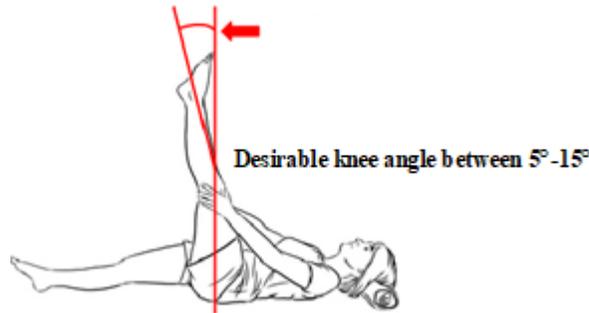


## Are my Muscles Tight or Weak?

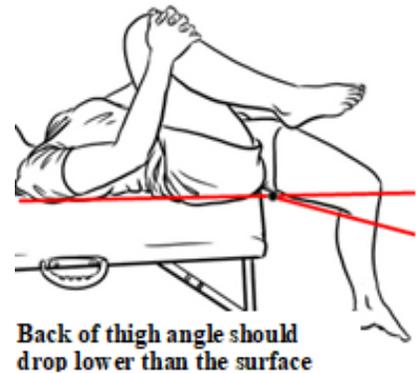
What exactly are your muscles trying to tell you? Your muscles feel tight; so you commit to stretching more. After a few weeks of this you aren't noticing a difference. Could it be muscle weakness instead? Sometimes our muscles send us mixed signals. **Muscle tightness** is best described as feeling stiff. Movement is more difficult than usual, or limited, especially after rest. **Muscle weakness** is feeling as though extra effort or assistance is required to move your arms, legs, or other muscles.

A weak muscle that isn't strong enough to perform may seize up protecting itself from injury. This inability to move a muscle can easily be mistaken for muscle tightness. Let's hone in on two common problem areas for runners, the hamstrings and hip flexors, and how to determine what your muscles are telling you.

### Hamstring Flexibility Test



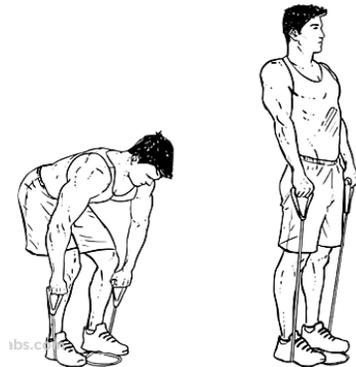
### Hip Flexor Flexibility Test



If you passed the flexibility tests, here are some strengthening exercises to try.

### Hamstring Strengthening Exercises

- Hamstring curl on stability ball
- Deadlift with exercise band



### Hip Flexor Strengthening Exercises

- Lying leg raise with ankle weight
- High knee march with exercise band



## Exercise Therapy at the GE Fitness Center



Have you recently completed physical therapy but still need a little bit of guidance and direction toward full recovery? Exercise therapy is an on-site post physical therapy program for GE employees, spouses, and dependents. Our fitness professionals work with a the GE physical therapist to develop and continue a plan of action for continued progression toward normal strength and range of motion to your injured area. Contact us at 243-9404 to schedule an exercise therapy consult free of charge.

# Dietitian Corner—Freezer Smoothie Bags Are Perfect for Summer

These make-ahead freezer bags are a perfect option for breakfast on the go, filling snacks, post-workout fuel, and after dinner treats! Just add the following frozen ingredients to baggies and store them in the freezer. When you're ready to make them, just mix the ingredients in a blender with 1 cup milk of your choice and enjoy!

Use these base ingredients:

- 3 cubes frozen nonfat, plain Greek yogurt (frozen in ice cube tray)
- 1 cup fresh spinach
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 1/2 tsp spirulina

## Pina Colada

- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple
- 2 tbsp shredded coconut

## Cherry Berry

- 1/2 cup frozen cherries
- 1/2 cup frozen mixed berries

## Banana Split

- 1 banana
- 1/2 cup strawberries
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder

## Tropical

- 1/2 cup pineapple
- 1/2 banana
- 1/2 cup mango or orange
- 2 tbsp shredded coconut

## Carrot Cake

- 1 cup carrots
- 1 tbsp walnuts
- 1 tsp cinnamon



## Freezer Ready SMOOTHIE PACKS

Optional additions:

- 2 tbsp rolled oats
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp maple syrup or honey
- 1 tbsp nut butter

Interested in learning more about nutrition and how your current eating habits stack up? Hannah Griswold, MS, RDN, LDN, CDE is available to answer any of your questions and create a tailored nutrition plan. Just call 853-8900 to schedule your appointment.

## Member Spotlight - Brandon Thomas

Meet fitness center member Brandon Thomas. Learn what drove him to make a lifestyle change and how he found support from the fitness center along the way.



### Tell us a little about your journey to good health. What prompted you to make a change?

I was prompted to change my lifestyle once I found out I was going to be a father. I knew I hadn't been taking care of myself lately and needed to make some changes.

### How did you get started and what wellness/fitness resources did you utilize and find support from?

I started by walking into the fitness center to ask questions and was introduced to Ashley. She answered all my questions and made me feel like the fitness center had a great atmosphere.

After joining, I was paired up with Xavier to create a plan that fit my goals and aspirations. I tend to workout in the evening and met Jessica who has pushed me to try new exercises. As a fitness team, everyone has helped me.

### How do you feel now and where are you in reaching your goals?

I feel amazing. I am physically healthier and mentally more clear also. I tend to sleep better and feel less stressed overall in my life. I did set goals, but now it has morphed into a lifestyle. I haven't reached every goal yet but if I continue with this lifestyle, I'll easily surpass the goals.

### What advice do you have for others who may be hesitant to start seeking a healthier lifestyle?

My advice would be do not fear the unknown and do not underestimate yourself. With proper motivation, it is amazing what our bodies can achieve.