



Active Nutrition

Newsletter May 2012



How Important is Stretching?

Exercise and age can cause muscles to tighten and shorten, limiting your range of movement. Not only does this limit your day-to-day activities but can also result in an increased incidence of injury.

The expression “use it or lose it” applies to stretching. People who exercise often do not stretch and as a result they fail to obtain maximum results from their training. Exercise shortens the muscle fibres and gradually, over time, reduces their range of movement and as such their ability to exercise to their potential. Tight muscles also lead to the increased potential for injury.

Post-exercise stretching can also aid in workout recovery, decrease muscle soreness, and ensure that your muscles and tendons are in good working order. The more conditioned your muscles and tendons are, the better they can handle the rigors of sport and exercise.

Pre-exercise stretches should not over-stretch muscles and should only be done on muscles that have been warmed up. Pre-exercise stretches are ideally the dynamic stretches which are the controlled gentle leg, arm and torso swings that take you to the limits of motion.



Never:-

- ✘ “Bounce” or perform jerky stretches as you are more likely to cause injury. Stretches (other than dynamic, pre exercise stretches) should be slow and controlled.
- ✘ Stretch when your muscles are cold
- ✘ Hold your breath when stretching as it causes tension. You need to be relaxed without tension
- ✘ Stretch to the point of pain.

It is important to stretch correctly. You need to be relaxed and focused on the body part you are stretching. Hold the stretch for between 15 – 30 seconds for maximum effect. Repeat the stretch 1 – 2 times, each time increasing the stretch.

Stretching should be done more than once a week. Daily stretching can help with recovery, relaxation, and enhance daily life as well as gaining the range on movement and flexibility you are striving for.

Use what means you have to increase your stretch routine. Use a partner or a trainer; include equipment such as Swiss balls or Dyna bands, but whatever you chose, do incorporate it in your daily life.

Stretching has so many benefits:-

- 🍏 Decrease risk of injury
- 🍏 Relief from pain
- 🍏 Increased energy levels and reduce fatigue
- 🍏 Increased flexibility and elasticity of muscles
- 🍏 Better range of motion of the joints – helps with balance, mobility and increases ability to perform sport and exercise
- 🍏 Greater circulation of blood to various parts of the body – increases the delivery of nutrients to your muscles and removal of waste products
- 🍏 Reduce muscle tension – injury prevention
- 🍏 Relaxation and stress relief for a greater sense of well-being
- 🍏 Enhanced muscular coordination and endurance
- 🍏 Improved posture



Would you like further information?

Book an appointment for a training session - you can reserve appointments or just drop me a line from my web site www.activenutrition.co.nz

I also can help with your nutrition requirements. I am based in Tauranga. However, if you do not live in the Tauranga area this is not a problem with consultations as I am able to consult via Skype, internet or by telephone. There are no barriers to good information.





Recipe of the Month



Tofu Stir Fry (Serves 4)

It is a good idea to eat one meat-free meal per week. Serve this stir-fry with egg noodles (baked NOT fried) and a green salad



High in Iron



Low Calorie



Low sodium



High Vitamin C

400g extra-firm water-packed tofu, rinsed chopped into 2cm cubes

1/2 teaspoon five-spice powder

1 tbsp. canola/rice bran oil

1/2 cup water

2 tbsps. Oyster-flavoured/ oyster sauce

1/2 tsp. corn flour

4 cups broccoli crowns, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces

1 yellow pepper, cut into 2 cm dice

1 red pepper, cut into 2 cm dice

1 cup mushrooms chopped

1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger

1 teaspoon minced garlic

2 tablespoons walnuts

2 teaspoons hot sesame oil, (optional)

Pat tofu dry and combine with 1/4 teaspoon five-spice powder in a medium bowl.

Heat oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat

Add tofu and cook, stirring every 1 to 2 minutes, until golden brown, 7 to 9 minutes total.

Transfer to a plate.

Whisk water, oyster sauce, corn flour and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon five-spice powder in a small bowl.

Add broccoli, yellow and red bell pepper and mushrooms to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until beginning to soften, about 4 minutes.

Add ginger and garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Reduce heat to low, add the oyster sauce mixture and cook, stirring, until thickened, about 30 seconds.

Return the tofu to the pan along with nuts and stir to coat with sauce; stir in hot sesame oil (if using).