

Calf Stretching Exercises

The Achilles tendon (located at the back of the foot) and the muscles. Connected to it are very important structures that allow your feet to move. Tightness of any of these structures prevents normal ankle joint movement, which is important for walking normally.

Tightness in the Achilles tendon area may cause your foot to roll over. When this happens, your foot looks flatter than usual at the arch. Any problems with the foot cannot be corrected until the Achilles tendon and the muscles connected to it have been stretched. Stretching allows the ankle joint to move normally again.

In order to stretch the Achilles tendon and the muscles connected to it, you will need to do the following exercises regularly.

Each exercise should be repeated twice a day. You can do the exercises 3 times a day but you should not do them first thing in the morning. It is very important that each stretch is held for at least 30 seconds.

Please note that the exercises should be done as described in order for each stretch to be effective

Standing Stretch Exercises

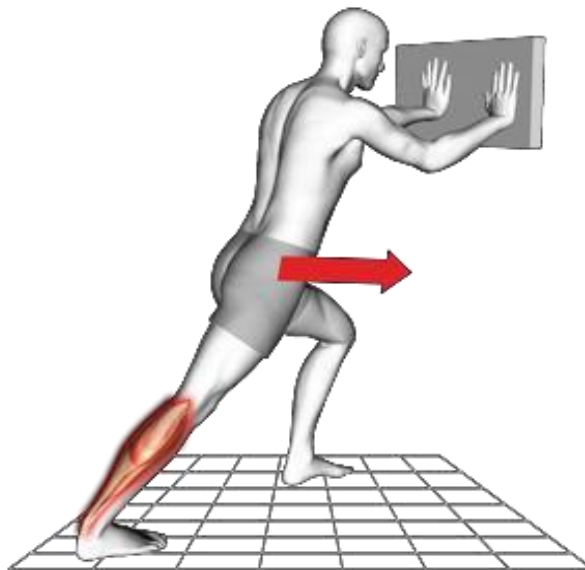
1. To stretch the Gastrocnemius Muscle and Achilles Tendon

Stand with your feet apart, as wide as the width of your hips. Both feet should be straight and not pointing outwards or inwards at the toes.

Put one foot forward by about 30-45 cm, depending on what you feel comfortable with.

Bend the front leg, at the knee, and lean the body forward slightly, making sure that the back leg is straight at the hip and knee and that the heel of the back foot is pressed into the ground.

Repeat the exercise, on both legs, 5 times, twice daily, holding the stretch for at least 30 seconds. This will stretch the muscle and its tendon, and the back of the calf of the outstretched leg.



Standing Stretch Exercises

2. To stretch the Soleus Muscle

After the first exercise (Gastrocnemius stretch), bend the front knee again then **slightly bend the back knee.**

You will feel the pull in the back leg moving further down, towards the ankle.

Press the heel of the back foot into the ground and hold for 30 seconds.

Repeat the exercise, on both legs, 5 times, twice daily, holding the stretch for at least 30 seconds.

