



Mobility & Recovery

SIMPLE ROUTINES TO
HELP YOU MOVE BETTER
& RECOVER FASTER



CHIROPRACTIC
FIRST OF IOWA

MOBILITY & RECOVERY

Why it matters

Mobility and recovery aren't just for athletes - they're essential for *everyone*. Whether you're reaching for groceries, getting out of bed, walking your dog, or doing a workout, **mobility determines how well (and pain-free) you move.**

And recovery is where the real magic happens. During recovery, your body **rebuilds tissues, clears inflammation, and strengthens your muscles and joints.** When these two are ignored, stiffness builds, injuries sneak in, and your body starts to feel "older" than it actually is.

The good news? Improving your mobility and recovery isn't complicated. All it takes are some simple daily habits, which is laid out in this guide!

What to Expect

Here's what's covered:

- ✓ **Simple routines** for morning, noon & night
- ✓ **Stretch flows** for flexibility & better sleep
- ✓ **Breathwork** for nervous system recovery
- ✓ **Recovery tools** to ease sore muscles
- ✓ **Daily tracker** to help you stay consistent
- ✓ **Red flags** to watch for & when to get help



Benefits of Mobility & Recovery Work

- Injury prevention
- Supports joint health
- Improves flexibility
- Enhances performance
- Less stiffness & muscle tightness
- Better longevity & independence as you age

DAILY BLUEPRINT ELEMENTS

Overview

The best routines are the ones that slip easily into your day. And that's exactly what this blueprint is here to help with.

This guide breaks things down into three simple checkpoints: **morning, midday, and evening**. Each one gives your body the chance to move, rest, or unwind, without taking too much time.

The Three Daily Anchors

Time of Day	Focus	What You'll Do	Key Benefits
Morning	Mobility wake-up	Stretches & joint movements	Reduces stiffness & boosts energy
Midday	Breathwork reset	Guided breathing exercises	Calms stress to support recovery
Evening	Stretch & wind down	Gentle evening stretch routine	Eases tension & promotes a good night's sleep

Tip: Pick a consistent daily cue as your reminder to move or breathe (e.g., brushing your teeth, finishing your lunch). This will make it much easier to stick with!



Why This Rhythm Works

Daily movement, even in small amounts, can **reduce stiffness, improve flexibility,** and **support your body's natural repair process.**

MORNING MOBILITY ROUTINE

To wake up your body

Tired of waking up with stiff joints or tight muscles? Enter morning mobility. A short routine can help wake up your body, ease tension, boost circulation, and set a positive tone for your day.

The sequence below takes just 5 minutes, and the first two moves can be done right from bed. From there, you'll transition into more active stretches on the floor.



Morning Mobility Routine



1) **Figure 4 Stretch** (30 seconds each side)

Lie on your back with one ankle crossed over the opposite knee. Draw your lower leg in towards your chest. Take some slow, deep breaths as you hold and then switch sides.

2) **Neck Rolls & Shoulder Circles** (10 reps each direction for both)

Sit up in your bed (or stand) and gently roll your neck around in slow circles. Reverse direction. Then slowly roll your shoulders forward and backward.

3) **Hip Circles & Ankle Rolls** (10 reps in each direction for both)

Stand and place your hands on your hips. Make slow circles with your hips in one direction and then reverse. Then sit on your bed and roll each ankle in both directions.

4) **Cat-Cow** (30-60 seconds)

On your hands and knees, slowly alternate between arching and rounding your spine. Inhale as you arch, exhale as you round.

5) **World's Greatest Stretch** (1-2 reps per side)

Step your left foot forward into a lunge and place your right hand on the floor. Rotate your torso toward the left as you stretch your left hand toward the ceiling. Hold for 10-30 sec and repeat on the opposite side.

MIDDAY BREATHWORK

For recovery & stress relief

Stress slows recovery. When you're in "fight or flight" mode, your body holds onto tension, and has a harder time repairing itself.

Intentional breathing can help calm your nervous system and flip the switch into "rest and repair." Just a few minutes can promote relaxation and help your body and mind reset.

Here are 4 simple techniques to try:



Box Breathing

How to do it:

Slowly inhale through your nose for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat for 1-3 minutes.

[Box Breathing Demo](#)

Coherent Breathing

How to do it:

Slowly inhale through your nose for 5-6 seconds. Then exhale for 5-6 seconds. Repeat for 1-3 minutes.

[Coherent Breathing Demo](#)

4-7-8 Breathing

How to do it:

Inhale through the nose for 4 counts & hold for 7. Exhale slowly through the mouth for 8. Repeat for 4 breaths.

[4-7-8 Breathing Demo](#)

Cyclic Sighing

How to do it:

Take one long inhale through your nose, followed by a second shorter inhale. Then slowly exhale through your mouth. Repeat for 1-5 min.

[Cyclic Sighing Demo](#)

EVENING STRETCH ROUTINE

To relax & release tension

Ending your day with some gentle stretches can help release tension, quiet your mind, and prep your body for a good night's sleep. The 10-minute routine below is a simple way to help your body wind down and promote recovery.

Evening Stretch Routine

1) **Forward Fold** (1-2 minutes)

Stand or sit and hinge at the hips, letting your head and arms hang heavy.

Benefits: Relieves back tension & calms the nervous system



2) **Seated spinal twist** (3-5 breaths each side)

Sit tall and cross one leg over the other. Gently twist your torso toward the bent knee. Hold for a few breaths and switch sides.

Benefits: Releases spinal tension & supports digestion



3) **Neck stretch** (15-30 seconds, repeat 2-4Xs each side)

Sit or stand tall and tilt one ear toward your shoulder. Repeat on the other side.

Benefits: Eases neck and shoulder stiffness from the day



4) **Legs up the wall** (3-5 minutes)

Lie on your back with your legs extended up a wall (or a bed or couch). Here's a [demo video](#) if you're new to it.

Benefits: Improves circulation, relaxes the body, & promotes restful sleep

5) **Child's Pose** (1-2 minutes)

Kneel on the floor (or on your bed) and sit back on your heels, stretching your arms forward with your forehead resting on the ground.

Benefits: Relieves back and hip tension & calms the nervous system

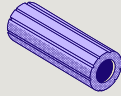


THE BEST RECOVERY TOOLS

For easing sore muscles

Recovery tools can make it easier to release tight muscles and improve mobility. Here are a few to consider adding to your toolkit:

Foam Rollers



What it is:

A dense cylinder made of foam

How to use:

Roll slowly over large muscles like your quads, hamstrings, glutes, or lats.

Benefits:

Boosts blood flow, releases muscle tension & aids recovery after workouts or long days of sitting

Mobility Sticks



What it is:

A long, lightweight, flexible stick

How to use:

Use it for shoulder pass throughs, overhead holds, or twisting rotations to open the upper back.

Benefits:

Improves posture and shoulder mobility so you can move more freely with less tension

Lacrosse Balls



What it is:

A small, firm ball (a racquetball or tennis ball work too)

How to use:

Place it under your shoulders, glutes or feet and lean into a wall or floor, applying gentle pressure.

Benefits:

Targets knots that a foam roller can't reach. Great for desk workers or anyone with hip tension.

Yoga Blocks & Strap



What it is:

Lightweight foam or cork blocks & a long strap with a buckle

How to use:

Use blocks to bring the floor closer in stretches or loop the strap around your foot to reach deeper w/o strain.

Benefits:

Make flexibility work safer and more comfortable, especially if you're new to stretching or feeling tight

LIFESTYLE FACTORS

That boost recovery



Sleep

Deep sleep is a must for recovery. It's when your body repairs tissues, reduces inflammation, and restores energy for the next day. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Have trouble sleeping? Try to wake up and go to bed at the same time each night. And keep your bedroom cool, dark, and screen-free.



Hydration

Water cushions your joints, delivers nutrients to your muscles, and flushes out waste products from exercise. Aim for about half your body weight (in pounds) in ounces per day.

Pro tip: Add electrolytes or a pinch of sea salt to your water if you're active or sweat often.



Minerals

Minerals like magnesium, potassium, sodium, and calcium help regulate muscle contractions and prevent muscle cramps. So be sure to add mineral rich-foods to your meals. Think leafy greens, nuts, seeds, avocados, and salmon.

Pro tip: Try magnesium glycinate before bed if you struggle with sleep or sore muscles.



Protein

Protein provides amino acids, the building blocks for repairing muscles and tissue. Without enough, recovery slows and soreness lingers. Shoot for 0.6-1.0 grams of protein per pound of body weight (depending on your activity level).

Pro tip: Spread intake evenly across meals, instead of loading it all at dinner.



MOBILITY & RECOVERY

Habit tracker

HOW TO USE THIS TRACKER

- ✓ Choose which habits to focus on this week.
- ✓ Set your daily water, sleep, & protein goals.
- ✓ Check off each one you hit.
- ✓ Celebrate your wins at the end of the week!

WEEK OF:

DAILY GOALS

WATER: _____ **OZ.** **SLEEP:** _____ **HRS.** **PROTEIN:** _____ **G.**

HABIT	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
MORNING MOBILITY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROTEIN GOAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MIDDAY BREATHWORK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EVENING STRETCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLEEP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WINS & REFLECTIONS

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

When to get help

Mobility and recovery work should feel *good*. While mild discomfort or soreness is normal, sharp pain is a sign to seek help. Listening to your body is the smartest recovery tool you have.

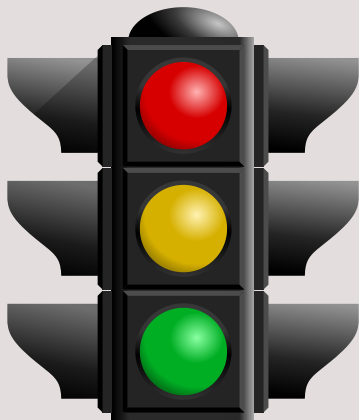
When to See a Professional

Check in with a chiropractor, physical therapist, or healthcare provider if you experience:

- Sharp, stabbing, or shooting pain
- Tingling, numbness, or burning in limbs
- Pain that worsens when resting instead of improving
- Joints that frequently lock, give out, or are unstable
- No noticeable improvements after 2-3 weeks of mobility work



Understanding Your Body's Signals



Sharp pain = see a professional



Discomfort = monitor



Mild soreness = normal

Remember: Your body is wise. When in doubt, get it checked out.