

FITNESS EXERCISES FOR GOLF

INTRODUCTION

As medical science practitioners we have not only treated Golfers, but assessed their Musculo-skeletal system and assisted in coordinating fitness programmes for Golfers. These programmes are not only designed to prevent injuries but also to assist in improving good golf bio-mechanics which will in turn enhance "Performance" in the golfer.

A QUESTION OF POSTURE...

Good posture is defined as maintaining the primary and secondary curves of your spine, these curves occur at different areas of the spine.

Benefits of the Correct Spinal Curvature Areas are as Follows:

- Promote good mobility
- Allows even pressure of the spine
- Allows golfers body weight to be transferred over a greater surface area, therefore allowing less stress on the spine
- Promotes more efficient biomechanical movement through axis of the spine and will ensure smooth and efficient "backswing and follow through"

Deviations and Postural problems do occur e.g. Scoliosis, Sway Back, Loss of Lumbar Lordosis.

Postural deviations can also be caused by hereditary factors, muscle group imbalance and/or weakness and occupational and domestic activities. It is therefore important to do postural re-education exercises to maintain good posture in order to achieve correct address to the golf ball.

POOR POSTURE = POOR ADDRESS + POOR SWING PATH

An example of this is the overweight golfer with a large stomach will use his/her arms to compensate for lack of spinal rotation in back swing and follow through.

WHY IS FLEXIBILITY IMPORTANT...

To obtain good back swing and follow through a good range of spinal rotational (especially through the thoracic spine) is essential. The spine is the main rotational component and pivotal in the golf swing itself. This is apparent when you have experienced having a stiff neck as you will tend to block, thus causing "sliced" shot.

Good shoulder mobility is also important especially at the "top of the back swing" and on "follow through". This is reinforced by good bilateral hip rotation in association with free movement at the wrist and elbow joints. Reduction of this range can be highlighted by golfers who are restricted in range at these specific joints e.g. osteoarthritis / osteoporosis / total hip replacement, and tennis elbow. Strong and Flexible Forearms, Wrist and Hands are essential for Good Golf.

STRENGTH TRAINING

Specific muscle groups need to be strengthened to prevent injury, to give stability at joints and increase club head speed. This promotes good correlated muscle group co-ordination resulting in smooth and efficient back swing and follow through. Muscle groups involved in good golf bio-mechanics are the muscles of the Abdominals, Paravertebrals, Gluteals, Quadriceps, Peronei, Rotator Cuff, Forearm Flexor and Extensor muscle groups and the Intrinsic muscles of the Hands.

Female golfers are more prone to upper limb injuries (see arms section) and generally requires a full upper limb exercise program to prevent injuries and enhance power and stability in all stages of the golf swing. Especially on the “follow through” phase and when the club makes contact with the ball. However, female golfers are generally more mobile in their lumbar-pelvic region compared to men, who lack tone in the Abdominals, glutei and paravertrals. As a result of poor posture men tend to be stiff and inflexible in the lumbar spine region.

DON'T FORGET TECHNIQUE!

It should be emphasised that these physical factors will prevent injury and contribute to enhancing performance, however, always approach your GOLF PROFESSIONAL/COACH on the actual techniques and practical application of the golf swing. Any assessment and treatment you receive should always be backed up with regular lessons as the new motion and power you gain will become a new muscle memory.

Contact the **PhysioStudio** for specific treatment of golf injuries, Musculo – Skeletal Screening, Postural Exercises and Stretches, Fitness Assessments and Individual Exercise Programs for all Standards of Golfer.

This information brought to you by the Physio Studio, Binfield Bracknell's premier physiotherapy practice.

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