

## **Calf Stretching Program**

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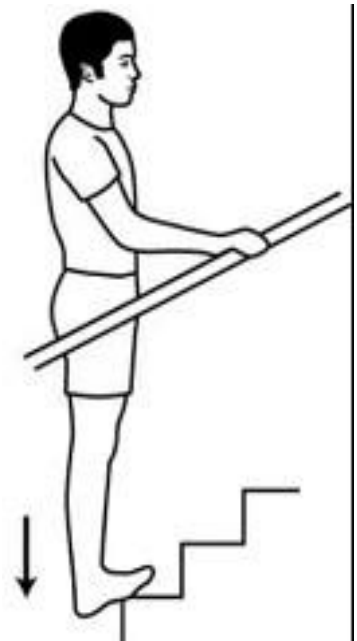
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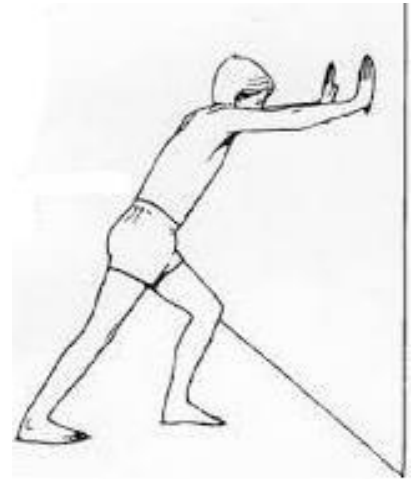
A common source of discomfort in the foot is excess tension on the fascia or muscle lining in the calf. The muscles that push the foot down are much stronger than the muscles that pull the foot up. front. Over time this can lead to tightness in the calf. This puts pressure on the ball of the foot, Achilles tendon, plantar fascia, and can worsen a flatfoot. There are a couple important points to consider when doing the stretches:

- The tightness should be felt in the back of the calf, not the bottom of the foot.
- The gastrocnemius muscle is usually the offender in a tight calf. This muscle crosses the knee joint. To stretch this muscle, the knee **MUST** be straight during stretches
- You may chose the exercise that works best for you. A goal stretching time should be around 15- 20 minutes per leg to see improvement.

1. Standing with only the ball of the injured foot on the stair or stool. Push your heel down until the stretch is felt in the back of the leg. Hold that position for 30 seconds and repeat 5 times for each leg, 3-5 sessions per day. You must hold for 30 seconds each time, or it will not be effective.



2. Stand with your affected foot back, leg straight forward keeping the heel on the floor. Lean into the wall until a stretch is felt in the calf. Hold that position for 30 seconds and repeat 5 times for each leg, 3-5 sessions per day. You must hold for 30 seconds each time, or it will not be effective.



**NOTE:** If you have a pre-existing flatfoot, you will need to supinate (or turn in) your foot to stretch the muscle. This can be done by doing the exercises with arch supports and shoes, or by rolling the foot in to put all the weight on the pinky toe side of your foot. This position restores the arch to focus stretching on the calf muscle rather than the arch tendons and ligaments.

