

Fitness Forum: Stretch is great for increasing circulation

by CNS

CHEST STRETCH - Fire Capt. Maria Cabrera stretches the chest, shoulders and hips by slowly bending backward and holding the movement. CNS Photo by Peggy Peattie **THE MOVE:** Standing back bend.

WORKS ON: Stretches the anterior chest, shoulders, trunk and hips. A great break from sitting for extended periods. Increases circulation.

SET UP: Stand fully erect with the feet shoulder-width apart and the toes pointing straight forward.

STEPS: Place the palms of the hands half on the small of the back and half on the buttocks. Gently squeeze the elbows toward each other and slowly bend backward until you feel a gentle stretch in your trunk. Look overhead with the eyes, but keep the head aligned with the spine.

REPETITIONS: Aim for one or two stretches every hour. Hold each stretch 15 to 30 seconds.

PRECAUTIONS: Do not bend the neck back. Progress slowly with the stretch if you have poor balance.

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