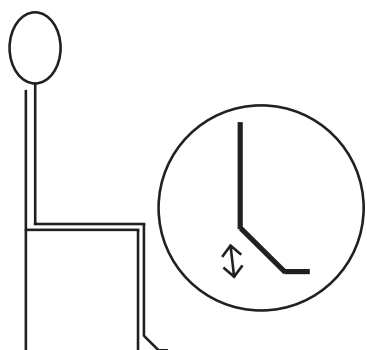


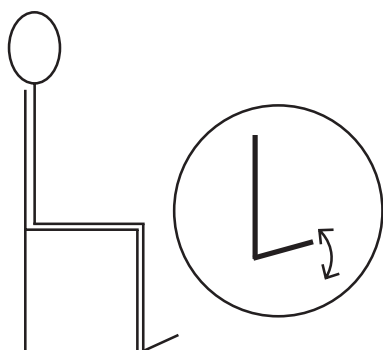
Something new...

A healthy circulation carries oxygen and nutrients to every cell. Practise these simple exercises to boost yours while you stitch...

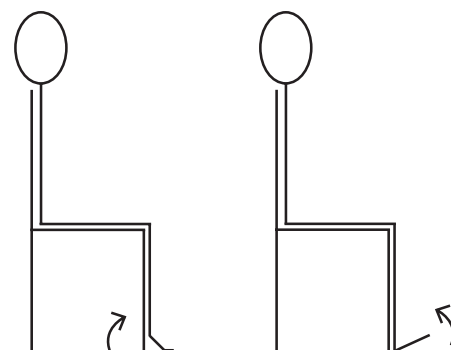
As we mentioned in our Stitchlinks Posture Advice, it's important to stretch and move around every 20 minutes when you're stitching. This will help to prevent aches and pains and give your circulation a good boost making you less tired and more alert. The exercises shown below are specifically designed to help your circulation and should be done smoothly, but quickly so as to have a pumping effect on your blood. If you're able to get up and walk around then do this as well. They're easy to learn and will soon be second nature.



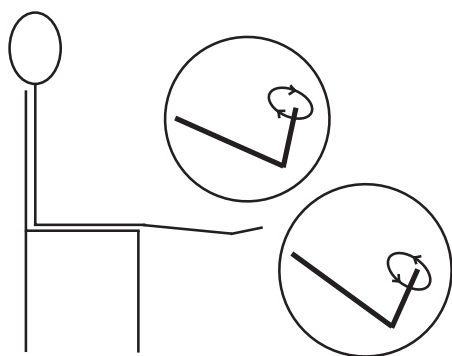
Keeping your **toes** on the floor, lift your heels as high as possible then lower and repeat 10 times quickly. Feel it pumping those calf muscles!



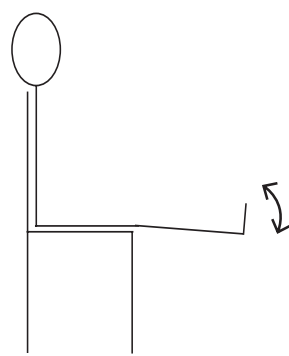
Keeping your **heels** on the floor, lift your toes as high as possible. Lower and repeat 10 times quickly. Do both feet at the same time.



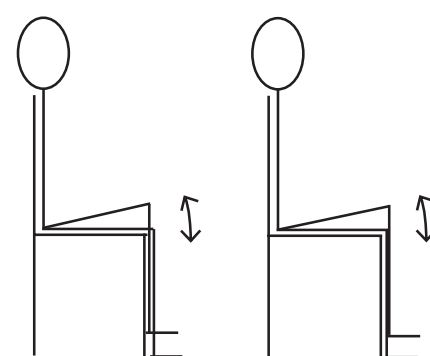
Now combine these two exercises by raising and lowering your heels, followed by your toes. x10 heels and x10 toes. Feel that pump!



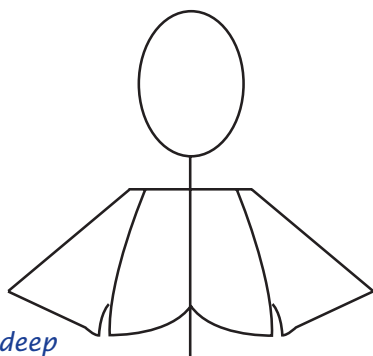
Lift your lower leg and **keeping your knee straight** circle your foot clockwise x10, then anticlockwise x 10. Repeat with the other leg.



Lift your lower leg and **keeping your knee straight** pull your foot up towards you and hold for a count of five. Do this x5 each leg.



Whilst sitting lift one knee as shown in the diagram. Lower it then lift the other as if you were marching. Ten times each leg.



Take deep breaths using your lower chest.

Breathe well

Many of us breathe using only the upper portions of our lungs, so when you've done your exercises finish off with four deep breaths to get fresh air down to where the mucus collects due to gravity. To do this place your hands on the lower sides of your rib cage as shown. As you breathe in feel this area expand, outwards. It may take a bit of practise and you can try one side at a time if it's easier.

Posture

Sitting for long periods, maybe stitching, working in an office or travelling can cause problems, so it's important to keep moving and stretching. Take time out to check out your posture on a regular basis and be careful not to hunch over your work. Get into the habit of gently pushing your shoulders back into the chair. Use a copy holder for your charts and it'll soon all slot into place!