

# Exer-Stretch

Item # 12741



- **Overview.** The Exer-Stretch is not just a parachute, it is a group exercise device that makes fitness activities fun. Due to its elasticity, it can be used to create resistance across the entire surface, giving all participants proprioceptive feedback. The 12' diameter stretch-Lycra® Spandex sheet has 16 elastic handles suitable for eight to 16 participants.
- **What Are the Educational Applications?**
  - The Exer-Stretch parachute assists students in performing curl-ups, sit-ups and resistance exercises.
  - Exer-Stretch parachutes allow students at various fitness levels to work together while improving muscular strength and endurance.
  - Exer-Stretch parachutes reinforce resistance training in a safe manner to a wide age-range of students.
  - The parachute material has a lot of elasticity and creates resistance across the entire surface, giving all participants a great workout.
  - Teachers can also have three Exer-Stretch parachutes being used simultaneously, each one focusing on a different set of muscles or small groups doing the same. Activities lend themselves to self-run play once instructions are given, allowing the instructor to monitor multiple groups at one time in a safe environment.
  - Parachute activities help with the social aspect of development on top of the physical aspect. However, in order to be successful, it is imperative that the participants work together. Communication is the key to success. The focus is on group success versus individual.
- **How Can I Use This Product With My Students?**
  - **Where:** Can be used indoors and outdoors.
  - **Age:** Appropriate for a variety of age ranges - anyone from preschoolers to adults can use it. In addition, it does not require a high physical skill ability level.
  - **Group Size:** For 8 to 16 participants.
  - **Basic Skills Needed:**
    - Communication skills
    - Knowledge of spatial awareness and directions in space (up, down, in, out, under)
    - Knowledge of speeds (fast, slow, medium)
    - Understanding of push, pull
  - **Other Info:**
    - Non-threatening use of equipment, with options for individual handles or material use.
    - Can be used with yarn balls, beach balls, foam balls, scooters and other parachute add-ons.

## The Games/Activities

### • **Activity #1: Aerobics**

- a. Objective: Do different aerobic steps with Exer-Stretch on the floor.
- b. How to Play:
  - March in place then in different directions.
  - March in place while doing bicep curls.
  - Do wide-in and wide-out steps in the same spot.
  - March, then step touch forward.
  - March then lunge backward.
  - March and bicep curl while lunging.
  - March with heel-tap-front or back.
  - Can-Can kicks while moving the ball to the correct hole.
- c. Extension: Have students perform the exercises while holding the parachute.

### • **Activity #2: Bicep Curls and Tricep Extensions**

- a. Objective: To perform activities that use and strengthen the bicep and tricep muscles.
- b. How to Play: To work biceps, have participants hold a handle in each hand (elbows in close to the body); then raise and lower in low numbered sets with a high number of repetitions.
- c. Extensions:
  - Lift and lower one arm at a time, facing either center or standing sideways with the curling arm facing the center.
  - To work triceps, have participants turn so that their backs are facing center; grip edge with palms up (elbows close to ears); then slowly raise and lower in low numbered sets with a high number of repetitions.

### • **Activity #3: Rollup**

- a. Objective: To work on fine motor skills coordination as well as wrist strength.
- b. How to Play: While standing, have each student take his/her edge of the parachute and roll it inward toward the middle, about two steps in so the chute is about the thickness of a ballet bar. The rolling works fine motor coordination as well as wrist strength. Now you can take students through a variety of muscle exercises such as:
  - Facing toward the center, balance on toes and slowly raise and lower heels above the floor to strengthen calves. For variety, change toes from parallel to each other to pigeon toes in, or ballet first position toes out.
  - With hip facing the center while balancing on inner leg, raise then lower the outside leg to strengthen thigh adductors. Make sure to do even amount of repetitions on both legs.
  - Sitting on floor with straight legs under the Exer-Stretch parachute, do leg lifts then side leg lift raises (works hamstrings and hip flexors).
  - Raise parachute upward so arms are parallel to floor then lower (front deltoids).
  - Turn to the side so hip faces the parachute. Hold one handle, keeping arm straight and raise parachute to shoulder height then lower (side deltoids).

### • **Activity #4: See-Saw Curl/Sit-Up with a Sit and Reach**

- a. Objective: To perform curl-ups and sit-ups using the Exer-Stretch Parachute.
- b. How to Play: Students sit with legs underneath the parachute either bent or straight. Half the group leans back while the other leans forward, then vice versa, creating a leaning forward sit-and-reach simultaneous sit-up or curl up, depending on how high the shoulder blades come up off the ground.

### • **Safety Issues & Concerns**

- Students and teachers should follow all safety rules concerning parachute play.
- Care should be taken when using the parachute handles.
- The Lycra material can tear if it comes in contact with sharp objects.
- The Exer-Stretch Parachute has an elastic characteristic that can lead to a snapping if let go from a stretched situation.

## Meets These NASPE Standards

1. Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.
3. Participates regularly in physical activity.
4. Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
5. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.
6. Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

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