

GOLF: 9 WARMING-UP STRETCHES FOR 9 HOLES to prevent injuries



GUEST CORNER

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With Spring arriving, golfers are flocking to their golf courses to resume their favorite leisure activity. After the Winter idle period, resuming golfing requires proper form and preparation to prevent injuries.

GOLFING ENTAILS THE BODY FUNCTIONING AS A UNIT:

Playing golf requires your whole body to function together as a unit.

With each golf swing, your body undergoes a combination of rotational, compression, stretching, and shearing forces that moves around the stable link, the core. Each club golf swing requires

- stability from the core and buttock muscles (Glutes);
- flexibility from the torso (thoracic spine) and shoulders; and
- balance to have proper swing, as well as to pick up your golf balls

NINE PRE-GAME WARMING-UP STRETCHES:

Warm-up while you do deep diaphragm breathing to get oxygenated blood from your lungs into your muscles to help relieve tension and bring fuel to your muscles.

I recommend the following warming-up stretches:

Warm-up, blood circulation

March in place bringing your knees high up to your chest:

1. First keep your elbows bent. Do 20 marching steps and bring your opposite elbow to your knee. Exhale as you crunch. Keep marching; and

2. Bend your arms sideways, like a goal post. Pull your elbows and arms forward in front of your chest and open your shoulder blades.

Open your elbows sideways again and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Alternate the movement as you march. Breathing deep in and out with your diaphragm, and you're your shoulders and neck relaxed. Do for 20 marching steps.

Flexibility for your thoracic spine

3. Stand with your legs shoulder-width apart, knees straight. Slide with your one hand down the side of your thigh in a side bend and bring

your other arm over your head to feel the stretch along your side. (Side bend as if you are standing between two walls one in front and one behind your back to prevent bending forward.) Do slow stretches and exhale as you bend sideways. Repeat 5 times.

4. Feet shoulder-width apart and knees bent. Hold your club horizontally in front of your chest with hands onto the ends. Keep your core and glutes tight and rotate your thoracic spine and shoulders from one side to the other side, follow with your head. Stretch slow and controlled and exhale as you turn. Repeat 5 times.

Glutes and core stability

5. Hold onto your club with your right hand. Place the handle end on the ground at about 45 degrees angle in front of your body. Lift your right knee up in a stork stance, squeezing your left glutes and core and rotate your right knee wide open and close. Use your left arm to follow your body to balance. Repeat 10 times. Switch the club to your left hand and repeat with left leg. Keep your torso, neck and shoulders relaxed.

6. Stand with your legs wide apart and feet slightly turned out. Keep your back straight, hinge from your hips. Slide with your hands down on your thighs as you bend down into a deep squat pushing your knees open with your elbows, come to resting with your forearms/elbows onto your thighs as you squat down. Exhale as you squat down, inhale 3 times holding the squat and exhale as you come up to the upright position tucking your core and glutes and lifting your ribcage to come to the upright position again. Repeat about 3 times.

Balance - control your body in space

7. Hold your club horizontally in front at shoulder-height with hands onto the ends. Lunge forward, keep your core and glutes tight. Bend deep into your front knee (while keeping your back leg straight). Rotate your body and torso slowly from side to side and keep your balance. You can modify this balance stretch by bending your back knee and lean onto your back knee to help stabilize

your body. Repeat rotation 5 times, then tighten your core and glutes to come to upright position (push with your club on the ground to assist you coming up if you need to). Repeat with other leg in front.

8. Hold your club horizontally in front at shoulder-height with hands onto the ends. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent. Shift your weight over to your right leg and, at the same time, turn your body with the club to the right. Then sway your body to the left and shift your weight onto your left leg. Alternate the weight shifts from right to left 10 times. Exhale as you transfer the body from side to side. Keep your balance and do not tense your muscles.

Cool down and get your mind and body connected for your game

9. Hold onto your club, get into your set-up stage. Quiet your mind

from distracting thoughts and feel the energy and blood flow from you neck, shoulder, thoracic spine into your lower back, glutes, thighs to your feet grounding you. Gently mimic the phases of your golf swing: from your set-up into your takeaway, to your backswing. Weight shift and prepare with gentle movements to get ready to transition into your down-swing impact and swing through.

If you experience any pain or tightness doing any of the warm-up exercises, please contact your physical therapist or reach out to me as all exercises can be modified.

Lize Lubbe is the owner of Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy with its main practice located at 892 Route 35 in Cross River and a PT Studio in the premises of Apex Fitness (where her team focus on the rehabilitation of sports-related injuries). Learn more by calling 914-875-9430, emailing contact@lizelubbept.com or visiting www.lizelubbept.com.



Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy (LLPT) has opened a PT Studio on the premises of Apex Fitness (at Orchard Square at Cross River) to focus on sports-related physical therapy rehabilitation services.

Our PT Studio at Apex will serve the needs of high school and college athletes, runners, golfers and tennis players, devotees and "weekend warrior" work-out gym members, and non-gym members, and other sport enthusiasts to continue their fitness goals, free of pain and to restore full pain-free mobility after injury.

Our PT Studio will be staffed with physical therapists who specialize in working with athletes, young and old. Our team provides dedicated, personable hands-on physical therapy rehabilitation services to help you prevent injuries and, if injured, to accelerate your recovery.

The professional services of our team at the PT Studio include the following:

- A free walk-in basic sports-related injury screening of about 10 minutes
- Guidance on sport-specific warm-up and exercise programs
- Brief assessment and Kinesio taping
- Individualized full PT rehabilitation treatment programs to recover from injury or surgery with full access to all the equipment at Apex Fitness, to get you back practicing your chosen sport, pain-free

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