Stretching and warming up before exercising

A warm up is an activity used to prepare the muscles for a workout so there is a lesser chance of an injury for the person that will be exercising [1].

Proper warm up and stretching is a vital component to exercising, effective measures should be considered to prepare for exercise.

Warming up before exercise will warm up your muscles and joints and can prevent injuries [1].

Be informed: Know the statistics warming up before exercising!

- In 2005, a study in Norway found that a proper warm up exercise can be helpful in reducing sport injuries [2].
- Stress fractures are injuries to the bone and are often seen in exercise related injuries [3, 4]. In children and adults, injuries to the tibia bone account for half of stress injuries [3].
- Warm up techniques were shown by one study in Norway to effectively reduce ankle and knee injuries by 50% [2].
- The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons stated that warming up increases your respiratory rate, the temperature in your muscles and makes your blood flow at a faster rate to prepare you for exercise [5].
- Each year, there are more than 2 million children in the United States that sustain sports related injuries, many of which could have been prevented [6].
- Muscle strains are one of the injuries common to young athletes and are associated with improper safety procedures such as improper warm up techniques [7].
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- Stretching should be done after warming up, chances of injury are greater if stretching is done before warming up your muscles [8].

- A study in Norway found that a proper warm up technique can help reduce the risk of injury by one third and up to one half in severe injuries among young athletes [9].

- In order to avoid sustaining an injury, muscles need to be stretched before participating in an activity as this adds flexibility to them. A muscle with poor flexibility can have 2.5 times the risk of injury as compared to a muscle with an average flexibility and 8 times the risk compared to a muscle with high flexibility [1].

Helpful fact

A suggested technique for warming up is to use a warm up exercise that involves the same muscles that will be used in the workout [10].

Health Tips

- Remember to warm up before stretching [8].

- Use a warm up technique that will warm up the same muscles that you will use in your exercise [8, 10].

- After a warm up, stretch to a point where you feel mild tension, the tension should never be painful [8].
References


