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Client: Expert Rating

Project Description: The following sample includes excerpts from a project for Expert Rating, an online resource for personal trainers to obtain credits for recertification. This training guide is for a stretching and flexibility certification. It includes text, pictures, and a video series for personal trainers to guide their clients through a complete stretching program.

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Stretching and Flexibility Certification

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80 MCQ's Final Certification Test

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Introduction

While not the most glamorous part of fitness, stretching and flexibility play a key role in improving your results while potentially decreasing the risk for sports-related injuries. Outside of the fitness arena, having a high level of stretching and flexibility has real life benefits that may help with functional movement patterns. For older adults, stretching and flexibility may allow them to maintain a greater sense of independence well past the age of retirement.

Being able to walk your clients through a complete stretching routine will benefit both of you. For the client, they will learn to loosen tight muscles and avoid aches, strains, and injuries. For the trainer, you'll be able to spot muscle overcompensation and trouble areas, and use this information to improve your client's fitness program.

Stretching and flexibility are essential components of any great fitness program and it should be placed on the same level of priority as the workload of exercises. Becoming an expert in stretching and flexibility training may allow you to take your level of care for your clients to a new level while ensuring that you maintain a steady client base.

Happy and injury-free clients are how you make a living; let's make sure they stay that way so you can continue to grow your business. We hope you enjoy this stretching and flexibility certification.

Chapter One: What is Stretching?

As a personal trainer, your initial certification probably mentioned the importance of stretching in relation to achieving overall fitness goals such as muscle building, fat loss, and performance enhancement. You've been told how essential it is but you still may be wondering: What exactly is stretching?

Stretching is the deliberate movement and hold of a muscle and the surrounding connective tissue to promote elongation or lengthening. The result is improved elasticity and the reduction or elimination of tightness in the muscle being stretched. Adhesions, commonly referred to as muscle knots, are also released during active stretching. This only adds to the greater feeling of relief and the reduction in muscle tightness. (1)



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STRETCHING VS. FLEXIBILITY

Have you ever been told by a client that he wants to be flexible but he doesn't want to stretch? Maybe you've overheard a female client say she wants to be as flexible as a gymnast but she believes that you're either naturally flexible or you aren't. Both of these scenarios couldn't be further from the truth; rather, stretching and flexibility go hand in hand as one begets the other.

Flexibility is the ability to safely and effectively move muscles and connective tissue through healthy ranges of motion without a risk for strain or injury. Stretching is the exercise needed to improve flexibility. It is through stretching and the elongation of the muscle that one can achieve a higher degree of flexibility.

EXAMPLES OF STRETCHING

Stretching in its most basic form is when you lengthen one muscle group at a time. If you are a personal trainer in a commercial setting, then you will often see people stretching. While one person may be bringing his arm across his chest to stretch the shoulder, another woman may be bending at the waist to stretch the back of the legs.

Yoga

Stretching can also be the focus of group fitness classes. Yoga is an ancient art of movement formed thousands of years ago. While yoga does help to build strength, *the primary benefit of yoga is to improve flexibility and muscle elasticity.*

Pilates

Much more of a strength-focused form of fitness especially around the core, Pilates does incorporate many active stretches into the routine to improve flexibility.



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FOCUS OF THIS CERTIFICATION

The static or holding stretch of individual muscle groups is the type of stretching that will be the focus of this certification guide. We will discuss other types of stretching as well but static stretching will be the foundation of this certification. With your knowledge of static stretching after completing this course, you will be able to apply these stretches to ensure client success with a variety of fitness goals including athletic performance and muscle building.

Key Terms

- Stretching
- Static stretching
- Adhesions
- Flexibility
- Yoga
- Pilates

Self-Study Descriptive Questions

1. In your own words, what is stretching?

2. How is stretching different from flexibility?

3. How can stretching help older adults?

Self-Study Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Stretching is the deliberate _____ and hold of a muscle and the surrounding connective tissue to promote _____ or lengthening.

- A. strengthening, extension
- B. movement, elongation
- C. shortening, adhesions
- D. touching, concentric

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2. What is the ability to safely and effectively move muscles and connective tissue through healthy ranges of motion without a risk for strain or injury?

- A. Yoga
- B. Static stretching
- C. Flexibility
- D. Muscle contraction

3. True or False: It doesn't matter how much you stretch; you're born with a set level of flexibility.

- A. True
- B. False

4. Which of the following group fitness classes primarily focuses on improving flexibility?

- A. Power lifting
- B. Zumba
- C. Yoga
- D. CrossFit

5. True or False: Stretching worsens adhesions.

- A. True
- B. False

Chapter Ten: Stretching Guide by Muscle Group

By this point in the certification, you should be able to confidently explain what stretching is, the different types of stretching, the proven benefits of stretching, and the myths of stretching to your clients. You should also be able to create extensive, effective, and safe stretching programs for a variety of special populations clients. The only thing left to do is to provide you with a general static stretching guide that you can use with your clients.

The following stretches are safe and effective for most types of clients. As mentioned above, it's important to consider the medical history, physical ability, and limited movement of your clients, and plan accordingly.

There is one stretch per major muscle group, and at the conclusion of this chapter, you will know enough stretches to develop a full stretching routine that will take between five to ten minutes to complete.

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CHEST

Door Chest Stretch

- Begin by facing a doorway. Place your right hand against the edge of the doorway and begin to turn away while keeping the hand there.
- Continue turning until you feel the stretch across your chest.
- Hold for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Repeat on the other side.

