

[IMAGE]

## 3 Great Stretches After Your Workout

By Editorial Staff

Whether you're a dedicated runner or participate in regular exercise that involves your lower body (jogging on the treadmill, using the elliptical machine, doing resistance or bodyweight hip / buttock / leg exercises, etc.), you know how tight and sore you can feel after a hard workout. But do you know how much better you can feel if you do these three simple stretches once you're done?

While static stretching is increasingly de-emphasized before a workout (or at least before you do a dynamic warm-up), it's an important component of a post-workout cooldown because it helps reduce stiffness and soreness, increases flexibility and reduces injury risk, among other benefits. So, here are the three stretches you should add to your cooldown routine after every workout:

1. *Hip Flexor Stretch*: Standing with hands on hips or elevated overhead, perform single-leg lunge and hold for 25-30 seconds, squeezing the glute on the knee-down side. Keep chest open and back straight. Repeat on opposite side.

2. *Piriformis Stretch*: Standing, sitting or lying down, put one foot over the opposite knee / quadriceps and hold for 25-30 seconds, pushing gently on the inside of the lower quad / upper knee of the bent leg to stretch without causing pain. Repeat on opposite side.

3. *Quadriceps Stretch*: Standing, reach back and grab ankle (foot if possible); pull foot toward buttocks (as high as possible, touching butt) and hold for 25-30 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.

Talk to your doctor about a comprehensive pre- and post-workout stretching routine to maximize your exercise results and minimize injury risk.

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