

Let's Go!

November Workout

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Get a Leg Up on Strong Legs

This month's moves focus on the quadriceps muscle group. Those are the large muscles on the front of your thighs. The quadriceps do the most work when you are running and jumping. Do these exercises two or three days each week, and you will be on the road to faster running and higher jumping!

OK! Get up and go!

*Exercise program designed by Tiffany Glenwinkel,
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Activity Challenge

This month's challenge requires nothing more than a few friends and a good imagination! Get your heart pumping, improve your running skills, and hang out with friends at the same time.

Grab three or four friends and play this game of follow the leader. Designate each person as A, B, C, or D. Person A should be the leader, B should be the timekeeper, and C and D are the followers. The object of the game is for Person A to lead the group in something that keeps them moving for at least three minutes while the timekeeper and others follow. After three minutes, call time, rest for 20 to 30 seconds, and rotate so that B now is the leader, C is the timekeeper, and A and D follow the leader. Everyone should get a chance to lead, keep time, and follow at least two times.

Here are some activity ideas: Run in place, do jumping jacks, run in zigzags or circles, leap around, or dance. Just move! When you have finished rotating roles, play the game once more, except this time do stretching activities (such as the stretches from September, October, and this month) to cool down. Your physical education teacher can show you some other good stretches. Each person should have the opportunity to lead the group in at least two stretches.



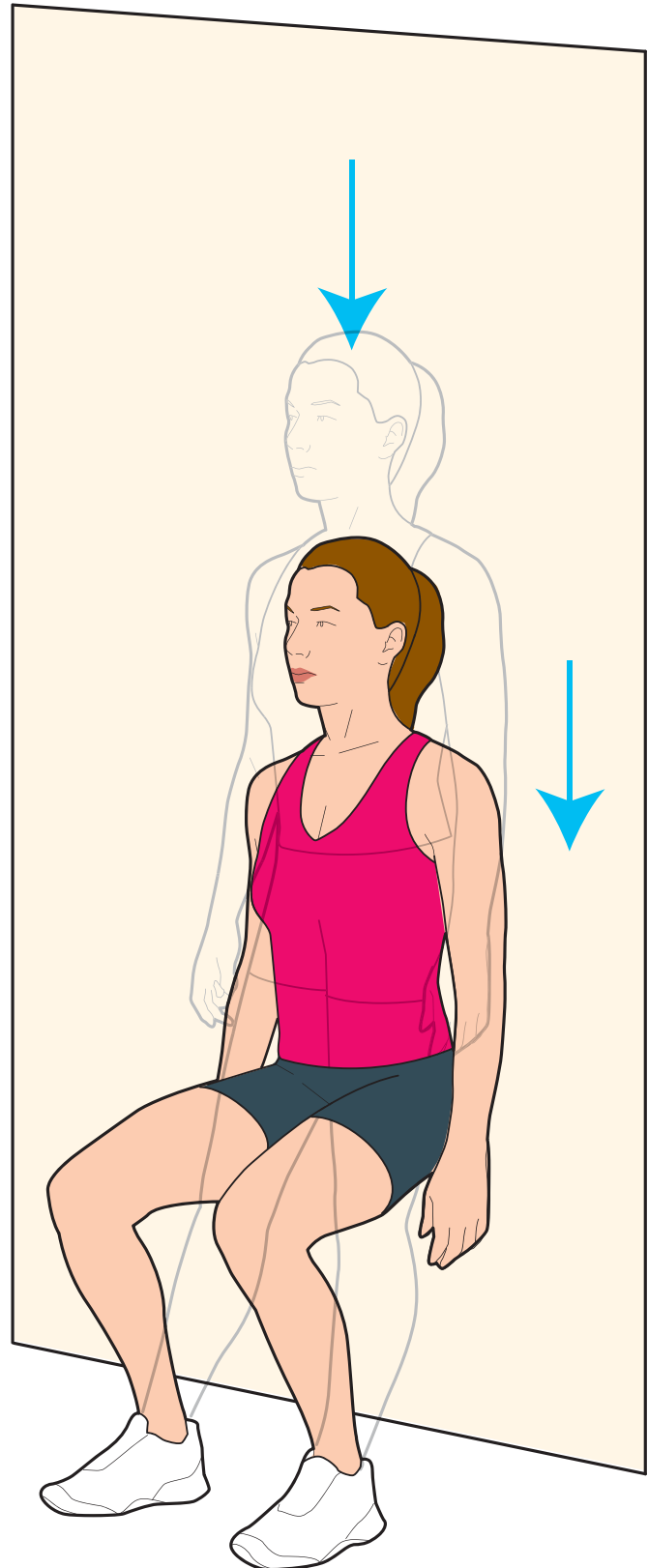
Wall Squat

The wall squat will strengthen your quadriceps and build lower-body endurance. To do this exercise, all you need is a wall or another sturdy surface you can lean on.

1. Stand straight with your back leaning against the wall and your feet hip-width apart and about 2 feet from the wall. (If you are tall or if you have really long legs, you may have to place your feet a little farther out.)
2. Slide down the wall so that your knees are at about a 90-degree angle (as if you are sitting in a chair). If your knees bend forward in front of your toes, move your feet farther away from the wall.
3. Inhale as you slide down to the “sitting” position, keeping your abdominal muscles tight and your back flat against the wall. Hold for two to three seconds.
4. Slide up to the starting position, keeping your back pressed against the wall and your abdominal muscles tight. Exhale as you push yourself up.

Repeat steps 1 to 5 for 12 to 15 repetitions. You may find it difficult to get all the way to 90 degrees at first, so go as far as you can, and keep working on it until you can do a full squat.

If you feel that this exercise is too easy, try stretching one leg out in front of you. Keep your squatting leg steady as you lower your body.



Quad Stretch

After doing the wall squat, use this move to stretch those muscles that were just worked. Stretching after exercise is important. It improves the range of motion in joints, keeps muscles from getting stiff and tight, and reduces the chance of having aches and pains after exercising.

1. Stand facing a wall or some other surface that you can use for balance if you need it.
2. Bend your left knee, and grab the top of your foot; bring your heel toward your buttocks with your knee pointing straight down at the floor. You should feel a stretch down the front of your leg.
3. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, and switch legs.

If you need a little more stretch, pull your toe toward your back, but keep your knees side by side. Don't let the knee of the foot you're holding swing back or to the side.



Did you know?

Did you know that building and keeping strong muscles is important for more than just physical appearance? Strong muscles help support your tendons, ligaments, bones, and joints. Strong muscles also mean that you are less likely to injure yourself, whether you're going on a bike ride with friends or just carrying that stack of heavy books to and from class.

