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EVIDENCE-BASED EXERCISES
FOR BRAIN AND BODY

STRETCHES FOR THE LOWER BODY

This is a series of basic stretches for your lower body. It is important to perform these gently and slowly. You should feel gentle tension not pain.

BUTTOCK STRETCH

Step 1

Sitting on a chair with your back straight place one ankle on the other knee. Wrap your hands around the knee.

Step 2

Gently pull your knee diagonally towards the opposite shoulder. You should feel the stretch in your buttocks.

Hold for 30 seconds.
Repeat on the other side.

Did you know your brain contains maps of your body and that each and every one of your muscles is connected to your brain via nerve pathways?



THIGH STRETCH

Step 1

Lie on your side with your knees bent, head resting on your hand.

Step 2

Hold your top foot with your top hand and slowly move your heel towards your buttock.

Hold for 30 seconds.
Repeat on the other side.



HAMSTRINGS STRETCH

Step 1

Lie on your back and bend one knee to 90 degrees. Place a towel around your foot and hold both ends.



Step 2

Slowly straighten your leg. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thigh.



If you feel it in your calf, try pointing your toe or bending your knee to feel the stretch in your hamstrings. If you are more flexible you can straighten the leg closest to the floor.

Hold for 30 seconds.
Repeat on the other side.



Learning new types of movements can result in changes within the maps of your brain.

CALF STRETCH

Step 1

Place your hands on the wall at shoulder height, one leg in front of the other.

Step 2

Bend the front knee and lean forward slightly so that you feel a stretch in the lower part of the leg furthest from the wall.

Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.



It has recently been discovered that the nerve cell connections in your brain can change over time – this is called neuroplasticity.

ROLLING OUTER THIGH

Step 1

Place your body on top of the roller with your hands flat on the floor. The roller should be just below the bony prominence of the hip.



Step 2

Taking the weight of your body on your hands slowly move your body upwards so that the roller moves towards your knee. Do not roll on the knee. You should feel pressure and some discomfort on the side of your thigh.



Step 3

Slowly roll back to the step 1 position.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 three times each side.

When you learn new exercises you're not just exercising your body – you're also changing your brain.

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