General Stretching Recommendations

- Keep stretching slow and controlled.
- Avoid forceful movements, jerking and bouncing.
- Breathe while you stretch. Do not hold your breath!
- Hold each stretch at least 10 – 15 seconds.
- May hold longer, especially if you’re feeling tight.
- Always stretch warm muscles. Best time to stretch is right after your exercise session.
- Stop or lessen the stretch if you feel any pain.
- Surgical patients, please be mindful of sternal precautions. Avoid upper body stretches until instructed otherwise by Cardiac Rehab staff.
- Level 1 stretches are appropriate for patients with sternal precautions.

1. Quad Stretch
   - Tuck your toes under seat and relax back onto chair.
   - For more intense stretch, slide forward toward the edge of seat.

2. Hamstring Stretch
   - Using wall for stability, bend knee and grip on to shoe/ankle/pant leg.
   - Try to stand up straight and keep knees together.
   - Sitting toward the front of chair, stick one leg out straight with toe up toward ceiling.
   - For deeper stretch, lean in and reach for toe.

3. Calf Stretch
   - With both legs out straight, slowly alternate between pointing and bending.
   - Repeat 10 times.
   - Using wall for support, get into wide stance with front knee deeply bent and heel of back foot all the way on floor.

4. Hip Stretch
   - From seated position, sit up straight and bring one ankle over opposite thigh.
   - Wrap hands around thigh and lean in for deeper stretch.

5. Overhead Reach
   - Slowly raise arms out to the sides and up overhead.
   - Slowly lower arms back down to starting position.
   - Repeat 5 – 10 times.

6. Side Stretch
   - Slowly roll your shoulders up, back and down (in a circle).
   - Repeat 10 times in each direction.

7. Chest Stretch
   - Reach both hands behind back and interlock fingers.
   - Squeeze shoulder blades together and pull shoulders down away from ears.

8. Back Stretch
   - Lift one arm up over head and bend at elbow, letting hand and forearm reach back behind head/neck.
   - Gently hold elbow in place with opposite hand.
   - Try to keep head up and look straight ahead.

9. Shoulder Rolls
   - Slowly roll your shoulders up, back and down (in a circle).
   - Repeat 10 times in each direction.

10. Shoulder Stretch
    - Band elbow and place hand on the opposite shoulder.
    - Use other hand to gently hold elbow in place.
    - Internally rotate by gently pressing elbow toward opposite shoulder.

11. Triceps Stretch
    - Interlock fingers in front of body.
    - Straighten out your arms, round your back and tuck your chin.
    - Try to make as much space as you can between shoulder blades.

12. Neck Stretches
    - Bring ear over toward shoulder.
    - Leave shoulders down and relaxed.

STRETCH 1: Bring ear over toward shoulder.
- Leave shoulders down and relaxed.

STRETCH 2: Slowly turn head to look over shoulder.
- Leave shoulders down and relaxed.