



Parish Health Ministry

The Scoop on Stretching

By Jan Hill, ERH Wellness Coordinator

Definition- Stretching is the process of placing the body in position to lengthen the muscle and associated tissues.

When you stretch, you affect the fascia or sheath (connective tissue) around the muscle. Stretching will reduce muscle tension and increase range of motion.

After a workout, soreness can occur because of micro tears in the muscle fiber which is natural in the process of building more muscle fibers. Stretching helps to alleviate the soreness that occurs after a workout. Stretching will lengthen the muscle fibers, increasing blood circulation and remove waste products that have built up during exercising.

When to Stretch- Before starting your workout, warm up by walking, reaching, twisting, and marching for a minimum of 5 minutes then a light stretch routine stretching the muscles you will be using in your workout for a minimum of 5 minutes. After your workout, cool down by doing similar exercises that you did in your workout but less intense. Length of stretch time should be for a minimum of 20 seconds to 30 seconds for each stretch doing each stretch 2 to 3 times with a resting time of 10 seconds between the same stretch. Hold a stretch until you feel the muscle relax.