

Forum thread, Ian King's stance on stretching, t-mag.com, from 31 May 2003

Ian King's stance on stretching

Today's Activity

05-31-2003, 01:18 PM

jpfitness

Level 1

After barely surviving my posts on stability, I am reluctant to dispute someone like Ian King, especially on this forum, but I am a little confused by this topic.

Join date: Feb 2003

Location:

Posts: 194

Ian King, by his own admission, goes against the "experts" in his adherence to static stretching.

I posed the question of static stretching to strength coach Bill Hartman, who says this:

The type of flexibility training applied to anyone's training program should support the needs of the individual based on the demands of the chosen activity.

For those NOT interested in sports performance, static stretching methods are sufficient.

When planning an athlete's flexibility training you must also consider specific movement patterns, speed of movement, and loads which are not addressed with static forms of flexibility training.

Ideal methods in this case include full ROM strength training and isometric stretching which promotes flexibility-strength especially at end ROM, and progressive, dynamic stretches in which the athlete performs movements near and at end ROM at progressively faster speeds to develop flexibility-speed capabilities. These types of activities also reduce the difference between passive and active flexibility (flexibility deficit).

A low flexibility deficit promotes injury prevention. Static stretching promotes a flexibility reserve against unexpected movements beyond normal ROM, but does not affect the flexibility deficit. Full ROM strength training, dynamic stretches, and isometric stretching will increase both static (passive) and dynamic (active) flexibility.

All methods of flexibility training is not created equal. There are times and places where each method may be ideal.

In regard to static stretching before activity...

Static stretching has been shown to reduce power output in vertical jump tests. Therefore it is not recommended prior to activities which require any significant levels of power. It is also not systemic, but rather isolative in nature as a warm-up and therefore may be insufficient as a form of warm-up whereas dynamic stretches tend to be more full body exercise which increases systemic body temperature (based on sweating patterns) and can be performed in more sport specific manners in preparation for specific activities.

Ian King says this:

Most of what I've said so far (nothing new or controversial) would be backed up by most "experts." So now let me run something by you that's less politically correct: I like static stretching. I know, I know...current trends in sport science have found favor in other methods, like dynamic stretching. But, in my opinion, it's all part of a circle that's slowly turning. Static stretching was the big hit in the '80s, and I suggest that it will be again.

But it gets worse? I believe in static stretching before the workout! How could I? Has my head been baking too long in the Australian sun? Don't I know that none of the "experts" support this, and neither does any of the "science?" Blah, blah, blah...

Rehab expert, Rob Tillman (who has rehabilitated many famous NFL athletes, including Troy Aikman), claims that static stretching even after the workout is bad. His analogy was that stretching the joints and the fascia is like stretching out your favorite sweater... once you have done that it will never hang the same. In the same way, once you have stretched that tissue it cannot return to its original form, and that overflexibility in the shoulder capsule is one of the big reasons so many people get shoulder injuries, particularly pitchers and quarterbacks. He says that to increase flexibility we must

"reteach" our muscles a wider range of motion. He showed me some really good exercises and I must admit, I noticed an marked improvement immediately in my hams.

Some of you on here are coaches and/or athletes. Which method do you use? I can't understand why King would use static training for athletes BEFORE a workout if the studies show a REDUCTION in force output following static stretching. Does anyone else support this method?

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05-31-2003, 07:01 PM

RugbyRenegade  
Level

can you share some of those exercises especially for the hamstrings and hip flexors/quad/itb thanks, RR

Join date: Feb 2003

Location:

Posts: 29

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05-31-2003, 09:03 PM

irondoc934  
Level

I've stretched with static methods since about 1978 after reading an article written by Mandy Tanny in the women's section of the old Muscle Builder Power(pre muscle and fitness.)

Join date: Feb 2003

Location: Malaysia

Posts: 852

I honestly don't think I've ever caused a problem by it. I've suffered my share of injuries, but always mild. The more serious injuries were do to trauma of a sudden nature. I'm an ART provider who treats many athletes. ART is essentially pin point stretching of build up areas of scare tissue. This is were I feel static stretching is helpful. Careful static methods can break down adhesions in the muscles and yes fascia. There are multiple soft tissue techniques aside of ART that do this. this is were the injury prevention comes into play.

The trick with stretching, I believe is the careful performance. Remember how Arnold talked of putting his mind into the muscle. You have to know your anatomy well with a

good degree of kinesthetic awareness to derive the highest benefit safely. If you can feel a proper stretch in the right region, you'll be fine. The shoulders can be tricky. This is where the ART is needed I feel over just static or other methods. If done improperly a whole case of bad stuff can open in your shoulder capsule, coracoacromial ligament etc. Personally my injured shoulder responds well to static stretching of the traps. By personal trainer ART provider buddy Rob Mason and I have found some common areas of adhesions in the traps and iliopsoas and rectus femoris that cause a lot of grief in the shoulder and lower back respectively.

One point to understand my perspective and the perspective of a doc guy, I live in a rural small town area. High levels of knowledge aren't available here. a person often has to figure it out on their own. I never had other methods available to me as a teenager than good static stretching that I learned well. My buddy lives 2 1/2 hours away, so treatment is difficult when I'm hurt.

Oh, I also would always warmup with movement and stretch at home later after showering. I think this combination has kept me pretty healthy over the years.

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05-31-2003, 09:31 PM

Hyok  
Level 1

I seem to recall that Ian disputes that the reduced force output 10-15 minutes after static stretching is significant. The studies that cite the reduced output seemed to have been done right after the stretching session.

Join date: Oct 2002  
Location:  
Posts: 6

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06-01-2003, 01:12 AM

invisible\_3  
Level

I am also very interested in those exercises!

Join date: Mar 2003  
Location:

Posts: 113

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06-01-2003, 03:07 AM

glute-spanker  
Level

Well JP

Why don't you go back to what Charles Staley said about gurus -

Join date: Apr 2003

Location:

Posts: 757

Don't just pick your guru in this world. learn from everyone and implememnt whats best FOR YOU.

FOR ME, static relaxed streches don't cut it. I rarely do them.

On the other hand, static stretches like PNF are extrememly helpful, even and especialy before and after training. anyway they should not be used ONLY BEFORE MAXIMAL ATTEMPTS, according to siff and tstatsuline. or if you go by the Tstatsuline moto: "if you need to stretch before it, you are not flexible enough for it and need to drop that movement from your routine"

my take

S-man.

also, my girlfriend does yoga and is very flexible but has all the symptoms of joint abuse by static stretching. (i.e pains, decreased ROM, prone to injuries etc)

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06-01-2003, 05:20 AM

irondoc934  
Level

All excellent points. As for glute spanker's gal, women are often to weak. I get nuts when I hear how yoga has "strengthened" their bodies. They cannot take the day to day pounding and flexibility itself won't just protect someone.

Join date: Feb 2003

Location: Malaysia

One point I didn't mention before was postural alignment. Flexibility training and strength training both can optimize this. We've all seen the hunched over "fit" marathon type

Posts: 852

runners.

Train for flexibility, but assess where you are and what you really need, don't rely on one expert. There was a great article in the recent Milo on the contradictory advice of the experts. Pavel recommends against high reps in his strength book, but advocates high rep kettlebells? Louis Simmons doesn't like stretching, but mentions in an article about being treated by a traditional Chinese doctor and how he calls his lack of flexibility a disgrace. Look for the common threads and consistencies between everyone and go from there.

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06-01-2003, 12:42 PM

glute-spanker

Irondoc

Level

About high-rep kettlebells I think it's was corrected by him to high volume. I.e X times 5 reps, with short rests.

Join date: Apr 2003

Location:

Posts: 757

I think he was too nuts about those kettlebells but he came around from that.

His stretching and mobility stuff are priceless (for me). all those looking for dynamic stretches, mobility drills, PNF stretches, just get his 3 books "beyond stretching", "super joints" and "relax into stretch"

S-man