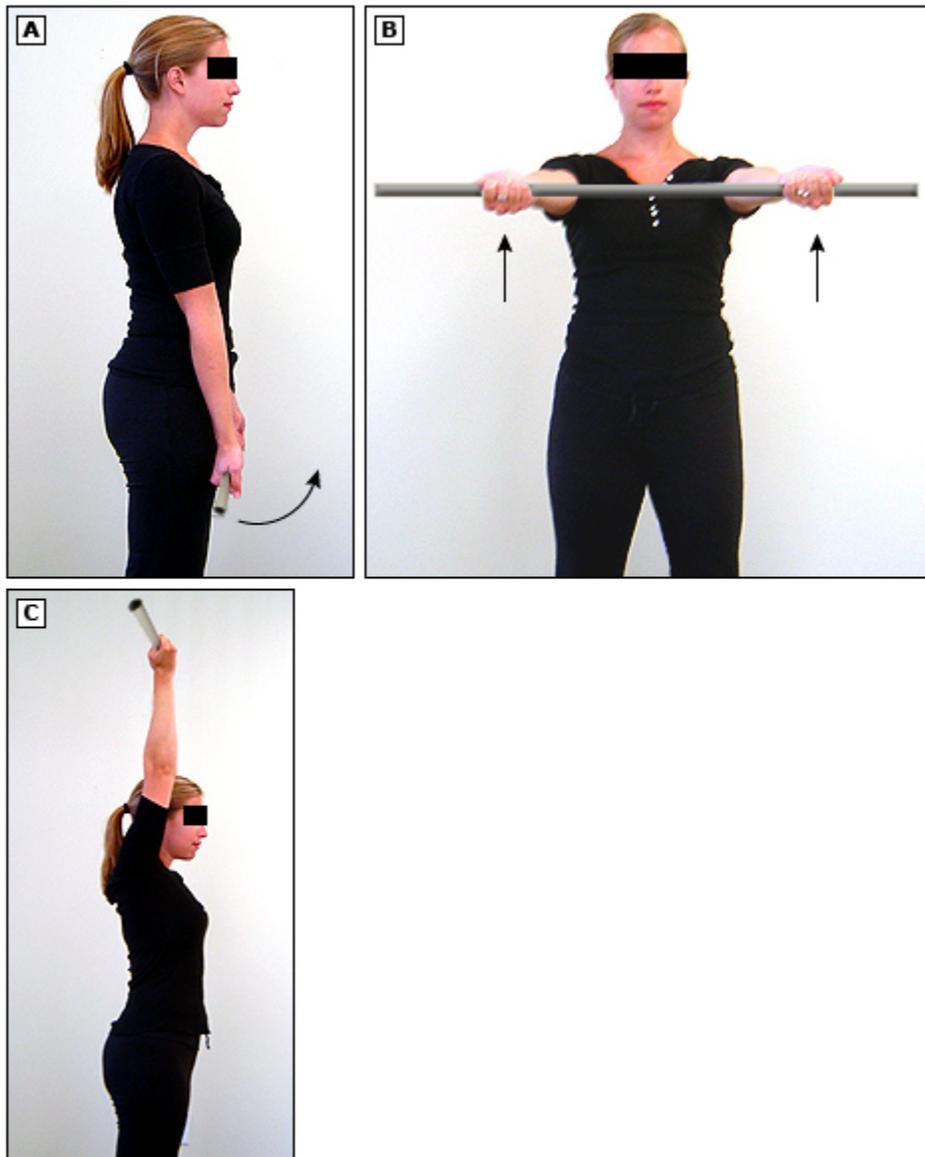
The hamstrings are the muscles in the back of the thigh, just above the back of the knee. To stretch them, you will need a stable stool that does not roll (or a stair) that is about knee height. Place hands on hips. Place the right heel on top of the stool, keeping the leg straight. Bend the left leg and slowly lean forward until you feel a stretch in the back of the right leg. Hold for 10 seconds. Rest. Repeat 10 times, then switch legs and repeat 10 times with the left leg on the stool or stair.

Gastrocnemius stretch



The gastrocnemius muscles are the two muscles in the upper calf, just below the back of the knee. To stretch them, stand 18 to 24 inches away from a wall (facing the wall). Place hands on wall at head level. Bend left knee and move right foot about 12 inches backwards. Keep right leg straight and keep heel on the floor. Lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in the right calf (this should not hurt); do not bounce. Hold for a count of 10. Rest. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

Shoulder ROM with cane



(A) Hold a cane (or dowel) with two hands. The arms should be held down with the elbows against the body and the thumbs on the front of the cane (away from the body). (B-C) Lift cane with both hands above head, keeping arms and back straight. Reach back until you feel a stretch in the shoulders (this should not hurt). Hold for 5 seconds. Lower the arms and rest. Repeat 10 times.

Source: <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/arthritis-and-exercise-the-basics> (August 3, 2016)