



# Harbor Physical Therapy Newsletter

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## Stretching Principles Static Stretch vs. Dynamic Stretch

The big question we hear often is, "Do I stretch before or after I work out?" When most people think about completing a stretch, they are thinking about static stretches. So what is the difference between that and a dynamic stretch? A static stretch is a muscle-targeted static movement that is held for a period of time in order to elongate that muscle. A dynamic stretch is a muscle-targeted dynamic movement to warm-up the muscles by increasing blood flow.

Static stretching after you workout is more beneficial to prevent muscle soreness and injury. If you static stretch before you workout, there is more potential to tear a muscle. This is primarily due to the lack of blood flowing to that muscle. However, dynamic stretching is beneficial before you work out to increase blood flow for your muscles.

To get the most benefit out of static stretching, make sure you hold the stretch at a point you feel a pull within the muscle. Stretching should be held between 15-60 seconds. Perform 2-3 repetitions of each stretch on both sides of your body. If a stretch is painful, you should decrease the range of motion of the stretch until you feel a pull, but no pain.

Prior to exercising, it is beneficial to perform a 5 minute dynamic stretching routine (warm-up) to get the blood circulating to prepare your body for the activity. Depending on your form of exercise, it is always good practice to mimic your exercise activity at a lower intensity for a warm-up.

Below is a list of dynamic stretches:

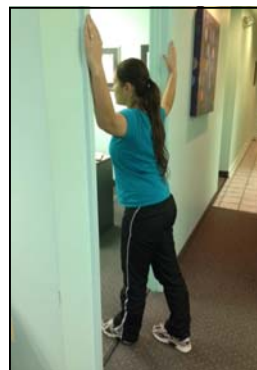
1. March in place for 5 minutes.
2. Perform squats.
3. Move your ankles in a circle and pump them up and down.
4. Stand on one leg and swing the other back and forth.
5. Move arms in circles in front of you and out to the side.
6. Reach overhead several times.

## Benefits of Stretching When Sitting for a While

Do you sit in front of the computer most of the day? Do you get tension headaches, neck pain, and sore chest muscles?

This is a result of repetitive, forward head movement that can be caused by typing, reading and looking down to write. Excessive forward head posture puts strain on your neck and shoulder muscles. Stretching throughout your day, helps to elongate your muscles that have become contracted with sitting. Perform the pectoralis stretch below to decrease muscle tightness of your neck and shoulder muscles.

Stand in a doorway and place your arms about 90 degrees along the sides of the door frame. Step through the door frame until you feel a stretch across your chest. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds. Alternate your foot forward with each stretch. (See photo)



## Do I need a referral for physical therapy?

In the State of Maryland, physical therapy does not require a physician referral. However, some insurances require a physician referral including most HMO plans. PPO and POS plans do not require a referral. If you are unsure if your health insurance requires a referral for physical therapy, please contact your health insurance or call Harbor Physical Therapy. Our staff will contact your health insurance company to verify your physical therapy benefits.



**HPT is providing  
Hands-on Wellness  
Services**

**Therapeutic massage  
&  
Dry Needling Sessions**

**Performed by our doctorate  
physical therapists**

**Call to book your appointment  
443-524-0442**

## Donut Muffins

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup margarine, melted
- 3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease 24 mini-muffin cups.
2. Mix 1/2 cup sugar, 1/4 cup margarine, and nutmeg in a large bowl. Stir in the milk, then mix in the baking powder and flour until just combined. Fill the prepared mini muffin cups about half full.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until the tops are lightly golden, 15 to 20 minutes.
4. While muffins are baking, place 1/4 cup of melted margarine in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix together 1/2 cup of sugar with the cinnamon. Remove muffins from their cups, dip each muffin in the melted margarine, and roll in the sugar-cinnamon mixture. Let cool and serve.

*This recipe is from allrecipes.com.*



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