Do you always want to sit or lie down after an exhausting run or race? Chris Ramsey, a physical therapist and triathlete, explains how getting off your feet too soon can cause muscles and tendons to tighten up. After a run or race, it’s crucial to implement a recovery plan that includes adequate hydration and stretches. The stretches below will increase elasticity and reduce stiffness. Complete these stretches dynamically: Hold each one for a second or two (to the point of tight tension); release momentarily; then stretch again, completing up to 20 reps.

**Hamstring Stretch**

Extend your right leg so your right heel is on the ground in front of you. Bend your left knee and slowly lower your hips down and back, as if you were sitting into an imaginary chair. Keep your upper body tall. Repeat on opposite side.

**Calf Stretch**

Stand with both feet on a curb or step. Move the heel of your right foot backward so it’s hanging off the curb. Lower your right heel down so you can feel a deep stretch in your calf muscle. Bend both knees to deepen the stretch.

**Glute and Piriformis Stretch**

Cross your right ankle just above your left knee and lower down into a squatting position. Hold onto a friend or a tree for balance if necessary. If comfortable, gently push down on your right knee. Repeat on opposite leg.
5 Post-Run Stretches
Every Runner Should Do

Chest Stretch

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Lace your fingers together behind your head above your neck. Squeeze your shoulder blades together while trying to extend your elbows out to the sides and slightly back to open your chest.

Quad Stretch

While standing on your left leg, bring your right heel back, and grab your right foot or ankle with your left hand. Gently pull your foot toward your tailbone. Keep your knees aligned, and don’t arch your back. Repeat on your other leg.

IT Band Stretch

Cross the right foot over the left and place the right hand on your hip. Extend the left arm up above your head and lean over to the right. Lean as far as you can without bending your knees. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds, then switch sides.
Hip Flexor Stretch

Get into a half-kneeling position, with your back leg being the one you are about to stretch. Engage your core while you keep the torso upright and tuck your pelvis under (squeeze your glutes). While keeping your pelvis tucked under, glutes squeezed and body upright, lean forward at the hips.