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OUR GUARANTEE

It is our policy to offer each patient an appointment within 2 working days. Emergency appointments made upon a physician's request will be honored.



STRETCH TO THE FINISH LINE

As the fall season approaches it is that time of year that we once again see an increase in running related injuries. With the Richmond marathon approaching in early November mileage numbers have increased for both the first time marathoner and experienced marathon runner. For years now in both our Richmond and Ashland locations we see a sudden increase in patients who have running injuries related to marathon training. These injuries typically are, but not limited to, plantar fasciitis, iliotibial band tendonitis, muscle strains, achilles tendonitis, and/or anterior knee pain. Typically these injuries are overuse in nature and may occur due to a number of factors such as, training errors, environmental factors, and biomechanical deficiencies.

One aspect of biomechanical concern that we often see is lack of lower extremity muscle flexibility. Appropriate muscle length allows for smooth and efficient function of all joints of the lower extremity and reduces the risk of muscle and/or joint injuries. We often see runners in the clinic who are not appropriately stretching. During the early to mid '90's controversy existed as to when was the most opportune time to stretch. For some unknown reason the thought was that no stretching should be done before running in fear of stretching a "cold" muscle, and that all stretching should be done after the run. Our years of clinical experience suggest stretching only after the event (in this case running), may not be enough. Runners who do not stretch prior to a run, in our opinion are potentially setting themselves up for injury and should avoid this at all costs. Obviously there are always your genetic outliers who have never stretched and do well. However, the majority of individuals do not respond this way. We do not recommend to immediately stretch a "cold" muscle vigorously, but to start with a gradual and gentle stretch to lengthen muscle tissue. As the muscle appears to lengthen then the stretch can become slightly more vigorous. One option is to do a light jog for five minutes, stretch, and then run. We feel that stretching only after a run is too late and you lose the potential benefits of improved range of motion and muscle flexibility needed for intense training/racing. In addition, we believe it is more important to stretch on a daily basis. Stretching daily maintains appropriate muscle lengths and joint mobility and will make stretching prior to running and easier task to perform. Stretching daily is appropriate especially the older the athlete gets.

Other biomechanical factors that may cause overuse injuries consist of leg length discrepancies, poor foot postures, and muscle weakness/imbbalances. However, lack of flexibility and limited interest in stretching prior to running are common mistakes we see in these patient populations. Spending a few extra minutes a day stretching can go a long way in preventing a variety of injuries.

ARE YOUR PATIENTS IN NEED OF EARLY MORNING HOURS?

Our Ashland office is now opening at **7:00 AM** on **Tuesday** and **Thursdays** to provide before work or school opportunities for your patient's physical therapy.

MEET OUR STAFF

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Richmond Physical Therapy is to promote the profession of physical therapy by providing outstanding quality of service to our patients through evidence-based practice. Our staff is dedicated to provide the latest rehabilitative techniques to return the patient to their normal level or pre-injury function in a timely manner.

VISIT OUR WEBSITES: WWW.RICHMONDPT.COM WWW.ASHLANDPT.NET

