The Benefits of Stretching and Why It Feels Good

Why It feels good | Benefits | Full-body stretches | Safety tips | Bottom line

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Why It feels good
1. Top 5 Basic Pain Exercises
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Benefits

Without realizing it, many of us start our day by stretching before we even get out of bed.

Intentional stretching of your muscles is called [passive stretch](#) if it's a relaxed state or [static](#) if it's a tension or relaxed muscle tension.

Your activities feel better after a period of inactivity than stretching. Stretching relieves your tight or aching muscles, can reduce feelings of calmness, and even thought-to improve your circulation.

In this article, we'll have explain why stretching feels good, explore the benefits, and provide examples of simple stretches you can do on a regular basis.

Why does stretching feel good?

Humans have a natural tendency to avoid things that cause pain and to seek activities that feel good. Stretching is no exception. Stretching is a natural reward system makes stretching feel good to motivate you to seek pain reliefs at regular intervals.

Here's a closer look at the reasons why stretching feels good.

Improved circulation

When you stretch a muscle, your body responds by increasing blood flow.[1] At first glance, this stretch increased the angiogenic factor within to allow more blood to flow through, and your heart starts pumping more blood.

This increase in blood flow allows the muscle or muscle you're stretching to receive more oxygen and nutrients to support its recovery.

Parasympathetic activation

Research suggests that slow stretching activates your parasympathetic nervous system and inhibits activation of your sympathetic nervous system.

Your parasympathetic nervous system is responsible for your rest and digestion. Your rest and digest also helps reduce feelings of calmness and relaxation.

Endorphin release

[Endorphins](#) are chemicals produced by your central nervous system and pituitary gland that function as neurotransmitters. They have protein-pain relieving effects than [morphine](#).[2] and cause a feeling of euphoria when they bind with receptors in your brain.

Endorphins are part of your body's natural reward system[3] and are released after activities like exercise, sex, eating, and stretching.

There's little research on the effects of stretching on endorphin release specifically. Research on the effects of exercise on endorphin release and neurotransmitter psych. Research has found that pain-relieving effects due to the relaxation of blood vessels, the release of beta-endorphins, and the suppression of [nociceptors](#).

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Improved relaxation

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What are the benefits of stretching?

There are many benefits to stretching your muscles regularly. Let's look at these benefits in more detail.

Increased flexibility

Regularly stretching may help improve your flexibility,[5] especially if you live a sedentary lifestyle. Your flexibility naturally decreases as part of the aging process, but stretching may help slow down this process.

Improved circulation

Stretching causes your blood vessels to circulate by relaxing your blood vessels and increasing the amount of blood your heart pumps.

Improved blood flow can have many benefits, including that stretching may have long-term benefits on your circulatory health, such as improved blood sugar levels[6] and improved blood pressure.

Stress relief

Some studies indicates your parasympathetic nervous system. Activating this branch of your nervous system may help alleviate the stress response. This, in turn, may help reduce feelings of calmness and relaxation.

Better sports performance

Being able to achieve a full range of motion through all your joints may help boost your sports performance. For example, to achieve maximum speed, a sprinter needs to be able to fully extend and rotate their hips.

Both static and dynamic stretching may be able to help you improve your range of motion. However, static stretching[7] should be reserved for after workouts and in cool-down sessions.

Improved posture

Muscle tightness and tension can negatively affect your posture by pulling your spine into positions that can cost discomfort and pain, and even muscle.

Research[8] has shown that regular stretching in combination with core strengthening exercises may help improve your posture and alignment.

Simple daily stretches

One of the great things about stretching is that you don't need any special equipment to do it. Stretching can be done anywhere at any time.

Here are five easy stretches that can help relieve tension and tightness in many of the major muscle groups in your body.

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Low lunge

The low lunge helps stretch the muscles in your hips, groin, thighs, and core.

To do this stretch:

1. Step your right foot forward into a lunge with your back knee on the ground and your left leg extended. Keep your right knee over your ankle and your hips square.
2. Put your hands on the ground next to your foot. You can also put them on your knees or raise them toward the ceiling.
3. Take a deep breath and focus on opening your chest and stretching your hip flexors.
4. Hold the pose for at least 5 breaths, then repeat on the other side.

Forward bend

The forward bend helps stretch your back, groin, and the backs of your legs.

To do this stretch:

1. Sit on a comfortable surface and extend your left leg out in front of your body. Keep your right foot against the inside of your left thigh.
2. Take a deep breath and lift your hands over your head.
3. As you exhale, bend forward from your hips and reach forward as far as you comfortably can.
4. Place your hands on the floor or on your left leg as you hold the pose for about 30 seconds.
5. Repeat on the other side.

Seated torso stretch

The seated torso stretch targets the muscles in your core and back.

To do this stretch:

1. Start by sitting upright in a chair with your feet on the ground.
2. Place your back of the chair with one hand and extend the direction of your back.
3. Hold the bent for up to 30 seconds and repeat on the other side.

Cobra Pose

Cobra Pose can help open up and stretch the muscles of your chest, abs, neck, and shoulders.

To do this stretch:

1. Lie on your stomach with your hands under your shoulders, your arms tight to your chest, and your fingers facing forward.
2. Pushing through your hands, lift your upper torso off the ground as you straighten your arms. Your hips should have if you want to make the pose easier.
3. Hold the position with a light twist in your elbows for 30 to 60 seconds.

Neck rolls

Neck rolls are a great way to release tension in your neck, especially after long periods of sitting.

To do this stretch:

1. Relax and sit upright with your ears aligned over your shoulders.
2. Roll your head forward and then to the right so that you feel a stretch in the left side of your neck. Hold the position for 30 seconds.
3. Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side.
4. Repeat 5 times in each direction.

Tips for stretching safely

- **Avoid stretching cold.** Before you start stretching, it's a good idea to do a few minutes of light cardio. This will help increase your body temperature, like walking or using jogging for 5 minutes can help warm up your muscles.
- **Stretch gently.** Stretch lead any problem that causes pain. If a stretch is painful, it means you're stretching too far.
- **Make stretching a routine.** You can reap the most benefits from stretching if you do it regularly. Research suggests that 15 minutes of stretching per day may be enough to improve your flexibility.
- **Stretch both sides.** Be sure to stretch both sides of your body equally to maximize flexibility imbalances.
- **Avoid bouncing.** Bouncing while you're stretching can injure your muscles or tendons. It can also make your muscles tighter.

The bottom line

Stretching tends to feel good because it activates your parasympathetic nervous system, increases circulation, and releases feel-good hormones. Research has shown that stretching may also release endorphins to reduce pain and enhance your mood.

Besides feeling good and helping to relieve muscle tension and stress, stretching can also increase your flexibility and circulation, boost your athletic performance, and improve your posture.

Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about stretching, especially if you have an injury or a chronic health condition.

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