

# PET EXERCISE

## GET READY



- Exercise can be great for you and your pet, if done safely!
- Before starting your pet on an exercise program, consult your vet to ensure your pet is healthy enough to exercise and to discuss any risk factors, such as age, breed, and health status.
- Once your pet is cleared to start exercising, use these tips to ensure a great run!

## WARM UP



- Your pet should always have a warm-up prior to ANY exercise.
- This can simply be a 10-15 minute leash walk.
- They can then work up to a trot for an additional 5-10 minutes.

## RUN



- Only after the warm-up should your pet be allowed to run.
- Ideally, walks/runs should be on softer surfaces such as grass or soil.

## COOL DOWN



- After intense activity (running for more than 5 minutes straight), your pet should have a cool down leash walk of 10-15 minutes.
- At the end of the cool down period, your pet should have a 5 minute session of stretching.
- This can include passive range of motion (PROM) or massage. See back for more details!

# STRETCHING

## Front & Hind Limb Passive Range of Motion

1. Lie your pet on his/her side.
2. Take each joint (wrist, elbow, shoulder, ankle, knee, hip) through a full range of motion.
3. Place one hand above the joint and one hand below.
4. Gently flex and extend each joint.
5. Pulse intermittently to improve the range of motion and hold each stretch for 10 seconds.
6. Do this for 3-5 minutes.

\*To see an example of this, check out our YouTube Channel, "AMCRehabFitness." Once there, search "Forelimb Range of Motion" and "Hindlimb PROM."



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## Massage

1. Begin by kneading with your fingers to pick up the loose skin around your pet's neck. This is a great way to relax them and signal the start of your therapy.
2. Use firm but gentle pressure to give your pet a massage along the spine.
3. Use circular motions with your thumbs on either side of the spine or cusp your fingers and run them down along the back.
4. Begin at the neck and move down towards the tail. You can also continue your massage through the limbs.



*Illustration by Margo McKnight*