



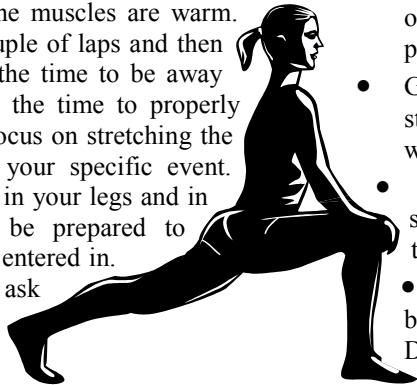
Cougar Running

Injury Prevention

Coach Herrs Newsletter

WHY DO WE NEED TO STRETCH?

Either in practice or in a meet, stretching is important to your overall performance and physical health. A complete stretching routine can take as little as 10 minutes. The best time to stretch is after you have warmed up and the muscles are warm. Jog for a couple of minutes or a couple of laps and then stretch each muscle group. This is the time to be away from your friends so that you take the time to properly stretch and prepare for your event. Focus on stretching the muscles you use the most during your specific event. Make sure you stretch each muscles in your legs and in your arms. Take your time and be prepared to compete for each event that you are entered in. If you need help stretching your legs ask a teammate to do some partner stretching with you!



Proper Stretching Technique

- Stretch both sides of your body. Stretch the right leg and the left leg.
- Avoid over-stretching. Never stretch to the point of pain or discomfort. It is ok to feel slight tension at the longest point of your stretch, but do not push your muscles.
- Go slow! Always stretch slowly and evenly. Hold the stretch for about fifteen seconds and release slowly as well. Stretching is not something that should be rushed!
- Never bounce or jerk while stretching. All stretches should be smooth, and slow. Make sure you take the time to stretch before and after each event in a meet.
- Don't forget to breathe. Flexibility exercises should be relaxing. Never hold your breath while you stretch. Don't rush your stretches and know when your event begins.

Nagging Injury?? Time to Ice!

Icing an injured body part is an important part of treatment. Icing injuries can be effective for sprains, strains, overuse injuries and bruises. Learn how to properly ice your injury to help heal your injury and get you back on the track as soon as possible!

1. **Get the ice on quickly.** Icing is most effective in the immediate period following an injury. The effect of icing diminishes significantly after about 48 hours.
2. **Perform an "ice massage."** Apply ice directly to the injury. Move the ice frequently, not allowing it to sit in one spot.



3. **Don't forget to elevate.** Keep the injured body part elevated above the heart while icing -- this will further help reduce swelling.
4. **Watch the clock.** Ice for 15-20 minutes, but never longer. You can cause further damage to the tissues, including frostbite, by icing for too long.
5. **Allow time between treatments.** Allow area to warm for at least 45 minutes or an hour before beginning the icing routine again.
6. **Repeat as desired.** Ice as frequently as you wish, so long as the area is warm to touch and has normal sensation before repeating.

7. **Prevent Frostbite:** Do not allow ice to sit against the skin without a layer of protection. Either continually move the ice (see "ice massage") or use a thin towel between the ice and skin.

Icing Option

Option 1 -- Traditional: Use a Ziploc bag with ice cubes or crushed ice. Add a little water to the ice bag so it will conform to your body.

Option 2 -- Best: Keep paper cups filled with water in your freezer. Peel the top of the cup away and massage the ice-cup over the injury in a circular pattern allowing the ice to melt away.

Option 3 -- Creative: Use a bag of frozen peas or corn from the freezer.

Running Injury Prevention

Running injuries are quite common among both amateurs and professionals. Read the following information below to find out helpful running hints.

Prevention of Injury

- Plan a progressive running program to prevent injuries. A five-minute warm-up (which should raise one's temperature by one degree) followed by stretching exercises, is essential before starting a run. Following the run, stretching again is important, because microtears that may have occurred will heal better.
- You can lose between six and 12 ounces of fluid for every 20 minutes of running. Drink 10 to 15 ounces of fluid 10 to 15 minutes prior to running and every 20 to 30 minutes along your route. Weigh yourself before and after a run. For every pound lost, drink one pint of fluid.
- In cool weather, you are less likely to get chilled if you run into the wind when you start running and run with the wind at the finish.

Proper Equipment

- When selecting a running shoe, look for good shock absorption and construction that will provide stability and cushioning to the foot. Make sure that there is a thumbnail's width between the end of the longest toe and the end of the shoe. Buy shoes at the end of the day when the foot is the largest.
- Sixty percent of a shoe's shock absorption is lost after 250-500 miles of use, so people who run up to ten miles per week should consider replacing their shoes every nine to 12 months.
- Excessive clothing can produce sweating, which causes the body to lose heat rapidly and can increase the risk of hypothermia. Instead, dress in layers. The inner layer should be material that takes perspiration away from the skin (polypropylene, thermax); the middle layer (not necessary for legs) should be for insulation and absorbing moisture (cotton); the outer layer should protect against wind and moisture (nylon).
- Do not run at night, but if you run at dusk or dawn, do wear reflective material.
- Don't wear a headset or jewelry while running as you will not be able to hear possible road dangers.

Planning

- Run with a partner. If alone, carry identification, or write your name, phone number, blood type, and medical information on the inside sole of your running shoe.
- Let others know where you will be running, and stay in familiar areas, away from traffic.
- Whenever possible, run on a clear, smooth, resilient, even, and reasonably soft surface. Avoid running on hills, which increases stress on the ankle and foot. When running on curved surfaces, change directions in forward movement, so that you have even pressure on both feet during the run.

Source: U.S.A. Track and Field Association, Road Runners Club of America and American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine.

