

# The Importance of Warming Up and Cooling Down

“Lack of activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it.”

~ Plato



The benefits of exercise and physical activity are well documented, yet a recent research survey documents that only 28% of people surveyed reported exercise as a daily habit. It is vitally important that you consider staying physically active as part of your wellness plan! Just 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week has tremendous health benefits.

While it's important to add exercise in to your long-term wellness plan, it's also important to do it the right and the *safe* way. That's why it's so important to warm up before you exercise and to properly cool down afterwards. This will reduce your risk of an injury and help your body recover faster, enabling you to get the most out of your workouts.

## 3 Types of Exercise for Your Wellness Plan

**1. Aerobic / cardiovascular exercise** – Regular aerobic exercise progressively strengthens the heart and lungs, is a great fat burning form of exercise, and has tremendous general health benefits.

**2. Strength training** – The benefits include increased muscle tone and body shape, increased bone density, improved hormone and mental function, decreased stress, increased metabolism, and weight loss.

**3. Stretching exercise** – Stretching increases blood supply and nutrients to joint structures, increases soft tissue temperature, enhances elasticity of soft tissues, and acts as a lubricant for our bones and cartilage.

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According to the American Council on Exercise:



“Warm-up and cool-down activities should be an essential part of all exercise programs.

The purpose of warm-up activities is to prepare the body, especially the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems, for the conditioning or stimulus phase of the exercise session. The cool-down phase assures that venous return to the heart is maintained in the face of significant amounts of blood going to the previously working muscles.

Light aerobic endurance activities, coupled with activities, provide the fundamental basis for both the warm-up and cool-down phases. The length of the warm-up and cool-down periods depends on several factors, including the type of activity engaged in during the conditioning period, the level of intensity of those activities, and the age and fitness level of the participant.

In general, the warm-up and cool-down phases should last approximately five to ten minutes each. **If the individual has less time available to work out than usual, it is recommended that the time allotted for the conditioning phase of the workout be reduced, while retaining sufficient time for both the warm-up and cool-down phases.”**

THINK PREVENTION!



**Prevention is always better than treatment!  
Warming up and cooling down is a proactive strategy to live longer and stay well.**