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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Get in the Game Without the Pain

Despite the cool windy weather, the keen golfers of the Nicola Valley were out on the Merritt Golf Course for opening day last Friday. As I drove by, I wondered to myself how many of them actually did a proper warm up before their first game of the season, thus preventing a potential injury. In order to further encourage this habit, I thought it would be appropriate to do an article describing a few warm up stretching exercises for golfers.

Quadriceps stretch:

1. Using a golf club for balance while standing, bend your right knee and grab your right foot with your right hand. Keep your thighs together, and your right knee pointing toward the ground.
2. Pull your abdominal muscles in and maintain a straight back.
3. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat two times for each side.

Hamstring stretch:

(Avoid this stretch if you have back problems.)

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Reach your hands to the sky.
3. Then, slowly bending at the waist, reach toward your toes.
4. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat two times.

Forearm stretch:

1. With your arm straight out in front of you and palm facing upward, gently pull your fingers back with your other hand. Do not let your shoulder rise up.
2. Next, with your arm straight out in front of you and your palm facing down, point your hand to the ground. Gently pull the back of this hand toward you with your other hand.
3. Hold each position four times for 15 seconds and repeat with other arm.

Knee to chest stretch:

1. Stand (you could also do this one lying on your back) with your feet shoulder-width apart.

2. Using both hands, pull one knee into your chest.
3. Hold for 30 seconds.
4. Repeat with the other knee. Do both legs two times.

Back of the shoulder stretch:

1. Place your right hand on your left shoulder.
2. Gently pull your right elbow across your body toward your left shoulder.
3. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat on the other side. Do this twice.

Shoulder stretch:

1. Hold the shaft of a golf club vertically behind your back.
2. Gently pull the club up with your top hand until you feel a slight stretch in the shoulder of your lower arm. Hold for 15 seconds. Do this twice.
3. Gently pull the club down with your bottom hand until you feel a stretch in the top shoulder and arm
4. Hold for 15 seconds. Do this twice
5. Reverse hand positions and repeat.

Squat:

(Avoid this stretch if you have knee problems.)

1. Start from a standing position with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Squat down, trying to keep your heels flat on the ground and your lower back straight.
3. Hold for 30 seconds. Do this twice.

Side bending stretch:

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold the golf club above your head with your arms straight.
3. Slowly bend to one side, without rotating, until you feel a stretch in the side of your back.
4. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat twice for each side.

These stretches are for preparing you for a game of golf, not to cure an already existing back problem. If you experience back pain that lasts more than two or three days, call your chiropractor for an evaluation.