

Flexibility

A Health-Related Fitness Component

Flexibility – The ability to move your joints through a full range of motion (ROM).

Joint – A place in the body where bones come together

Range of Motion (ROM) – The amount of movement you can make in a joint.

Benefits of good flexibility:

- 1) Improved function in activity and daily life
- 2) Improved health and wellness

Characteristics of Flexibility:

- 1) Body Build – Some people will not be able to score as well on flexibility tests as others no matter how much they stretch. Anatomical differences in our bodies help determine what we can and cannot do.
- 2) Hypermobility – An unusually large range of motion in certain joints (often referred to as being double jointed)
- 3) Joint Laxity – When the supporting tissue around a joint allows the bones to move in ways other than intended; also called looseness in the joints.

A balanced exercise program includes both strength and flexibility exercises for all your muscles.

Applying the Fitness Principles to Flexibility:

- 1) Overload – You need to stretch your muscles longer than normal to increase flexibility.
- 2) Progression – You need to gradually increase your exercise intensity (stretching farther as you gain more flexibility).
- 3) Specificity – Flexibility exercises improve only the specific muscles at the joints that you stretch.

Maintaining Flexibility

- 1) If you do not continue to stretch the joints and muscles you will lose your range of motion and flexibility.

Types of Flexibility Exercises:

1. Static Stretching – stretching slowly as far as you can without pain, until you feel a sense of pulling or tension, then holding the stretch for 15 seconds.
2. Ballistic Stretching – Series of quick but gentle bouncing or bobbing motions that are not held for a long time.