

# HEALTHY MOVES

## Stretch of the Month

### Quadriceps Muscle Stretch

#### Why stretch the Quads

The muscles in the front of the thigh are called the quadriceps -commonly referred to as the quads. These muscles are responsible for extending the knee.

Keeping the Quads flexible helps decrease the wear and tear on the knee cap by decreasing compressive forces on the articular surfaces between the thigh bone and knee cap.

Tight Quads are a common cause of knee pain.

One of the quadriceps muscles ( the rectus femoris) also functions as a hip flexor. It attaches to the front aspect of the pelvic bone. When tight it can tilt the pelvis forward. This causes an increased lower back arch (lordosis). This increased lordosis is a common cause of low back pain.

In the big picture we have a group of muscles that when tense or tight can cause pain in the knee and the back.

#### How to Stretch

- Stand next to a chair or wall.
- Grasp the ankle, with the hand on the same side, and pull it back and up.
- Keep the leg you are stretching parallel to the leg you are standing on. DO NOT flare your leg out.
- Keep the knee on which you are standing slightly bent.
- Maintain an upright posture. DO NOT arch your back nor lean forward.

You should feel only a comfortable stretch in the front of your thigh.

- Hold the stretch for 20 to 30 seconds
- Repeat same for other side
- Stretch each side 3 times



If you are unable to hold your ankle and keep a good posture, you can place your ankle on a bench or chair, as in picture above right. Place pillows or blankets on the chair to make it the right height for a comfortable stretch.

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#### Disclaimer:

Suggestions made in this publication are no substitute for medical advice. If you have any pain or difficulty performing this stretch seek advice from your appropriate health professional.