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Having a daily stretching routine is an incredibly beneficial and vital part of any good fitness and health plan. While most of us spend our time focusing on things like speed, strength, and endurance, stretching is equally important, yet often ignored.

The Benefits of Having a Daily Stretching Routine

- The most apparent benefit of having a daily stretching routine is that it improves your flexibility, which makes you more athletic, better able to perform various exercises, and stay safe while training.
- Another incredible benefit is that it helps improve post-workout recovery and prevent the onset of delayed-onset muscle soreness (DOMS) from occurring. So, if your muscles are supple and loose through stretching, you'll recover quicker after workouts.
- Another great benefit of stretching is that it directly improves our exercise performance. Having better hip, ankle, upper back, and shoulder mobility allow us to more safely (and more effectively) perform various complex exercises like the barbell squat, deadlift, bench press, arm curls, and more.
- This all translates into maybe the most important benefit of all: a consistent daily stretching routine substantially reduces your risk of injury. And as you get older, this becomes increasingly important!

A Sample Routine for The Busy Ones

With everything said so far, you probably realize just how important it is to have a daily stretching routine. But, if you have a busy schedule, making time for stretching every day might seem impossible!

To that end, I've put together this incredibly useful routine you can do in as little as five to ten minutes as you wake up in the morning or before going to bed in the evening.

Routine for Daily Stretching

Warm-up for 1 to 2 minutes – choose any one of the following:

- Jog in place
- Jumping jacks
- Jump rope OR Hopping in place

This will get your muscles warm and your blood flowing. **Never stretch or workout cold muscles!**

After that, move to the dynamic stretching element and move from the top-down of your body:

- Neck rotations
- Shoulders rotations
- Arm rotations
- Chest stretch
- Torso rotations (core, and hips)
- Leg sweeps
- Knee lifts
- Feet and ankle rotations

Once you're done with that sequence, you should be feeling loose and energetic. Move on to the second and more relaxed part – the static stretching.

Focus on body parts that are more susceptible to injuries – both as a single event (e.g., acute injuries) and as you age (e.g., overuse injuries).

Meaning:

- Lower back stretches
- Neck stretches
- Hip stretches
- Light full-body stretches – your arms, legs, shoulders, upper back, and ankles.

That's it. In as little as ten minutes per day, you can drastically improve your flexibility and athleticism while also decreasing the risk of injuries and aches down the line.

How and Why, You Should Emphasize Different Parts of Your Body

Before wrapping this guide up, it's important to emphasize one key point: Depending on your occupation and lifestyle, you should emphasize different parts of your body. The daily routine for stretching that you follow should not be identical to someone else's.

For example, if you work a desk job, you should ensure work on your lower back and posture to improve your long-term wellness.

On the other hand, if you work a physically-active job (for example, construction), you should focus on stretching your legs, arms, and back more.

The point is, look at your lifestyle and occupation when designing your daily stretching routine – don't just copy other people. Everyone's body is different, so your stretching routine should be tailored to your lifestyle.

Since during our LIVE session I focused mainly on Neck Stretching Routines to Avoid Injury, Reduce Stress, and Feel Better, here's a more detailed description of what I covered during the session!

Have you ever considered neck stretching routines as part of your overall fitness plan?

Given that the neck, like the back, is a central hub in nearly all motion that we perform, a neck injury can be very debilitating. Wouldn't it make sense to take some simple steps to avoid this hassle in your life?

An effective stretching routine for your neck is one of the most effective ways to reduce, or even eliminate, the chance of a painful neck injury. As part of an overall stretching and fitness plan, neck stretching will not only reduce injuries, but also improve your overall wellness. Your neck, back, and body will just feel better if the muscles are properly stretched and exercised, and you follow a consistent plan to achieve this.

Neck Stretching Benefits

There are many powerful benefits to a consistent neck stretching routine:

- Reduces stress in the neck, which will improve muscle tension throughout the body.
- Improves flexibility in the neck which will reduce injuries in your daily life.
- Greatly reduces the chance of injury in physical workouts and sports.
- Improves your neck's range of motion, which can diminish with age in the absence of stretching.
- Improves your posture by reducing the tightness of your primary neck muscles.
- Improves circulation by increasing blood flow to your muscles.

And because you will feel it throughout each day, the most important benefit of all might just be the improvement in your overall well-being.

When your muscles are flexible, stretched, and relaxed, your body feels better and is more at ease. It is more prepared for all of your daily activities, which of course includes workouts, sports, and physical activity.

Neck Stretching Routines

Consistent and effective neck stretching is a critical part of any overall stretching program. The following outlines the steps to follow in your routine, as well as the stretching exercises.

Warm-up – 1-2 minutes

The first step, prior to any stretches, is to warm-up your muscles and body. This prepares the muscles for stretching. Stretching cold muscles is a surefire way to a painful injury.

Perform some quick and simple cardio for two minutes:

- Jumping jacks
- Gentle walking
- Jump rope
- Jogging or Hopping in place

Dynamic Stretching – 2 minutes

Start by rolling the neck in a very slow and controlled motion. Move it to down to the chin, then to the left, then to the right. Do this several times, and then roll the neck in a complete circle – 360 all the way around. Then roll the other direction. Slowly increase the speed, but only slightly.

Make sure the neck roll is always a controlled motion, and never bouncy or jerky.

Static Stretching – 2 minutes

There are 6 main static stretches that will improve flexibility, and help you to achieve all of the benefits listed above. Follow the stretches in the order and manner listed. Stretch to the point of slight discomfort, and hold each stretch for 5 to 10 seconds.

Neck Flexion Stretch

1. Stretch the rear neck muscles by moving your chin slowly to your chest.
2. Hold for 5 seconds
3. Recover
4. Repeat 5 times



Neck Extension Stretch

1. Stretch the front and side neck muscles by moving your head slowly back as if to look at the sky
2. Hold for 5 seconds
3. Recover
4. Repeat 5 times



Rotation Neck Stretch



1. Slowly rotate your chin to your right shoulder
2. Hold for 5 seconds
3. Recover
4. Repeat 5 times
5. Then repeat the stretch to your left shoulder and left side.

Assisted Neck Rotation Stretch

1. Position your right hand on your chin as shown, and grab your right elbow with your left hand as shown.
2. Slowly rotate your chin to your left shoulder using your hand as a lever to apply pressure to the stretch.
3. Hold for 5 seconds.



4. Recover.
5. Repeat 5 times
6. Then reverse your hand positions and stretch your neck and chin to your right shoulder.

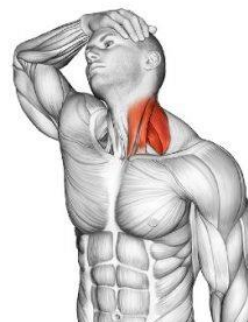
Lateral Flexion Neck Stretch

1. Move your left ear to the left and down as you rotate your head to the left and down until your head is horizontal, still looking forward
2. Hold for 5 seconds
3. Recover
4. Repeat 5 times
5. Then repeat the stretch to your right side.



Assisted Lateral Flexion Stretch

1. Using your left hand placed on the top of your head, slowly and softly pull your head to the left and down until your head is horizontal, still looking forward
2. Hold for 5 seconds
3. Recover
4. Repeat 5 times
5. Then reverse the motion to your right side.



Again, make sure to hold each stretch for 5 seconds, and it is critical to never bounce or jerk. The motion is slow, controlled, and fluid.