

Stretching for Flexibility and Injury Prevention

All exercise programs should consist of 3 things: cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and stretching. Stretching is important to both improve flexibility and prevent injury and it is also a component of one's physical fitness. This newsletter will help you to know when it is appropriate to stretch, how often to stretch, and how to perform certain stretches.

- **Importance of stretching** - Stretching can help to improve and maintain joint range of motion as well as improving posture while helping to release muscle tension and soreness. Having adequate range of motion will help to prevent injuries such as muscle strains or sprains. As we get older, flexibility will begin to decrease, so it is important to always stretch to maintain and improve flexibility.
- **Appropriate times to stretch** - NEVER stretch cold muscles! ALWAYS allow muscles to warm up before stretching to reduce the risk of injury and improve flexibility. A warm up could consist of 5-10 minutes of walking at a moderate pace, which is enough to raise body temperature. Stretching at the end of a workout, especially the muscles used, is a great time to increase flexibility because the body is warm and relaxed.
- **How to stretch** - Static stretching is a safe and effective way to improve flexibility for anyone. This type involves holding the stretch at a point of mild discomfort for at least 15-30 seconds. Taking about 3 slow, deep breaths will allow for at least 15 seconds, and will also aid in relaxation of the muscle. NEVER bounce in a stretch, this can cause micro-tears in the muscle which will set you back from reaching your goals.
- **The Stretches!** Use the following stretches to help improve flexibility in various muscle groups of the body, or [CLICK HERE](#) for lower body stretches and [CLICK HERE](#) for upper body stretches.



- **DON'T FORGET!** The SCSU Fitness Center will be holding a stretching workshop on **April 1st at 11am**. In this workshop you will learn several stretches to help improve flexibility and release tension. The workshop will also cover different types of stretching techniques.

GROUP WALK
Thurs 4/9 11:00 am
Student Center
Meet by the information desk
Come join us!

STRETCHING WORKSHOP
Wed 4/1 11am
FITNESS CENTER
Call 203-392-8968 to save your spot!

Nutrition Tip

Dehydration is a common cause of muscle cramps. Be sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially if you will be exercising.



Fitness Tip

Is your walking routine getting boring? Change up your intensity and scenery by visiting one of the New Haven County State Parks!

For information on these parks, [CLICK HERE!](#)

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