



Stretching can help get seniors moving

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THURSDAY, April 5, 2018 -- Stretching leg muscles every day may benefit seniors and other people with mobility problems, a new study reports.

Researchers placed splints on lower limbs of older rats to stretch their calf muscles. The splints were placed on one leg for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, for four weeks.

This stretching program increased blood flow to muscles in the lower leg, according to the study published April 4 in the *Journal of Physiology*.

The findings suggest that regular stretching could improve blood flow to leg muscles and improve walking ability in elderly people and others with limited mobility.

However, animal studies don't always produce the same results in humans.

"This highlights that even individuals who struggle to walk due to pain or lack of mobility can undertake activity to possibly improve their health," lead researcher Judy Muller-Delp said in a journal news release. Muller-Delp is a professor of biomedical sciences at Florida State University.

She noted that the researchers did not test a range of stretches or different time spans.

"It is possible that greater stretch or stretch that increases steadily over the four-week period would have an even greater benefit. It is also possible that greater benefit would be seen if the stretching continued for longer," Muller-Delp said.

More information

HealthinAging.org has more on [mobility problems](#).

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