Flexible Function

Flexibility is one of five components of physical fitness. It is defined as the ability to the move the joints or any group of joints through and entire, normal range of motion.

Flex Facts:
- Static stretching is effective at increasing joint range of motion. The most effective time to hold a static stretch is between 10 and 30 seconds.
- Muscle contraction right before it is stretched also increases joint range of motion. Proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation, or PNF, yields increased ranges of motion on both sides of the body.
- Dynamic stretching has been shown to improve range of motion and increase blood flow to muscle tissue before exercise.

Major Flexibility Myths Debunked

1. It is necessary AND beneficial to stretch before physical activity. FALSE!

For decades, coaches have told their athletes to stretch and warm up before practice, allotting time just for that. In fact, one 2012 study discourages static stretching before exercise as the sole part of a warmup because it reduces muscular performance.1

2. Stretching helps to reduce muscle soreness after a workout. FALSE!

The fact is, no amount of static stretching has been proven to relieve soreness. The effects, if any, are purely due to a placebo affect and the perceived benefits are really ‘all in your mind.’2

Questions?
Email me at hwilliams@chpnet.org for the answer in next month’s letter.