



# MERIDIAN PHYSICAL THERAPY

RET Physical Therapy Group

## About Stretching:

Stretching is a term used to describe manual or passive lengthening of soft tissue such as muscle or tendon that has been pathologically or physiologically shortened. Stretching may be indicated for muscle tightness, adhesions from immobilization and scar tissue. Stretching is as important to an athlete as strength training. Stretching of a muscle can assist strengthening, help restore normal motion and reduce musculoskeletal injuries.

Certain athletic activities, such as baseball and gymnastics, require range of motion greater than those needed by the average person. Certain sports demand overstretching in order to excel. A baseball pitcher that lacks enough external rotation may use a physical therapist to improve motion, usually through manual stretching techniques, active training and a good warm-up program.



## Why Stretch:

A flexibility/injury relationship exists for young adolescents participating in sporting activities. During the growth spurt of young adolescents, the tendons and muscles can tighten dramatically as they lag behind the rapid bone growth. Stretching is just as important to athletes of all ages, not just adolescents. For all athletes, poor flexibility may lead to injuries. Staying injury-free throughout the sports season requires a proper stretching program. Thus regular stretching is essential for athletes to excel! Stretching improves your body's potential for performance and function.



## Benefits of Stretching:

- Increased flexibility
- Decreased delayed onset of muscle soreness (DOMS)
- Better posture
- Improved range of motion
- Decreased pain
- Restoration of normal function
- Injury prevention
- Increased blood flow/circulation
- Better performance

**Durability** is part of what makes a great athlete.

*Bill Russell*



## Injury Prevention

Prevention of injuries starts with proper conditioning. Conditioning includes stretching, strengthening and endurance.

An assessment of each player's flexibility can provide valuable information for a therapist. The therapist would then put together an individualized stretching, strengthening and endurance program to gain that competitive edge.

## Importance of "whole-body" stretching

In any sports activity, overall flexibility is important for various reasons. In throwing, hip and lower extremity stretching is important as the legs decelerate the forward momentum, which would otherwise be transferred to the arm. Tightness in the back can limit upper extremity elevation needed in throwing/shooting motions. Rotation and extension is also needed for throwing motions and in gymnastics, to avoid and prevent pathological compensations in the shoulder.

## Plans:

- Rookie:** 4 sessions over 4 weeks ..... **\$340**
- All-Star:** 8 sessions over 8 weeks ..... **\$640**
- MVP:** 12 sessions over 12 weeks..... **\$900**