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The Benefits of Static Stretching on Health: A Systematic Review

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The Benefits of Static Stretching on Health: A Systematic Review

By Semir Mašić, Denis Čaušević, Nedim Čović, Seth Spicer, Ahmed Gawash

Abstract

- Static stretching exercises (SS) have well-established positive effects on physical fitness and rehabilitation, but their effects on general health, muscle function, flexibility, and daily activities are less understood.
- The articles found that the effect of SS, regardless of the protocol used or whether it is active or passive, has a positive effect on the health status of the subjects.
- SS is an effective and safe method for improving flexibility and ROM, preventing muscle atrophy, enhancing physical functioning, and improving quality of life with minimal risk of injury.

Introduction

- The quality of human movement depends on the range of motion (ROM) available in synovial joints, which can be limited by joints and muscles.
- Insufficient physical activity can lead to a decrease in muscle function, endangering ROM and consequent joint health.
- Stiffness, as a result of reduced activity, limits ROM and can create muscle imbalances.
- Limited mobility or reduction in flexibility can increase the incidence of injuries, especially musculotendinous strains.
- To maintain body mobility, regular physical activity is necessary, and stretching exercises, in particular, can be examined further.
- There are several different stretching techniques, including static stretching exercises (SS), dynamic stretching (DS), and proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF).

Discussion

- The results of the included studies show that the effect of SS, regardless of whether it is active or passive, is mainly positively reflected in the health status of the subjects.
- Improvements in ROM according to Bandy & Sanders (2001) can be explained by the fact that in the SS there is a high possibility of increasing the number of sarcomeres in series (muscle length) due to prolonged exposure to stresses that occur at a certain degree of stretching, which is constant (Medeiros et al., 2016).
- Gartley & Prosser (2011) found that fewer warehouse loaders and delivery drivers were present during a 90-day stretching program, suggesting that even a short SS protocol can positively affect the health status of workers working in specified or similar circumstances/listed or similar jobs.
- Aje et al. (2018) suggest that an effective and affordable stretching program can be a feasible clinical intervention in a factory work environment, reducing work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSD) over a 60-day period compared to the same period last year.
- Stretching exercises may be recommended when women cannot adhere to other forms of exercise, as pregnant women adhere better to the PSE regimen than other forms of activity in the second and third trimesters.

Conclusion

- SS exercises have a positive impact on the health status of various groups of people.
- SS exercises show potential benefits on human health regardless of stretching parameters used.
- SS exercises are adaptable to individual constraints, relatively simple to perform, and require low level of strain.
- SS exercises can serve as a simple and effective tool to improve and maintain health and increase satisfaction during activities of daily living.

References & ResearchGate
References


References (Cont)


