

by CNS

THE MOVES: A lumbar spine stretch using a squat position.

SQUATS - To stretch the lumbar spine, firefighter Ryan Ybarra squats down, trying to get his buttocks to touch his heels. CNS Photo by Nadia Borowski Scott. **DOWN STRETCH** - To stretch the lumbar spine, firefighter Ryan Ybarra squats down, trying to get his buttocks to touch his heels. CNS Photo by Nadia Borowski Scott. **WORKS ON:** Spine mobility, lumbar flexibility, lower-extremity flexibility and strength.

PRECAUTIONS: This stretch is not for everyone! If you have a history of back injury, check with your physician before attempting this. Do not hold your breath during this activity.

SETUP: Stand with the feet hip-width apart. Perform a full squat with the torso coming down between the knees and the abdomen resting on the thighs. Attempt to keep the heels on the ground. Allow the arms to wrap around the outside of the knees. Allow your head to relax down toward the ground. It may take months, but the end goal of this stretch is to get the buttocks touching the heels, with the shoulders between the knees and in front of the shins.

REPETITIONS: Starting out, perform each stretch for 30 seconds to one minute. As your tolerance builds,

progress to one to two minutes. Let go and allow your body to relax into the position.

OPTIONS: You can perform this stretch by holding onto something very sturdy that is about waist-high. This will assist you in coming back out of the squat if strength or balance is a problem.

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Fitness Forum: Lumbar spine stretch takes patience and practice by CNS