<u>Exercise and Stretch of the Day</u>

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Today's Muscle is: The Chest Muscles (Pectorals)

**Why are these muscles important to stretch and strengthen?**

The primary movement of the pectoral is the raising and lowering of the arm. It is also responsible for any cross-body and pushing movements. The chest muscles include several upper body muscles and we rely on them for everyday movements, this includes when we are pushing doors, washing and styling our hair, and even getting up from our chair or bed.

In order to keep the chest muscles strong, they need to be worked and strengthened regularly. It is also equally as important to stretch before every work out. This will help warm the muscle up before exertion and helps with improving the range of motion for our muscles and joints.

A Stretch for the Chest Muscle: *Standing Door Frame Stretch*

- Stand in an open doorway. Raise each arm up to the side, bent at 90-degree angles with palms forward. Rest your palms on the door frame.
- Slowly step forward with one foot. Feel the stretch in your shoulders and chest. Stand upright and don't lean forward.
- Hold for 15 – 30 seconds per stretch.
- Step back and relax the body.
- Complete 1-3 sets per stretch.

Picture (A) is using both arms to stretch both chest muscles at the same time.
Pictures (B) is stretching one chest muscle at a time.
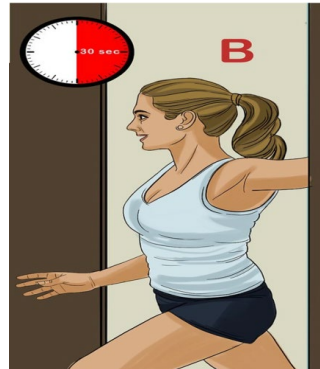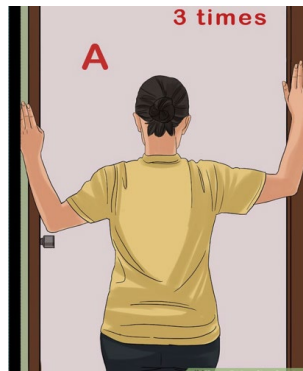
An Exercise for the Chest Muscle: *Dumbbell cross body chest raises:*

- Stand straight feet shoulder width apart to help with balance.
- Hold one dumbbell in each hand
- Arms should be next to the body next to your hips and your palms should be facing out.
- Keeping a slight bend the arms proceed to lift the dumbbell across the body until reaching the oposite shoulder.
- Hold and Squeeze pectoral for 1 second and release.
- Repeat with opposite arms.
- Alternate arms.
- Complete 1-3 sets for 8-12 reps