

From: Z-Health Staff <info@zhealth.net>
Subject: **November 2008 - Knees: Top Sports Injury, 2009 calendar**
Date: November 15, 2008 2:20:37 PM PST
To: jwaak@mac.com



Z-Health Newsletter - November 2008

Your monthly insight to Life in Motion

In This Issue

1. [Ask Dr. Cobb](#)
2. [Knees - Top Sports Injury](#)
3. [2009 Calendar](#)
4. [Newsletter Archive](#)

Calendar of Events

We have recently released the first part of our 2009 calendar. View it below and be sure to check our [website](#) regularly for updates.

R-Phase (Level 1)

- New York, NY: Sept 26-28 & Nov 14-16
- Phoenix, AZ: Jan 23-25 & Mar 6-8
- Durham, NC: Jan 30-Feb 1 & Mar 13-16
- Edinburgh, Scotland: Mar 30 - Apr 4

I-Phase (Level 2)

- Fremont, CA: Nov 6-9
- Northeast US: Feb 19-22

S-Phase (Level 3)

- Phoenix, AZ: Dec 4-7

T-Phase (Level 4)

- Phoenix, AZ: Feb 11-14 *NOTE: Wed-Sat

9S: Sustenance

Ask Dr. Cobb

If you have a question you'd like Dr. Cobb to answer in a future column, send it to askdr Cobb@zhealth.net.

Q: *Traditional training methods have emphasized stretching prior to and after exercise, and many people stretch as a form of exercise itself. Most of this stretching involves holding a position for a particular length of time, and then deepening into it as the body will allow. Some say that this type of stretching is absolutely necessary, others say that it is not needed, and still others that it can be damaging. I would like your thoughts on stretching, about warming up in general, and how Z-Health relates or compares to them. Thank you.*

A: Ahhhh... One of my favorite topics to discuss: stretching! Stretching has probably been the subject of more controversy and misinformation than any other aspect of health and fitness. Because this can be a very lengthy topic, I am going to confine my discussion to only one type of stretching protocol, called static stretching, as this is the method you referred to in your question.

As a method, static stretching involves placing a muscle or group of muscles into a lengthened position and then holding that stretched position for a period of time. In most cases this ranges from 15 seconds to several minutes, depending upon the method of choice.

The stated goal of static stretching is to passively lengthen the connective tissues that cover the muscle fibers and most people use stretching for two primary reasons:

1. Injury Prevention
2. Enhanced Performance

Unfortunately, the vast majority of research does not support using static stretching for EITHER of these reasons. Here are a few examples:

1. One of the largest studies yet conducted looked at 2,600 Australian soldiers -- half stretched while the others did not prior to physical training. There was no difference in the injury rates.
2. Another recent study demonstrated that static stretching decreases eccentric muscular strength up to 9% for an hour or more after the stretching session. This is very bad news if you are using stretching as a part of your pre-exercise routine.
3. Multiple additional studies have shown that static stretching decreases maximal force output from the involved muscles. You are never going to be able to lift as much or punch/kick as hard if you pre-stretch the related muscles.
4. Other studies indicate that static stretching decreases coordination during explosive movements when tested immediately after the stretch. This means that your roundhouse kick will be much stronger if you don't stretch first.
5. Finally, several interesting studies have shown that there is virtually no relationship between static and dynamic flexibility. In other words, increasing static flexibility does not automatically mean you will be more flexible in your sport.

As you can see, the evidence is strongly AGAINST using static stretching as a primary component of your training programs. With that said, however, understand that in Z-Health we never completely disregard any tool. We simply try to understand how to best utilize that tool. There are very specific occasions post-injury where we may use static stretching in combination with mobility work and other techniques.

If you have been a dedicated "stretcher" for years, consider changing your pre-training focus to more active mobility drills like those found in our R-Phase program or Neural Warm-Ups. These types of drills have shown a

- Phoenix, AZ: Mar 19-22

Master Trainer Live Training

- San Diego, CA: Jan 5-10

direct carryover to both injury prevention and performance enhancement, making mobility drills the warm-up of choice. Thanks again for the question. Have a great month.

Keep Moving,

Dr. Cobb

Knees - Top Sports Injury

Monday, #1 ranked tennis player Rafael Nadal pulled out of his second major tournament of the year due to ongoing knee problems. This past Sunday, the Green Bay Packers lost a starting lineman due to an ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) tear. During week 1 of the NFL season, the Patriot's star quarterback and two-time SuperBowl MVP, Tom Brady, went out with a torn ACL that required surgery to repair. Brady is out for the season, and the team that went 16-0 last season is now sitting at 6-4. It is almost impossible to read the sports section and NOT read about a knee injury.

Knee injuries, specifically the ACL, are the number one sports injury among athletes of all levels. But, just because you aren't a pro athlete doesn't mean that you are immune from a knee injury -- there are 100,000 serious ACL injuries treated in the US every year. While many of the injuries you see at a professional level are the result of a direct blow to the knee, contact is NOT required to tear an ACL. All it takes is landing "wrong" from a jump, a bad foot plant while changing direction during a game of pick-up soccer, or something as simple as going down the stairs or stepping off of a curb.

The prevalence of ankle taping in athletics is also leading to an increased incidence of ACL injuries. Because the body is meant to have all of its joints mobile, when you make one set of joints immobile, you force others to pick up the slack and compensations take place. In this case, by making the extremely mobile foot and ankle immobile, you cause a considerably less mobile joint, the knee, to bear the brunt of the movement. While the ankle is, indeed, more stable, that is only useful if the body is not in motion. Instead, you need a strong, mobile, and flexible base of support that can absorb the shock of the movement and adapt to changes in direction. It is a similar rationale to why tall buildings in earthquake zones are actually built to be able to sway and move and often have rollers built in to the foundation.

The traditional coaching of "don't let your knees go past your toes", or "make sure that your knees track to your feet" are also in part responsible for today's ACL injuries. There are times, such as when under heavy load, where those sorts of instructions make good sense. However, daily life has different requirements. Pay attention the next time you go down the stairs or bend down or over to pick something up -- in everyday life your body goes through pretty extreme ranges of motion, whether you are aware of it or not. By deliberately taking your body and knees through their complete ranges of motion, you strengthen the ligaments and tell your body that it's OK for the knees to be in other places. This will let your body respond more gracefully and with less likelihood of serious injury as you go through daily life.

2009 Calendar

We are pleased to announce the calendar for the beginning of 2009. We have exciting new things on tap for 2009, including our first Master Trainer Live Training event, and the second in our series of 9S courses - Sustenance.

Calendar specifics are available in the sidebar on the left as well as on the [website](#).

Don't forget -- prices are going up in 2009. The only way to reserve current pricing for a 2009 certification is to make a deposit before the end of 2008. Call the office at 888.394.4198 or email info@zhealth.net to sign up or for more information.

Newsletter Archive

Did you miss an issue of the Monthly Newsletter? Delivered on the 15th of every month, the newsletter is filled with interviews, articles, reviews, and all of the goodness that is Z-Health Performance Solutions.

Did you forget to sign up for the Weekly Training Tips? The Weekly Training Tips is a new series that started on June 22nd. Delivered to your inbox every Sunday, these brief training nuggets will be sure to enhance all of your activities.

Catch up on all of our [back issues](#) on the Z-Health web site or click on the "Manage your Subscription" link on the bottom of this email to ensure you are getting the latest news.

<http://www.zhealth.net>

[Affiliate](#)


[Calendar](#)

[Certification](#)

Copyright 2008 - Z-Health Performance Solutions, LLC




This message was sent from Z-Health Staff to jwaak@mac.com. It was sent from: Z-Health Performance Solutions, LLC, 25110 8th Place South, Des Moines, WA 98198. You can modify/update your subscription via the link below.

Powered by:
iContact
We Simply Communicate™

 [Manage your subscription](#)



FORWARD TO A FRIEND

View this message in the iContact Community:  [View message](#)  [Comment on this message](#)  [Receive as RSS](#)

Share this message with others:  [del.icio.us](#)  [Digg](#)  [reddit](#)  [Facebook](#)  [StumbleUpon](#)