

## LEG EXERCISES FOR FITNESS



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We need our leg muscles all the times, while doing our routine chores of life and this can't be done without strong leg muscles. Walking is a good exercise but for walking to be effective we again need strength of our leg muscle.

### **Warm up**

Before we start any strength building exercise warm up is a must.

Warm up can be stationary or dynamic warm up.

Dynamic warm up is by tread mill or cycling or even walking.(fig 1- 3)

If you are doing with tread mill see to it that the surface is not inclined. Warm up by simple walking can be from 10 -20 minutes depending on how many calories you want to burn or by stationary cycling for 5-10min.

If you have to lose weight then these exercises can be for longer period like 15-20 min but for toning up and strength building warm up 5-10 min. is ok.

Stretching the muscles you are going to exercise is also very important so that you don't damage your muscles while doing strength building.

### **Walking as an exercise**



### Fig.-1 Brisk walk

### fig -2 slow pace

Walking to be effective has to be at a brisk pace.

- Slow walking does not give any benefits of weight losing or even for cardioprotection. you should do at a pace that you are barely able to talk.
- Foot wear should be proper and ideally it should not be on hard surface.



**Fig: 3 cycling**

### Leg exercises

Leg exercises should be done to strengthen your all leg muscles and give them full range of motion and some of these exercises are following which can be done at home.

Stretching is a vital component of any exercise program. A brief stretch after any workout is a nice way to relax-and it helps prevent injury and maintain flexibility..

### HAMSTRING STRETCH

Sitting on the ground, with one leg straight and the other one comfortably bent in front of your body, bend at the waist and lean forward, keeping your back as straight as possible and don't arch it. Reach with your arms towards the foot until a stretch is felt under your thigh. Hold each stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds, any less than 15 seconds and the muscle will not conform to the new increase in length. Do 3 reps, 3-6 times a day. Any pain you feel with this exercise

should only be a local stretching sensation to the back of your thigh area, without aggravating your condition.



**Fig :4 Hamstring Stretch**

### **Gluteus Stretch**

Lying down on your back, bend your right knee, and place your left leg over the right leg, resting the outside of the left ankle slightly above the right knee. Place your right hand around the outside of your right thigh and place the left hand around the inside of your right thigh. Lock the two hands together. Now pull forward towards your chest to achieve a stretch in the left gluteus portion of your buttocks. Do the exact opposite to achieve a stretch of the right gluteus portion of the buttocks. Hold each stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds, any less than 15 seconds and the muscle will not conform to the new increase in length. Do 3 reps, 3-6 times a day. Any pain you feel with this exercise should only be a local stretching sensation to the back of your thigh and buttocks area, without aggravating your condition.

### **Calf Stretch**

Start with stretching the right Gastrocnemius portion of the right calf area. While standing, place your right leg in front of you and your left foot directly behind you. Place the toes of your right forefoot up against a door or other flat wall surface, keeping your heel down to the floor. Lean

against a wall or other stationary object, both palms against the object. The leg you want to stretch is back, several feet from the wall, your heel firmly positioned on the floor. Your other leg is flexed about halfway between your back leg and the wall. Start with your back straight and gradually lunge forward until you feel the stretch in your calf. "It is important to keep your back foot straight and angled 90 degrees from the wall,". Hold each stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds. Any less than 15 seconds and the muscle will not conform to the new increase in length. Do 3 reps, 3-6 times a day. Any pain you feel with this exercise should only be a local stretching sensation to the calf area of the leg, without aggravating your condition.

### **Quadriceps Stretch**

Start with stretching the left Quadriceps muscle. While standing hold a solid surface for support and bend back your left leg. Grab your left ankle and pull that foot to your left buttocks while simultaneously pulling your left thigh backwards while keeping your back straight. Pulling your thigh backwards is a very important part of this stretch, as it will place the stretch in the mid-thigh instead of overloading the pressure on the knee. Do the exact opposite to achieve a stretch of the right Psoas portion of your front upper thigh area. Hold each stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds. Any less than 15 seconds and the muscle will not conform to the new increase in length. Do 3 reps, 3-6 times a day. Any pain you feel with this exercise should only be a local stretching sensation to the Quadriceps muscle area of the upper thigh, without aggravating your condition.



### Fig: 5 Quadriceps stretch

#### Inner side of thigh muscles stretch or adductor stretch

Our muscles do not work alone when we perform certain exercises. Our adductor muscles are working simultaneously with others while doing squats, leg presses, or lunges. Make sure that your adductor muscles are in their good condition every time you perform stretching activities. To stretch the groin simply place the feet together pull in toward yourself grab onto your ankles and apply force with your elbows down on your legs. If you're doing this stretch correctly you'll feel a pulling on your upper inner thigh.



Fig :6 Abductor stretch

#### Front Lunge

The lunge is a dynamic exercise that targets the muscles of the thighs, back, and buttocks, Strengthening the bones in the hip and spine. The wide leg squat addresses the same muscles, But the lunge includes balance and coordination as well.

**Starting position:** Stand next to table or counter with your feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent. Lightly hold on to the counter with one hand.

**1-2-3-Forward:** Take a large step forward with your right leg. Land on the heel of your right foot, and then roll your foot forward until it is flat on the floor. Keeping your body erect, bent both knees so that your hips drop straight down. Your front thigh should be almost parallel to the floor, and the knee of your back leg should approach the floor. The knee of your forward leg should be over your ankle, not past your toes. The heel of your back leg will come off the floor. Your weight will be equally distributed between your front foot and the ball of your back

Foot.

**This exercise can be done with holding free weights in your hands**, and as your strength goes on increasing you can increase weights or you can do with weights attached to a barbell and barbell is held at the upper part of your back.



**Fig :7 lunges without weight**



**Fig: 8 lunges with weights.**

### **Pause for a Breath**

Return: Push back forcefully with the front leg to return to the starting position.

Pause for a breath, and then repeat the move.

Reps and Sets: Alternate legs as you step forward until you have done 8 reps with each leg – this

is 1 set. Rest for a minute or two and do a second set.

This exercise can be done without weights or slowly you can add weights.

### **Wide Leg Squat**

It strengthens the muscles of your front, back, and inner thigh as well as your buttocks and the hip-bones, i.e. hamstrings, quadriceps and gluteus muscles.

Stand about 6 inches in front of the chair with your feet a little wider than shoulder-width apart. Take a deep breath and flex your knees and then aim your buttocks back and slowly lower yourself into the chair. Your knees should remain above your ankles; your knees should never go beyond your toes.

Pause, and slowly stand. Then repeat the move 8–10 times and three sets of same repetitions.

You have to do these exercises after gap of 2-3 days only so that you don't overburden your muscles.

**So be cheerful keep smiling and laughing and strengthen your leg muscles so that you can run around happily and have a quality of life.**