

Golf Shoulder Stretches

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The Golf season started early this year, and hopefully you have all been out golfing and enjoying it. Preparing for golf can happen in the form of practicing, or by watching golf training programs on television or online. But another essential part of preparing for golf is by exercising and stretching.

I'm going to focus on the shoulder joint this month. Range of motion in your shoulders, determines your ability to have a good golf swing. So here are a couple stretches/exercises that can help develop a better range of motion in your shoulders.

1. Wall Angels Golf Stretch

Back flat against the wall. Make an L shape with your arms trying to keep arms flush against the wall (do the best you can). Keeping your elbow bend consistent, move your arms up and down on the wall trying to keep your arms flush. Perform for 5 minutes moving slowly. Wall angels address both shoulder abduction and external rotation. This is a great stretch for the shoulders and is also great for improving posture and avoiding the "hunchback" appearance.

2. Alternating Arm Cross Golf Stretch

Begin with arms in front of you. Reach across your body with one arm and use the other arm to increase the stretch while rotating your head the opposite direction. Hold for 3 seconds and repeat to the opposite side. Do 10+ repetitions.

3. Left Shoulder Backswing Golf Stretch

Get into your golf stance with something to grab onto next to your right shoulder. Reach across with your left hand at shoulder height. Stretch option #1: rotate your neck and hips as far as you can to the left and hold for 30 seconds. Option Stretch #2: Keeping your left hand stable,

squat down by bending your knees until stretch is felt in the shoulder. Hold for 30 seconds.

4. Right Shoulder Backswing Golf Stretch

Stand with something to grab onto on your right side at shoulder height and arms length away. Reach out and hold with your right hand. Option #1 stretch: rotate your body away from your right hand until stretch is felt and hold for 30 seconds. Option stretch #2: Keeping your right hand in place, squat down by bending your knees until stretch is felt in right shoulder, chest, and arms and hold for 30 seconds.

5. Shoulder External Rotation Golf Stretch

Sit next to a table/counter and place your forearm on the surface PARALLEL TO YOUR BODY. Bend forward at the hips until you feel a strong stretch in your shoulder. Hold for 30 seconds...repeat often.

**If you experience a sharp, pinching pain at the top point of your shoulder, you should decrease how far you stretch until the pain is completely gone.

If you are unable to perform the stretch at all without this pain, you may have a shoulder impingement where a nerve or blood vessel is being physically pinched by the bones in your shoulder. If this is the case, you should not perform these stretches and should be evaluated by a medical professional. Most of the time this can be corrected in the clinic by a physical therapist. This is not a pain to ignore because if left untreated, can progress to a serious impingement requiring major surgery. So get it looked at today!

I recommend that you keep your body strong and flexible by taking time to exercise and stretch; then get out there and swing away.