

Tiffany Esser conducted stretching and resistant training exercises during the 2009 NHA Natural Living Conference. The following are the chair stretching exercises with photos to help you perform them properly. In the next issue we will include the resistant training exercises.

Chair Stretching Exercises:

Time: approximately 10 minutes

Take deep breaths to release tension through each exercise.

Head Tilts

Hold for 3 deep breaths on each side x 3 sets

Start: Neutral seated position: that is, feet flat on the ground, arch the lower (lumbar) spine, shoulders pulled back, hands resting on the knees, head straight and eye focus parallel to the ground.

Mid: Tilt head to the right shoulder eye focus forward.

Finish: Back in neutral position with head and spine straight. Repeat other side.

Focus: Trapezoids, SCMs (Sternocleidomastoid muscles)

Shoulder Rolls

10-15 reps. in each direction x 3 sets

Start: Neutral position.

Mid: Roll shoulders up and back. Visualize energy moving along the ceiling and to the wall behind you as you rotate. Inhale for 1 rotation and exhale for 1 rotation.

Finish: Rotation ends in neutral position. Repeat other direction.

Focus: Trapezoids and Rhomboids

Core Rotations

Hold for 3 deep breaths on each side x 3 sets

Start: Neutral position. Then place left hand on right knee. Place right hand on the top of the chair behind you.

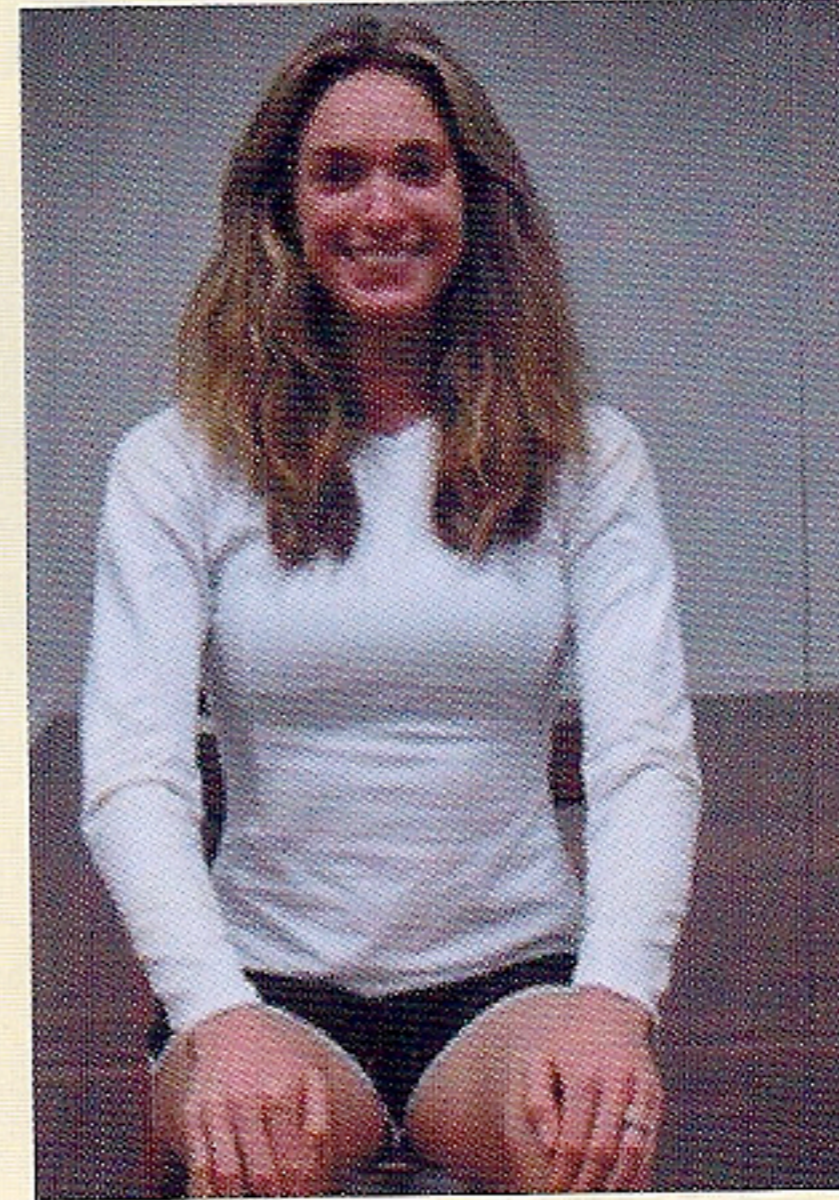
Mid: Rotate shoulders and spine to the right. Eye focus is up and over your right shoulder. Gently encourage your lower (lumbar) spine to twist further and increase flexibility.

Finish: Release stretch and come back to neutral position. Repeat other direction.

Focus: Abdominals and Lumbar Spine

A Stretching Workout

Head Tilts



Shoulder Rolls



Core Rotations



with Tiffany Esser



Seated Hamstrings Stretch



Standing Calf and Anterior Thigh Stretch



Standing Quadriceps Stretch



Seated Hamstrings Stretch

Hold for 3 deep breaths on each leg x 3 sets

Start: Neutral position. Extend the right leg out in front of the body. Keep the right knee straight and left knee bent. Flex the right foot with the toes upward.

Mid: Gently lean forward from the hip joint. Do not bend from the upper back. Lengthen through the spine and lift the shoulders back while pressing the chest forward.

Finish: Release the stretch and return to neutral position. Repeat other leg.

Focus: Hamstrings

Standing Calf and Anterior Thigh Stretch

Hold for 3 deep breaths on each leg x 3 sets

Start: Stand and face the front of a chair. Lift the right leg and place the foot flat onto the seat of the chair, preferably toward the back of the chair. Keep the front knee at a 90-degree angle.

Mid: Place hands on the top of the chair. Gently lean forward from the hip joint. Do not bend forward from the upper back creating a curve to the spine. The stretch will be felt in the hamstring of the upper leg, and the front of the thigh and calf of the lower leg.

Finish: Release the stretch and return to neutral standing position. Repeat other leg.

Focus: Anterior Thighs and Calves

Standing Quadriceps Stretch

Hold for 3 deep breaths on each leg x 3 sets

Start: Stand and face the back of a chair. Place the left hand on the back of the chair. Bend the right knee and lift the heel toward the back.

Mid: Grab the right ankle with the right hand. Pull the heel inward to the back. Keep the shoulders rotated back, and the right knee in a straight line with the spine.

Finish: Release the stretch and return to neutral standing position. Repeat other leg.

Focus: Quadriceps



Tiffany M. Esser is a personal trainer who draws from a past of lyric dance and endurance sports to create unique programs to meet the needs of individuals and groups alike.