



NORTHSHORE PHYSICAL THERAPY & BALANCE CENTERS

PHYSICAL THERAPY IN SPORTS: GOLF HIGHLIGHT

Physical Therapy In Sports: Golf Highlight

Posture, fitness, and flexibility are critical to help remain fit

and injury-free for any sport, particularly golf.

The achievements of professional golfers like Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Lorena Ochoa highlight a new athleticism associated with a sport that was once considered "leisurely."

Today's men and women golfers, both amateurs and professionals, are training to be stronger and more flexible, capable of far more powerful swings than ever before.



According to the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), awareness of proper posture and the importance of fitness and flexibility are just as important for weekend golfers as they are for professional athletes. Most athletes, including golfers spend thousands of dollars each year on new and improved equipment, but the most important piece of equipment is the human body.

Did you know?

- In 2005, Golf Digest calculated that the countries with most golf courses per capita were: Scotland, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, Canada, United States, Sweden, and England (countries with fewer than 500,000 people were excluded). The number of courses in new territories has been increasing rapidly.
- There are over 35 million people that play golf in the United States alone. Golfers need to take the time to work at their game and their conditioning if they want to excel in the game. Golfers should have access to a physical therapist who can assess their physical abilities and provide individualized training programs that address muscle imbalances, body mechanics, strength, posturing and cardiovascular fitness.

Golf Conditioning By Your Physical Therapist

- Just like any professional sport, there has been a significant increase in injuries among professional golfers, primarily because of the increased physical stress and intense training associated with the sport. Strength, flexibility, and endurance are just as important as exceptional driving distance and keen putting skills.
- It is now the norm, not the exception, for professional and non-professional men and women golfers to work with physical therapists to improve these factors. For golfers to improve their swing, it is vital that these programs be tailored to their individual skills. There are certain types of training that may actually hinder - not help - athletes. What works for someone else may not work for you!
- Call us today to find out what you are missing in your training as you aim to excel at your sport. We can help condition you for all sports, not just golf.



Keeping Injuries Away

Professional golfers make it look easy, but the golf swing is actually one of the most difficult and complicated movements in all of sports, requiring stability in some joints and flexibility in others. The ability to coordinate motion, strength, and function throughout the swing play a large role in preventing injuries. A better swing means a more accurate ball strike, greater distance, and less stress on the muscles and joints.

- Our physical therapists work with individuals in all sports. We have observed that recreational golfers often complaining of spine-related injuries, including upper and lower back, shoulder and neck pain. Leisure golfers attempt to swing with the speed and force of professional athletes, but did you know that with each swing 7 to 8 times a golfer's weight is directed into the spine?
- With this kind of force, it's easy to damage discs and strain muscles. Multiple core (not just abdomen) stabilization exercises are critical for golfers. Pilates programs are an example of excellent injury-prevention tools that can ultimately help golfers improve their performance.

Golfers of all ages and abilities should make a habit of the following:

- Warm up and stretch before teeing off. Spend at least 20 minutes warming up and stretching all the major muscle groups, especially the back and extremities, before practice or play. Don't wait until you are on the course before stretching because that is neither practical nor conducive to a thorough stretch.
- Don't forget the cardiovascular conditioning. Fatigue can result in poor performance due to a lack of coordinated body movements. To keep endurance up and muscles warm and conditioned, we suggest golfers walk the course whenever possible, as continued aerobic conditioning is an essential component of golf fitness.

Thank you for reading. Call your physical therapist today to see what you are missing to help you improve your game (and your swing)!

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