

Mobility - exercises to improve joint range of motion

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Mobility - picture

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What is mobility?

Mobility refers to the ability of the body to perform movement in a specific range within a joint, through the simultaneous cooperation of the nervous system and the musculoskeletal system. In other words, it is the ability of a person to move freely in different positions and directions without pain or discomfort.

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Good mobility in sports is extremely important. It is believed to minimize the risk of injury and increase athletic performance, such as running economy or force transfer efficiency. Factors influencing mobility include diet, lifestyle, and physical activity. Good mobility enables the achievement of correct movement patterns and maintaining proper body posture, resulting in better movement mechanics and muscle power generation.

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Benefits of performing mobility exercises:

- Improvement of joint mobility and increase in range of motion
- Increased muscle efficiency, strength, and movement economy
- Enhanced fitness and improvement of motor skills
- Correction of proper body posture
- Minimization of the risk of joint, tendon, and muscle injuries
- Faster recovery and prevention of overtraining

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Mobility training is important for another reason – mobility decreases with age and is associated with the natural aging process. Just look at children characterized by high mobility, effortlessly assuming various complicated positions. Can you imagine sitting in a deep squat, holding a bucket of sand overhead, and scratching your back with the other hand? How long can you endure?

Therefore, mobility training is crucial, and we should strive to maintain our mobility at a high level throughout life.

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Basic principles of mobility training:

1. **Frequency** To achieve the best results with mobility exercises, frequent repetition is crucial. Performing short series several times a day will yield better results than one long training session per week. In addition to training, try to incorporate mobility elements into your daily activities, such as Turkish get-ups or couch stretching while watching TV.
2. **Full Range of Motion Work:** During strength training sessions or other types of sports activities, and even daily activities, it is essential to strive to perform movements in the full range of motion of the joint. In strength training with free weights, it is better to use lighter weights and focus on technique.
3. **Utilization of Multi-Plane Movements:** Try to perform compound exercises in which movement occurs in multiple planes (sagittal, frontal, transverse). The training plan should include multi-joint exercises with free weights, bands, and body weight.
4. **Learning Proper Breathing:** The first step you can take to improve your mobility is to learn the proper breathing technique. Diaphragmatic breathing and balanced breathing – during daily activities and training – will relax your muscles.
5. **Frequent Position Changes:** In the case of mobility, the key is to avoid prolonged periods of staying in one position for too long. Therefore, fidget, change your position, cross your legs from left to right, and stand up frequently. In short: do everything to avoid staying in one position for too long.

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How often to train mobility?

If you have significant mobility issues, it is advisable to perform exercises 2-3 times a day for 5-10 minutes each session. After several weeks of such training, when the range of motion of your joints increases, it is recommended to train mobility once a week and incorporate mobility exercises into your warm-up during other training sessions.

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Who is mobility training for?

Mobility training is intended for everyone, regardless of age and fitness level. The key is to choose the right exercises for you.

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Is mobility training healthy?

Yes, mobility training is not harmful if exercises are performed correctly and are tailored to you.

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"Strengthening the health awareness of primary school students with the use of modern forms of education" benefits from funding worth EUR 240,000.00 received from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway under the EEA Funds. The aim of the project is to increase knowledge and develop habits regarding proper patterns of a healthy lifestyle among students of grades IV-VI.

Sample set of mobility exercises [Link to YouTube video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sT3zAMtAf8w>]

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TEST

1. What is mobility in human movement activity? A) A way of moving in difficult terrain B) The ability of a person to move freely in different positions and directions, without pain and discomfort C) A lifestyle that involves regular physical activity

Answer: B) The ability of a person to move freely in different positions and directions, without pain and discomfort

2. What factors affect mobility? A) Age, gender, and height B) Weight, diet, and skin color C) Physical activity, diet, and lifestyle

Answer: C) Physical activity, diet, and lifestyle

3. What exercises improve mobility? A) Isometric exercises B) Stretching exercises C) Strength exercises

Answer: B) Stretching exercises

4. Why is mobility important? A) It improves balance and motor coordination B) It enhances overall fitness C) It prevents injuries and pain

Answer: A) It improves balance and motor coordination and C) It prevents injuries and pain

5. What does the term "sedentary lifestyle" mean? A) A lifestyle involving regular physical activity B) A lifestyle characterized by low physical activity and prolonged sitting C) A lifestyle involving extreme sports

Answer: B) A lifestyle characterized by low physical activity and prolonged sitting

6. What are the benefits of regular physical activity? A) Improved fitness and endurance B) Reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes C) Enhanced well-being and stress reduction D) Increased muscle strength and flexibility E) All of the above

Answer: E) All of the above