



SAFETY TOPIC: PRE-CYCLING STRETCHES

Calves: To stretch the right calf, stand three to four feet from your bike and lean on it, right forearm on the saddle and left hand on the handlebar. Step forward with your left leg, bending the knee. Keep the right knee straight behind you with the right foot about 18 inches behind the left. Slowly move your hips forward until you feel a stretch in the right calf. Keep the heel of your right foot on the ground and your toes pointed straight ahead. Hold an easy stretch for 15 seconds, relax and repeat. Then, stretch the left calf.



Back and Shoulders: Place your feet about four feet from the bike and bend 90 degrees at the waist. Put one hand on the saddle, the other on the handlebar. Relax, keeping your arms straight and your feet directly under your hips. Bend your knees slightly. Slowly move your chest down until you feel a gentle stretch in the arms, shoulders and back. Hold for 15 seconds, relax and repeat. When you come out of this stretch, save strain on your back muscles by bending your knees more before standing.



Hamstrings: Lift your right leg and place the middle of the calf on the saddle. Steady the bike with your left hand on the top tube. Your right knee should be bent about an inch. Your left knee should be slightly flexed with your foot pointing straight ahead in a walking position. Slowly bend from the waist, eyes forward, until you feel a mild stretch in the back of your right leg. Hold for 15 seconds, relax and repeat. Then, stretch the left hamstring.



Quads: Stand next to your bike and hold the saddle with your right hand. With your left hand, grasp your right foot behind you and pull it gently across your buttocks. Stretch the right quad gently for 15 seconds, relax and repeat. Then, stretch the left quad. The knee bends at a natural angle when you grab your foot with the opposite hand, so this stretch is good for problem knees.



Shoulders: Raise the tops of your shoulders toward your ears until you feel a slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold this feeling for three to five seconds; then relax your shoulders. Repeat two to three times.



These stretches are provided courtesy of *Bicycling Magazine* - July 1998