

DYNAMIC STRETCHING



Dynamic Stretching Part of an Effective Warm-up

A focused warm-up that includes 5-10 minutes of dynamic stretching is an important tool that young ski racers and young athletes can utilize year-round. Dynamic stretching is a form of active movement that takes your body through ranges of motion that will better prepare you for a workout or competition.

A good dynamic warm-up increases ranges of movement, along with blood and oxygen flow to your muscles, tendons and ligaments before they're called upon to do a serious workout. Dynamic stretching not only increases performance, but also helps prevent injury. As an athlete, it's a must!

To warm-up properly before a workout, start by jogging for a few minutes, progress into some dynamic stretches, and then end with a few light sprints to activate the muscles for your workout. Below is a sample warmup to give you a general idea of how to prepare a dynamic warm-up routine.

Get Muscles Moving and Warm:

- 5-minute jog to warm up your legs and body

Dynamic Stretches:

Each individual exercise will be a 10m down and back. Pick 2 from each section.

- Backwards jog, side shuffle, karaoke, normal skips, high skips
- Bear crawl, inch worm, lizard crawl with twist, knee to chest, open the gate, close the gate
- Walking deep lunges, walking side lunges, alternating sumo squats, ground sweeps, zombies
- Walking quad stretch, heel walks, toe walks, rocking toe walks, walking figure 4
- Slow bounding speed skaters, two-footed hops (looking for distance), single-leg hops left leg, single-leg hops right leg, high knees, butt kickers

Finish off with a few Light Sprints:

- 3-5 light sprints of 50m.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see our Europa Cup ELITEAMers doing some dynamic stretches.

After finishing your workout, do some static stretching along with a few more dynamic exercises and a slow jog to cool down. Taking the time to cool down and properly stretch after a workout is good practice for the body to recover efficiently and effectively. Be sure to stay well hydrated especially when workouts happen during peak hours of the day in the summer. Speaking of which, check out the Electrolyte Delight recipe below!

ELECTROLYTE DELIGHT



Electrolytes

Why are electrolytes important for the healthy athlete? Firstly, what are they?! Electrolytes are minerals that break into small, electrically charged particles called ions when they dissolve in water. They are essential to physical activity because they regulate bodily fluids and help our muscles contract. Electrolytes are lost in sweat during hard physical exercise and can create imbalances in our bodies. They may be tiny little things, but they have a big impact when it comes to maintaining a healthy body, especially for athletes!

Types of electrolytes and some of their functions:

- Sodium and Chloride- maintain fluid balance
- Calcium- aids in muscle contraction
- Magnesium- vital role in energy production
- Potassium and Phosphate- helps prevent cramps

A good source of electrolyte minerals can be found in foods like bananas, spinach, milk and yogurt. Hmmm, sounds like a great post-workout green smoothie! Sprinkling sea salt on a baked sweet potato is a good one. Other options include chocolate milk, watermelon, avocados, oranges, and almonds.

And instead of buying Gatorade or other popular electrolyte drinks (which can have unwanted additives), try making your own. Experiment with the recipe below!

Thanks to USOC Sports Dietician and Performance Chef Megan Chacosky for this recipe!

ELECTROLYTE DELIGHT

3-4 cups filtered water

3/4 cup 100% fruit juice (OJ, apple, etc)

1/4 cup fresh squeezed lemon or lime juice

1-2 TBSP real maple syrup or raw honey

1/8- 1/4 tsp. sea salt

Directions- Mix all ingredients. Refrigerate to get cold. Go work out and get sweaty. Then replenish those electrolytes with your homemade recipe!

****Tips****

- Drinking plenty of electrolytes and water before and after workouts maintains peak hydration
- Good electrolyte balance helps prevent muscle cramps and reduces fatigue.

