Is stretching good for you?

There are many benefits to regular stretching. Not only can stretching help increase your flexibility, which is an important factor of fitness, but it can also improve your posture, reduce stress and body aches, and more.

9 Benefits of stretching

1. Increases your flexibility

Regular stretching can help increase your flexibility, which is crucial for your overall health. Not only can improved flexibility help you to perform everyday activities with relative ease, but it can also help delay the reduced mobility that can come with aging.

2. Increases your range of motion

Being able to move a joint through its full range of motion gives you more freedom of movement. Stretching on a regular basis can help increase your range of motion.
One study Trusted Source found that both static and dynamic stretching are effective when it comes to increasing range of motion, although proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF)-type stretching, where you stretch a muscle to its limit, may be more effective for immediate gains.

3. Improves your performance in physical activities

Performing dynamic stretches prior to physical activities has been shown to help prepare your muscles Trusted Source for the activity. It may also help improve your performance in an athletic event or exercise.

4. Increases blood flow to your muscles

Performing stretches on a regular basis may improve your circulation - Trusted Source. Improved circulation increases blood flow to your muscles, which can shorten your recovery time and reduce muscle soreness (also known as delayed onset muscle soreness or DOMS).

5. Improves your posture

Muscle imbalances are common and can lead to poor posture. One study Trusted Source found that a combination of strengthening and stretching specific muscle groups can reduce musculoskeletal pain and encourage proper alignment. That, in turn, may help improve your posture.

6. Helps to heal and prevent back pain

Tight muscles can lead to a decrease in your range of motion. When this happens, you increase the likelihood of straining the muscles in your back. Stretching can help heal an existing back injury by stretching the muscles.

A regular stretching routine can also help prevent future back pain by strengthening your back muscles and reducing your risk for muscle strain.

7. Is great for stress relief

When you're experiencing stress, there's a good chance your muscles are tense. That's because your muscles tend to tighten up in response to physical and emotional stress. Focus on areas of your body where you tend to hold your stress, such as your neck, shoulders, and upper back.

8. Can calm your mind

Participating in a regular stretching program not only helps increase your flexibility, but it can also calm your mind. While you stretch, focus on mindfulness and meditation exercises, which give your mind a mental break.

9. Helps decrease tension headaches

Tension and stress headaches can interfere with your daily life. In addition to a proper diet, adequate hydration, and plenty of rest, stretching may help reduce the tension you feel from headaches.

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