

For Exercising, When and How Should You Stretch?

ストレッチは健康のために大切だと分かっているけど、普段どのくらい意識してできているでしょうか。今回は、ストレッチをいつ、どのように行うのがよいかを取り上げた記事です。研究では運動前と運動後、それぞれに効果があることが示され、けが予防やパフォーマンス向上につながる点で注目されています。記事に出てくる「joint」は「関節」という意味で、joint pain（関節の痛み）やknee joint（膝関節）のように使われます。日常生活でも運動でも、関節を守る工夫は欠かせません。あなたは健康のために、どんな方法で身体をケアしていますか？講師と話してみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Years ago, the traditional advice was to do some stretching before exercising. Over the years, that advice changed to stretching after exercising. It turns out that both can be true. And that can lead to some confusion.

Stretching can help make you more flexible. The more you stretch, the more you improve the range of motion in your [joints](#). This not only feels good, but it also can prevent injury and lead to better physical results.

David Behm researches human body movements at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's, Canada. Speaking with the Associated Press, he offers advice on when to stretch and how to do it safely.

Warm up first

It is almost always good to stretch. However, Behm, says it is better if you warm up first. He suggests light aerobic activity such as jogging, walking or cycling for five to 10 minutes.

He suggests to follow that warm-up movement with static stretching. This traditional way of stretching involves reaching your body into different positions and holding them for about one minute each.

Then you can do dynamic stretching related to specific exercises or activities. This is where you warm up the muscles with repeated movements like leg lifts.

Expand your definition of ‘stretching’

Should you always stretch before exercising? If it is traditional static stretching, not necessarily, Behm says.

The better questions, he says, are, “Should people increase their range of motion? Should people have better [flexibility](#)? And that is yes, because it helps prevent injuries. It helps with health. But you don’t have to stretch to [achieve](#) that.”

Resistance training, for example, can be an effective form of stretching. Doing a chest press increases range of motion in your arm and chest muscles. Whether you use barbells, dumbbells or machines, there is no need to stretch beforehand. However, Behm warns to start with a small amount of weight to warm up and then add more to train.

He adds that you do not need to stretch first if you are going for a short run. Simply start with a slow jog to warm up and then increase the speed.

Don’t do it if it hurts

After exercise, light stretching is fine, as long as you do not feel pain, Behm says. Because your muscles will be warm by that point, overdoing it makes you more likely to injure yourself.

Foam rollers can help with muscle recovery and have been shown to increase range of motion as well as stretching.

Do some static stretching before sports

If you’re playing a sport, Behm says, static stretching beforehand helps reduce muscle and [tendon](#) injury.

Sports like [gymnastics](#), ice skating, and golf require a great range of motion. For these activities, he suggests extra stretching specific to those sports.

“If you’re going to do an explosive movement, change of direction, agility, sprint, any of these explosive activities that involve your muscles and tendons,” he said, “you’re going to be stronger if you do static stretching.”

People can especially get in trouble when they go back to a sport they used to play. Stretching can prepare muscles that may be out of shape. Also, he says to stretch both sides of your body equally. Lacking flexibility on one side also can lead to injury.

Sounds simple. Why all the confusion?

Different studies over the years have led to different advice about stretching before exercise. Behm says that is partly because some studies did not consider real-life conditions. Also, some researchers designed studies with high-performance athletes in mind and not regular people.

“If you’re Usain Bolt, it makes a difference,” he said. For the rest of us ... not so much.

Albert Stumm reported this story for The Associated Press. Anna Matteo adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Source: For Exercising, When and How Should You Stretch?

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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. joint (n.) a place where two bones meet

My joints are sore from yesterday's workout at the gym.

2. flexibility (n.) the ability to bend your body

Karla stretches every day to keep her flexibility.

3. achieve (v.) to do something successfully; to accomplish something

There are three goals that we need to achieve in the next six months.

4. tendon (n.) a part of the body that connects a muscle to a bone

One of my teammates injured a tendon in his leg during practice last week.

5. gymnastics (n.) a sport with activities that test strength and flexibility

Brett is learning the parallel bars and floor exercises in his gymnastics class.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What are the benefits of stretching?

2. What are static stretching and dynamic stretching, and when should you do them?

3. What kinds of exercise or activities do not require stretching?

4. How often do you exercise, and what kinds of activities do you do?

5. Both stretching and strength training can prevent injuries in people of all ages. Do you do either of them?