

DURING WORK STRESS RELEASESERS

Work Warm-Up, Stretch and Flexibility Program

Before you get started, here are some key points:

Neutral position: This is the starting posture for all of the exercises. Stand straight, head and spine in alignment, chin in, eyes looking forward. Shoulders back and down, feet hip width apart and knees slightly bent.

- Consult your doctor before beginning any new exercise program
- Stop if you feel dizzy, uncomfortable or experience any pain
- Always work at your own pace

Warm-Up

Stress has been linked to mental/emotional and physical illness. It is important that you reduce your stress levels to maintain overall health. The following stress relievers are designed to be done almost anywhere. It is recommended that you take a few minutes throughout your workday to release stress. You can do any one or a combination of these releasers whenever you complete a repetitive task or feel muscle tightness.

Hold each movement for 15-30 seconds.



1. Ear to Shoulder

- Stand in the neutral position
- Slowly and gently tilt your head to one side, keeping your ear aligned with your shoulder
- Return to the neutral position and wait a few seconds
- Repeat on the other side



2. Upper Torso Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Stand tall, feet hip width apart
- Reach both hands in front of you and interlock your fingers with palms facing out
- Straighten your arms and round your shoulders and extend your arms out further in front of you



3. Chest Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Reach both hands behind you and interlock your fingers together
- Straighten your arms
- Pull shoulder blades together and down as you lift your chest



4. Triceps Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Drop your chin to your chest
- Reach your right arm straight up overhead with your palm forward
- Bend your elbow and drop your right hand to the back of your neck
- Reach overhead with your left arm and grasp your right arm just below the right elbow
- Gently pull the right arm to the left
- Repeat on the other side



5. Biceps Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Place your arm on a wall with the thumb facing down and the back of the hand on the wall
- Turn your body away from the wall
- Repeat on the other side



6. Shoulder Stretch

- Stand (or sit) in the neutral position
- With your shoulders square, reach across your chest with your right arm
- Use your left hand to pull your right arm across your body
- Repeat on the other side



7. Wrist Extension and Flexion Stretches

- Stand in the neutral position
- Straighten your arm out in front of you, palm facing up, keeping elbow and wrist straight
- Gently pull your fingers and hand toward the floor
- Turn your hand over so the palm is facing down and gently pull your fingers and hand upwards
- Repeat on the other side



8. Standing Spine Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Straighten your arms overhead
- Raise up on your toes and take a deep breath
- Slowly exhale and lower heels to the ground
- Repeat 3-5 times



9. Standing Cat Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position
- Bend forward at the hips and rest your hands just above your knees with your fingers pointing toward each other
- Drop your chin to your chest
- Round your back until you feel a mild stretch through your back
- Release and lift your head and tailbone to reverse the arch



10. Standing Quad Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position facing a wall with your left hand on the wall for balance
- Bend the left leg slightly
- Using the right hand, draw the right foot up behind the buttocks
- Do a pelvic tilt to feel the stretch along the front of the thigh
- Repeat on the other side



11. Standing Hamstring Stretch

- Stand in the neutral position with your left foot slightly ahead of the right foot, heels touching the floor
- Place your hand on upper thigh of left leg
- Bend your right knee slightly, keeping your heel on the floor
- Keeping chin up and back straight, slowly lower upper body over left leg until you feel a slight stretch in the back of the right leg
- Repeat on the other side



12. Reach for the Sky

- Stand in the neutral position
- Raise arms overhead
- Slowly lean to the left and then to the right
- Straighten up to the neutral position and take a deep breath
- Repeat 3-5 times