



- support. Roll on the posterior hip area. You may increase the stretch by pulling your left knee towards the right shoulder with your right hand.
- Hamstring: Cross your right leg over your left and place the roll under your left hamstring just above the knee joint. Place your hands underneath your shoulders on the floor to lift your hips off the floor and move the roll up the length of your hamstrings to the buttocks region. Only your hands and the roller should be in contact with the floor
  - Calf muscle: Place the roll under your left lower leg by your ankle and cross your right leg over your left. Supporting your body weight with your hands, roll from your heel to the top or your calf, using your upper body to move your calf over the roller. Only your hands and the roller should be in contact with the floor.

**Where do I get the foam rolls?** Before running out to your local Walmart to buy just any piece of foam, it's important to understand that product density and size is very important. If the foam is too soft, less than adequate tissue pressure is applied. On the other hand, if the foam is too hard, bruising and more advanced soft-tissue trauma may occur, leading to further restriction, initiation of the inflammatory process, decreased range of motion, pain, and decreased performance. Foam rollers and proper instruction in their use can be obtained from most Physical Therapy clinics as well as online at various fitness and wellness companies such as <http://www.fwonline.com/foamrolls.htm>. The most functional roll is six inches in diameter and one to three feet in length. Smaller diameter rolls may be more beneficial for the neck and back regions.

In summary, using foam rollers can help you reach your health and fitness goals. By simply using your own body weight on the rolls, you can reduce pain and tension, and restore normal muscle length and balance. Optimum muscle balance helps to provide optimum joint motion, leading to optimum performance. Try it yourself to reach your fitness goals. You will be AMAZED!