

Stretching for the Echocardiographer

Preparation and recovery to reduce risk of injury

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Introduction:

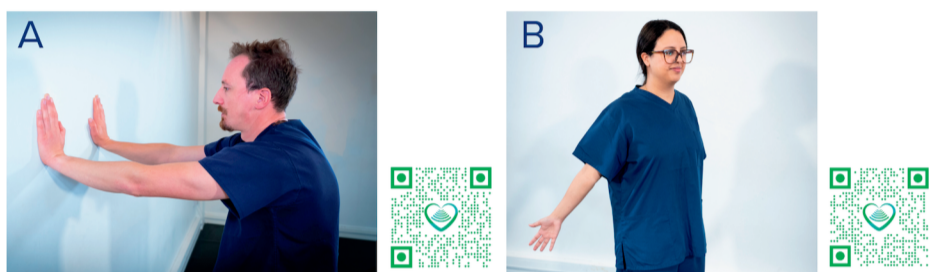
Regular stretching is proven to reduce risk of injury and improve mobility. Do each stretch/movement on both sides for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 2-3x. Take slow breaths throughout. Commence all exercises with feet hip width apart, toes pointed forward and knees slightly bent. Do not stretch to pain: aim to create pleasant sensations - maximum 6 out of 10 intensity. This may be 50% of your full range of motion. The objective is to mobilise and relax, not increase range.

N.B. This content should not be used as a substitute for direct medical advice from your doctor or other qualified clinicians. If you are injured, these stretches may not be appropriate for you. Please seek advice from your doctor.

STRETCHING FOR PREPARATION AND RECOVERY

A - UPPER BACK STRETCH

Place your hands on a wall, tuck your tail under and round your upper back. Breathe deeply, expanding your upper back. Feel for a stretch between your scapula. Relax the tops of your shoulders.

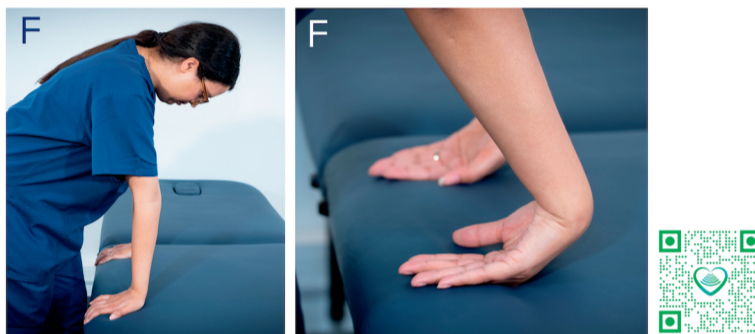


B - CHEST STRETCH (PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

Start with your arms slightly away from your sides, palms facing forward. Draw your scapula towards your spine, moving the arms backwards. Feel for engagement in your mid-back and a stretch across your chest.

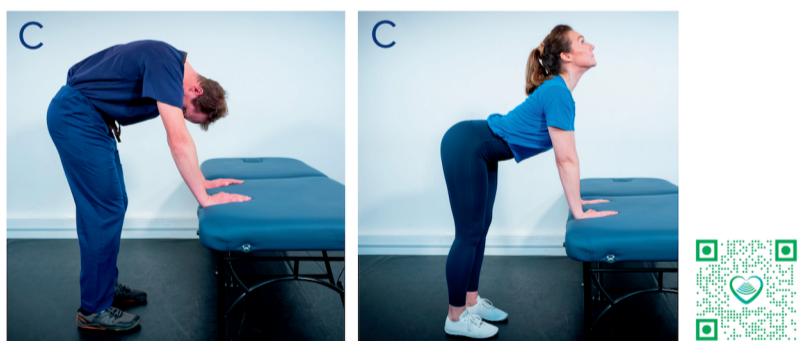
F - WRISTS AND FOREARMS (STRETCH)

With straight elbows, palms forward and fingers facing the floor, gently lower your palms onto the couch or desk. For less intensity let your fingers drop off the edge. Feel for a stretch of the anterior forearm. Step backward slightly to increase sensation. Repeat with the dorsal side of the hand down. Don't press your wrists into the couch. Feel for a gentle stretch in the posterior forearm. Be very gentle - less is more!



C - SPINE - FLEXION AND EXTENSION (MOBILISE)

Place your hands or forearms on a couch or desk. Round your spine letting your head and tail drop down. Focus on a complete exhale. Then, extend your spine allowing your head and tail to lift. Move slowly between the two positions.



D - SPINE - LATERAL FLEXION (SIDE STRETCH)

Gently side bend your spine. For more support bring your bottom hand to your waist. For a deeper stretch, raise your arm.

E - SPINE - THORACIC ROTATION

Sit with feet firmly planted. Take your right hand to your left knee and rotate your body to the left. Relax your neck; don't force your head to turn to maximum range. Send your head up to grow taller as you rotate.



G - WRISTS AND FOREARMS (MOBILISE)

Interlace your fingers, rotate your wrists in figure 8's. Stretch the arms long and rotate the wrists right and left.



H - NECK - LATERAL FLEXION (SIDE STRETCH)

Incline your head to one side. Avoid pressing your head down, instead focus on the opening side of your neck and a pleasant, gentle stretch.

I - NECK - EXTENSION (CHIN UP)

Place your hands on your chest and pull down. Raise your chin. Make small movements right and left to stretch the throat.

J - NECK - FLEXION (CHIN DOWN)

Place your hands on the back of your head. Retract your head, let your chin drop and the back of your head press gently into your hands. Feel for engagement between your shoulder blades. Next, lower your chin toward your chest looking to the floor. Feel for a gentle stretch in the back of your neck. (Not Pictured)



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