

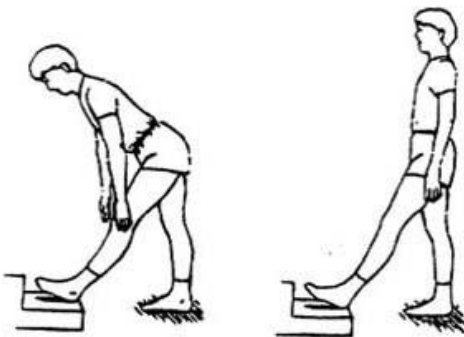
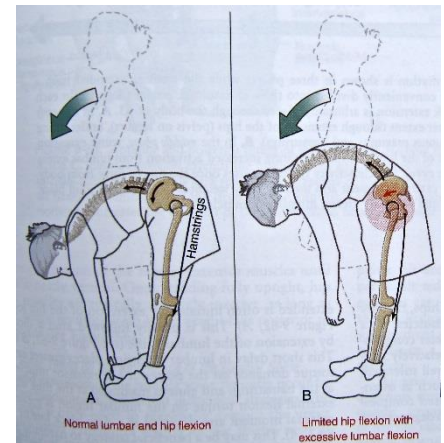
Hamstring Stretches

The Semitendinosus, Semimembranosus, and the Biceps Femoris collectively form the “Hamstrings”. This muscle group spans the entire back surface of the Femur (the “thigh” bone). They start low on the pelvis and insert high on the Tibia (the “leg” bone), behind the knee.

Rapid growth of the Femur is common during the pre-adolescent and adolescent years. If the Hamstrings are not adequately stretched to match this growth, they become relatively tight. Tight Hamstrings can lead to, or exacerbate, low back pain and may contribute to knee pain syndromes witnessed in the growing population.



Normal spinal flexibility requires contributions from the hip and from the lumbar spine. When the Hamstrings are too tight, the hip cannot adequately flex and excessive stretch is placed on the lowest levels of the lumbar spine (the Lumbosacral junction). At first, kids may compensate by bending their knees (which relaxes the Hamstrings). Over time, even this compensatory mechanism cannot prevent the development of low back pain.



Routine stretching is recommended in the growing kids twice a day (after waking up in the morning and before going to sleep at night) and before and after all sporting activities. ***Emphasize keeping the knee straight to maximize efficient stretching of the Hamstrings.*** Maintenance of this stretching program is encouraged even after symptoms have resolved to prevent recurrence.

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