

INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, almost half (43%) of non-fatal occupational injuries are sprains and strains. However, you do not have to be another statistic if you spend 8-12 minutes at the beginning of the day stretching.

SPRAINS AND STRAINS

- A muscle strain is the stretching or tearing of muscle fibers
 - *Strains can cause pain, tightness, swelling, tenderness, and inability to move the muscle very well*
- A sprain is a stretching or tearing injury to a tissue that connects bones
 - *Sprains cause pain, swelling, bruising and inability to move or use the joint*
- Pay attention to signs of discomfort and fatigue on the job; these are warning signs from your body
 - *If early symptoms are ignored, they can progress into more serious problems and cause long-term effects on your health and ability to move*



BENEFITS OF STRETCH AND FLEX

Stretch and Flex helps you prevent sprains and strains, and also helps you:

- Warm-up during work
- Relax during breaks
- Increase flexibility and normal range of motion
- Boost blood flow and oxygen to muscles



DOS OF STRETCH AND FLEX

- Start and finish all stretches in a relaxed, neutral position
- Stretch at your own individual rate and ability; it is not a competition
- Repeat each set of stretches at least three times
- Breathe in a relaxed manner
- Stretch to the point of comfortable tension

DON'TS OF STRETCH AND FLEX

If you stretch incorrectly, you could end up harming yourself more than helping yourself.

- Do not perform stretches in the wrong order
- Do not over-stretch the muscles
- Do not take insufficient rest between stretches
- Do not bounce while stretching
- Do not continue stretching when you feel pain or discomfort

CONCLUSION

Simply stretching correctly for 8-12 minutes a day can help you avoid injuries and increase your health. Your stretch and flex program will depend on what type of work you do, but as long as you remember the dos and don'ts of stretching, you should be able to decrease the risk of injury, minimize muscular soreness, and increase your flexibility.

