

Runners... Get Ready, Get Set, **STRETCH!**

May 2014

The Recovery

Stretching seems to be the last thing runners tend to think about, but stretching is an important element to any fitness routine. After running for long periods of time your muscles tend to strengthen and get tight, which eventually could lead to injuries caused by the overuse of these muscles. Maintaining flexibility by stretching can help your muscles recover more quickly and it can benefit your overall health by increasing circulation, range of motion, reduce stress, enhance coordination, help alleviate pain and help better your posture. So for all the runners out there if you are not doing anything else, add these stretches to your exercise routine at least to help avoid future injuries and increase your flexibility.



Quad Stretch:

1. Stand near a wall or piece of sturdy furniture for support
2. Grasp your ankle and gently pull it towards your bottom until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.
3. Tighten your abdominal muscles to prevent your stomach from sagging outward and keep your knees close together.
4. Hold for 3 seconds. Switch legs and repeat.



Calf Stretch:

1. Stand at arm's length from a wall or piece of sturdy furniture for support
2. Place your right foot behind your left foot
3. Slowly bend your left leg forward, keeping your right knee straight and right heel on the floor.
4. Hold your back straight and your hips forward. Don't rotate your feet inward or outward.
5. Hold for about 30 seconds. Switch legs and repeat.



Iliotibial Band Stretch:

1. Stand near a wall or a piece of sturdy furniture for support.
2. Cross your left leg over your right leg at the ankle
3. Extend your left arm overhead, reaching toward your right side. You'll feel a stretch along your hip.
4. Hold for 30 seconds. Switch sides and repeat.

Benefits of Stretching:

1. Increases circulation
2. Increases flexibility
3. Increases range of motion
4. Reduces stress
5. Enhances coordination
6. Helps alleviate pain
7. Helps better posture

What is the overall goal of Stretching?

To prevent musculoskeletal injuries by making soft tissue, including ligaments, tendons and muscles, more pliable and less likely to overstretch or tear.

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Standing Hamstring Stretch:

1. Stand tall with your left foot a few inches in front of your right foot and your left toes lifted.
2. Bend your right knee slightly and pull your abdominals gently inward.
3. Lean forward from your hips and rest both palms on top of your right thigh for balance and support.
4. Keep your shoulders down and relaxed; don't round your lower back.
5. Repeat the stretch with your right leg forward

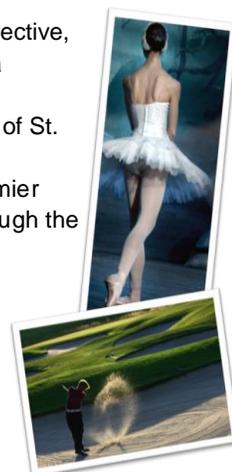
Piriformis Stretch:

1. Lie on the floor with legs flat. Raise the affected leg and place that foot on the floor outside the opposite knee.
2. Pull the leg that's bent directly across the midline of the body using the opposite hand or a towel, until stretch is felt. Do not force knee beyond stretch or to the floor.
3. Hold stretch for 30 seconds then slowly return to starting position. Try to complete a set of 3 stretches.



San Antonio Center for Physical Therapy is a privately-owned clinic offering personalized rehabilitative care to individuals with neuromuscular and musculoskeletal dysfunctions. The Doctors of Physical Therapy are certified Manual Therapists and specialists in orthopedic and sports injuries. We are committed to excellence by providing quality, cost-effective, outcome-based physical therapy. It is of utmost importance that our patients are treated with respect and friendliness in a professional, caring environment.

Dr. Jarrett and Dr. Nietz received their Manual Therapy Certification (MTC) during their Doctoral studies at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences in Florida. They utilize a unique manual approach to specialize in the treatment of spinal dysfunction, headaches, neck pain, and sports injuries. They are the company Physical Therapists for San Antonio's premier professional ballet company, Ballet San Antonio. Dr. Jarrett and Dr. Nietz have specialized training and certifications through the American Sports & Fitness Association and the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries. Dr. Nietz has further training and certification through BACKtoGOLF and the Titleist Performance Institute.



ASFA AMERICAN SPORTS & FITNESS ASSOCIATION

AAOMPT
American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists

APTA
American Physical Therapy Association

IADMS
International Association for Dance Medicine & Science

TPI
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