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## Stretch helps runners, walkers

LISA NEWMAN • SPECIAL TO THE CLARION-LEDGER • OCTOBER 7, 2008

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### Runners Lunge With Equalizer Bars (Thighs)

**Preparation:** The runner's stretch for the thigh category is the hamstring and thigh stretch. In running, keeping the hamstring muscles stretched will prevent knee, back and calf injuries. When using the StretchRite trainer, the handgrips provide better control to hold the stretch and release the thigh tension.

**Purpose:** The second exercise in the Spirit of a PERFIT Runner's series is the runner's lunge using the Lebert equalizer bars. The bars are a great multi-purpose fitness tool designed to challenge the total body with your own body weight. These bars allow the fitness enthusiast or athlete to apply specific running/walking movements for muscular isolation.

**Plan:** Start in-between the bars holding each handgrip on the bar. Place one foot forward and one foot back. Inhale to start while exhaling pressing the front heel down and pushing off the ball or forefoot of the back foot. Alternating each leg in a running and stretching motion. For a running stretch and strength sequence perform the lunges slower. For running stamina, perform the sequence faster. Runner's lunges can be performed in one set of 15-25 repetitions a count for each leg to improve stamina and strength for your walking and running performance.

**PERFIT Trainer's Tip:** Keep the core (torso) upright. Focus on keeping the knees straight throughout the lunges. You can use the arms to provide a lift while alternating legs.

**Variations:** There are eight stretches and equalizer bar exercises that will enhance a runner's or walker's fitness goals of a walk or marathon. The bars are portable, durable and cost around \$95.

**Lisa Newman, a certified personal fitness trainer, consultant and exercise physiologist, owns Perfit Inc. E-mail questions to [perfitlisanevman@aol.com](mailto:perfitlisanevman@aol.com).**



Above: Personal fitness trainer Lisa Newman demonstrates the runner's lunge with equalizer bars at Jackson Academy's Athletic Field in Jackson. Below: Newman demonstrates the StretchRite Trainer hamstring/thigh stretch that helps to prevent injuries.



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