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Debunking Medical Myths: Stretching Prevents Sports Injuries

Mikaela Grudzien
Wayne State University School of Medicine, gk3061@wayne.edu

Sara Kazyak
Wayne State University School of Medicine, hf4902@wayne.edu

Joel Drazin
Wayne State University School of Medicine, du2876@wayne.edu

Rachel Feldstein
Wayne State University School of Medicine, hj2208@wayne.edu

Matthew Kim
Wayne State University School of Medicine, hj0048@wayne.edu

See next page for additional authors

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Stretching prevents sports injuries
Fact or Myth?

The theory behind stretching and prevention of sports injuries is that it is supposed to loosen one’s muscles, increasing their compliancy and reducing stress on the muscle during range of motion.

Theory of stretching and preventing sports injuries

This study looked specifically at the effects of static stretching. The study contained 7 total clinical trials and the majority found no correlation between static stretching and the prevention of exercise related injuries. 3 out of seven did find a reduction in musculotendinous and ligament injury.

Study 1 Results

A study of 26,610 people and 3,464 injuries sound no indication that stretching prevented injury. This information was obtained through review and consolidation of peer research with clear quality controls, including injuries that could be attributed to the musculature.

Study 2 Results

This study looked specifically at the effects of static stretching. The study contained 7 total clinical trials and the majority found no correlation between static stretching and the prevention of exercise related injuries. 3 out of seven did find a reduction in musculotendinous and ligament injury.

Study 3 Results

A meta-analysis utilizing a total of 60 studies showed that there was no correlation between stretching and the development of sports induced injuries. Good news is things such as insoles, external joint supports, and specific training programs were shown to be effective in reducing sports induced injuries.

The Verdict

There is no scientific consensus that there is any benefit to stretching for the goal of preventing sports induced injury.