8 Minutes to a Better Golf Game!

Employee Wellness Solutions Network
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While it will always be in your best interest to plan and prepare, both mentally and physically, prior to your round of golf, the following stretches will get your body ready in record time. It is recommended that you take a few minutes to warm up aerobically before stretching just to warm up your muscles.

Stretch #1 – Lunge with Rotation

Goal: This movement is designed to duplicate the trunk rotation involved in the swing while stretching the hip flexors.

Instruction:

Place hands on opposite ends of a golf club and place behind the top of shoulders. Begin by taking a nice long step forward, then lowering to a lunge position. Gently turn your torso towards your extended knee. Hold each side for a count of two, then switch legs.
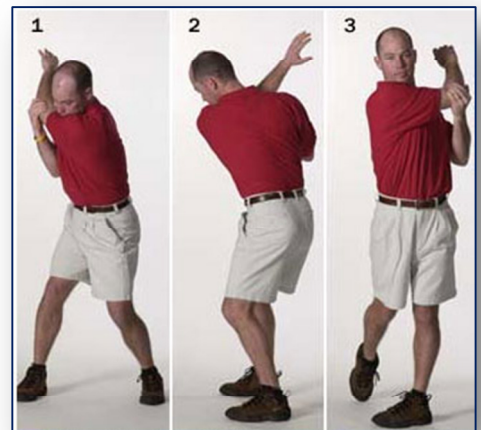

Stretch #2 – Shoulder Stretch

Goal: This movement is designed to stretch the shoulder muscles and lessen the chance for a rotator cuff strain.

Instruction:

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart as though you're addressing the golf ball. Hold your left elbow with your right hand (image 1). Keeping your left thumb pointed up, bend your left wrist toward your left thumb. Rotate your trunk to the right. Pull on your left elbow until you feel a slight stretch in your back (image 2). To stretch the trailing (right) shoulder, grab your right elbow with your left hand. Then rotate your trunk to the left (image 3).

Stretch #3 – Trunk-Hip Rotation

Goal: Loosens up the hip joints and prepares the body for a shoulder turn by stretching the back muscles as well. This stretch can be performed standing or sitting. Performing it sitting will reduce the amount of stretch you get in the lower lumbar region.

Instruction:

Hook your arms around the golf club placed lengthwise across your back. Rotate your trunk and head to the left and hold it there for 20-30 seconds. Don't swing and bounce into this stretch as that will put undue strain on the joints and ligaments of your spine. Repeat on the other side.
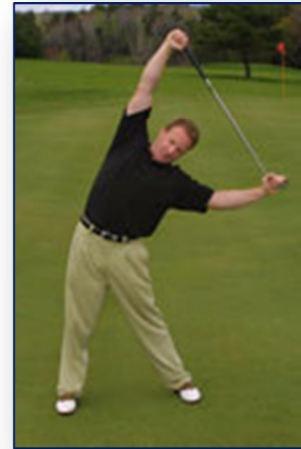
Stretch #4 – Lateral Back Stretch
Goal: To stretch the lateral muscles along the sides of the back.

Instruction:
Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Hold the golf club above your head with your arms straight. Slowly bend to one side, without rotating, until you feel a stretch along the side of your back. Hold 15 seconds. Repeat 2 times each side.

Stretch #5 – Neck Flexion & Side Flexion
Goal: To stretch the muscles of the neck.

Instruction:
A) Stand (or sit) tall with your chest up and head high. Put one hand on your chin and retract your head (so you have a double chin). Keep your head upright, don't look up or down. Keep eyes facing forward. While holding your chin back, use your other hand to reach over the top of your head. Stabilize your chin back as you gently pull the top of your head forward. Hold for 30 seconds.
B) Stand tall with chest up and head high. Put your left hand up over your shoulder and bring your elbow back, pointing your left elbow up to the ceiling. Use your right hand to gently pull your head forward and to the right. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the left side.
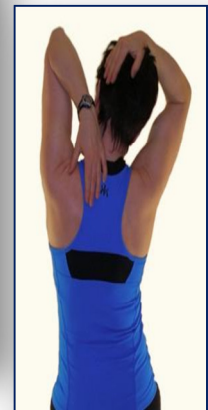
Stretch #6 – Wrist Flexor & Extension Stretches
Goal: To warm up the wrist muscles used during a golf swing.

Instruction:
A) Standing or sitting, straighten your right arm out in front of you with your elbow straight with your elbow straight with palm facing up. Grasp your right hand above your knuckles, and below your wrist and pull your hand down. You should feel a stretch in the front of your forearm. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the left side.
B) Sitting or standing, straighten your right arm out in front of you with your elbow straight and your palm facing down. Grasp your right hand above your knuckles and pull your hand down. While your hand is down and elbow straight, pull your hand out away from midline so that your fingers are pointing to the right. Remember "down and out". Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the left side.