

## Exercising - Stretching To Prevent Cramps

Everyone knows it's a good idea to always stretch your muscles prior to exercising, but did you know stretching might also help reduce leg cramps? Here are some good tips to proper stretching that will lower your chances of getting leg cramps. Before beginning any exercise or workout routine you should always stretch your muscle groups for at least a minute. The best way to accomplish this is to gradually stretch out your muscles. Don't stretch so hard and fast that you injure yourself by tearing the muscle. Slowly stretch and increase every 10 seconds until you can't stretch any further and then hold it for 30 seconds. According to David Joyce, a resident sports massage therapist, you should utilize a very light 10-minute warm up period at 50% effort. Then follow that up with 10 minutes of stretches. David has found that up to 70% of leg cramps and injuries can be prevented by following these tips. This applies to runners, football players and basketball players. David also mentions that a combination of massage and stretching will work the best. When you watch an NBA basketball game you will notice that during warm-ups the players stretch and trainers will massage the players legs. Of course, most of us don't have a personal trainer or massage therapist on hand to help us, but you can do some of this yourself with a little massage therapy basics. Read up on it and apply some of the principles. It will greatly reduce the possibility of getting leg cramps during exercises.

**Know How Flexible You Are** If you know how flexible you are then you can know if you're prone to getting leg cramps or even a lower leg injury like an Achilles injury. How do you test your flexibility? For your calf muscles you should sit on the ground with your legs stretched out in front of you. Keep your knees straight and grab the top of your feet, pulling them toward you. You should be able to pull them back 90 degrees without discomfort. If it feels tight then you know that you need to concentrate on exercising and stretching these muscles. Spend a little extra time stretching and you'll notice the results immediately. If you live in a colder climate you may need to spend more time stretching than you would in a warm climate. The colder air tightens your muscles. Keep that in mind on those cooler days. I know that 10 minutes can seem like a lot of time to warm up, so you may want to start out with a slow jog. After a few minutes you can begin stretching and even mix in a yoga routine. By adding the yoga to your stretching you can warm up your muscles quicker without the risk of getting a leg cramp or muscle injury. Be sure to end any workout or exercise routine with stretching. If you will add a good stretching routine before any sporting event or exercise program, you'll reduce the risk of getting those painful leg cramps. And that makes things much more fun in the long run.

### About the Author

As well as details of the organisation, there are articles on basic training methods.

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