**STRETCHING**

Stretching plays a large role in preparation for training, games and injury prevention.

STRETCHES

**Dynamic stretching:**

* Involves stretching the muscles actively with movements through and towards the end of its length (their range of motion).
* Should be done following 10 minutes of aerobic activity- brisk walk, jog.
* Is an effective method for injury prevention
* Is effective for warming up areas of the body specific to netball.

Examples specific for netball:

* Slow jogging with high knee lifts and heel flicks
* Jogging side-to-side or cross-over side-stepping
* leg swings to the sides and front to back
* slow walk through with lunges
* High knee hugs or heel holds (quick quad stretch).

**Static stretching**

* The muscle is sustained on stretch at the end of its range in an attempt to make it longer
* Does little to increase flexibility or prevent injuries before activity
* Is most effective following a warm-down to reduce muscle spasm, tightness and prevent soreness
* Should be done regularly to improve flexibility if you have muscle length issues that are contributing to injuries.

POST-GAME OR TRAINING it is ideal if this stretching follows a 5-10 minute cool down activity such as a brisk walk or slow jog. Stretches should be held:

1. just short of pain
2. for 2-3 sets of at least 30 seconds holds on each side
3. while maintaining normal breathing
4. to target tighter muscles or muscles that have been used most in the game.

Warm down stretches to cover:

- Calves (with the knee straight and with the knee bent)

- Quadriceps (can also add hip flexors in here too)

- Hamstrings

- Hip flexors (Front of the hip)

- Hip adductors (groin)

- Gluteals (pulling the knee up to the opposite shoulder)

- Hip abductors and ITBs (important to prevent knee injuries and shin splints)

- Lower back (important for hamstring injuries)

- Upper back, shoulders and upper limbs

**WHY STRETCHES PREVENT INJURIES**

Stretching improves flexibility.

The more flexible you are: the more range your joints have which reduces the risk of injury.

It is important to stretch on a regular basis to improve your game and prevent injuries. I am happy to run through stretches with you anytime. Please feel free to contact me on (08) 8263 8844 if you have queries about chronic niggly problems. If I am consulting, leave a message and I am more than happy to call you back.

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