

# General Rules for Injury Prevention

## 1. Do a *Warm up*.

The purpose of a warm up is to increase blood circulation to the muscular system, and prepare it to handle increased work load. In this process, the muscles have a chance to heat up which allows them to become more supple, gives them the capacity to take on increased demand, and lubricates the joints. There are many ways to *warm up* but the basic principle is always the same: low level activity. Light pre-exercise stretches should be done after the muscles are warm.

## 2. *Cool Down* when you finish your activity.

The cool down allows the heart to slowly return to its normal rate post exercise, and the muscles to cool down gradually. Incorporating a cool down, will diminish soreness and stiffness in the muscles that might otherwise occur post vigorous exercise. The cool down can be incorporated into the workout as a gradual slowing of intensity of the activity and should also **always** include stretches. Stretching the muscles post exercise is a fantastic way to not only maintain muscle length, but also to lengthen chronically tight muscles. Cool down stretches are held longer and stretch deeper than warm up stretches. Please take a look at the stretches we have included for the lower body post exercise.

**3. *Re-balance* your body.** Re-balancing is skipped more often than not, however, it is just as necessary as the warm up and cool down when it comes to injury prevention. Rebalancing will restore balance, align, and lengthen the body post exercise. In walking/jogging, the quads (the muscles on the front of the thighs) work more intensely than the hamstrings (the muscles in the back of the thighs). By doing a few quick re-balancing exercises, the body is better able to restore to the muscles to their original state with the proper division of workload and return focus to the core muscles which you use during your daily activities. The program we have designed should take not more than 5 minutes.

Injury prevention is our greatest concern at Synergy+, so we have designed this booklet with a simple warm-up and an effective cool down/re-balancing exercises appropriate for any lower body activity including walking, hiking, running, cycling, and rollerblading. These exercises are appropriate for everyone regardless of fitness and activity level.

### **DISCLAIMER**

As with any form of exercise, we highly recommend you to consult with a doctor before initiating the exercises described in this booklet. Some of the exercises included in this booklet are contraindicated for certain medical and physical conditions. Please consult with your physical therapist or doctor to clarify which exercises may not be appropriate for you.

**Synergy+**

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