St. Francis Sports Medicine

Foot and Leg Exercises

EXERCISES

Stretching and strengthening programs play an important role in the treatment of issues such as plantar fasciitis and shin splints. Leg exercises can correct functional risk factors such as tightness of the calf muscles and weakness of anterior tibialis or posterior tibialis and small muscles in the foot (intrinsics).

Calf Stretches

Gastrocnemius Stretch

Soleus Stretch

Wall Stretches:
Left (Gastrocnemius muscle): Lean against wall with back knee locked. Press forward until a stretch is felt in the calf. Hold 30 seconds without bouncing. Repeat 3 times.

Right (Soleus muscle): Then, bend knee until a stretch is felt in the Achilles tendon. Hold 30 seconds without bouncing. Repeat 3 times.

Stair Stretch

Slant Board Stretch

Stair Stretch:
Stand on a step near the bottom of your stairs, put your weight on the ball of one foot and slowly lower that heel until a stretch is felt in the calf muscle. Hold 30 seconds without bouncing. Repeat 3 times.

Slant Board Stretch:
Stand on slant board and slowly lean forward until stretch is felt in the calf muscles. Hold 30 seconds without bouncing. Repeat 3 times.

BON SECOURS
ST. FRANCIS HEALTH SYSTEM

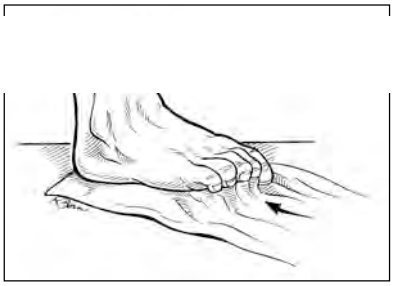
Learn more at **www.stfrancishealth.org/sports**

Use of 3 inch 2x4 piece of wood (Hold for 30 seconds; repeat 3 times)

Dynamic stretch – rolling foot over a can or a tennis ball for 1 minute

STRENGTHENING SMALL MUSCLES OF THE FOOT

Toe curls:
Place a towel on a smooth floor. Curl towel toward body, using only the toes while keeping the heel on the floor. To add resistance, add a weigh Toe Curls t to the far end of the towel. Repeat 20 times.



Toe Pick-ups:
Lift all the toes off the floor; while keeping the heel on the floor and the outside 4 toes in the air, repetitively tap just the big toe to the floor. Repeat 20 times. Then, reverse the process by repetitively tapping the outside 4 toes to the floor while keeping the big toe in the air. Repeat 20 times.

For a more difficult strengthening exercise, place a few marbles on the floor near a cup, pick them up with the toes, and drop them in the cup while keeping the heel on the floor. For a greater challenge, try to picking up coins instead of marbles.