

THE IMPORTANCE OF WARMING UP AND COOLING DOWN

No matter what your age, warming up and cooling down is an important part of your pre-game or training routine.

The **warm-up** aims to prepare the body and mind for the day. It increases the body's core temperature, which is especially important for the muscles, as they are more susceptible to injury when they are cold. Other benefits of the warm-up are your heart rate and breathing rate increases, which helps to get more oxygen to your muscles. Without oxygen, your muscles are like a car trying to drive without petrol. Not very effective!

The ideal warm-up should last for 10-15 minutes and incorporate the major muscles of the legs and arms. The intensity of the warm-up should begin at a low level and gradually build up to the intensity required during competition. We are often asked should I do static stretches in the warm-up? The latest research shows moving a muscle through its full range of movement (active stretching) is more effective than static stretching. So get those muscles moving!

Too many people neglect the **cool down** at the end of a session or game. It is just as important as the warm-up. The cool down should occur immediately after you finish and last for 10-15 minutes. The purpose of a cool down is to help the body to slow down and aid its recovery, especially helping to get rid of the waste product lactic acid.

The cool down normally consists of low intensity movements such as walking and jogging and static stretching. This helps to return the body to its normal levels and minimizes any post exercise soreness. Stretching after activity helps to ensure maximum flexibility, muscle relaxation and aid the recovery process. For the stretches to work you need to hold them for a minimum of 10 seconds and focus mainly on the muscles groups that you have used that day.

If you have any questions about what to do in your warm-up or cool down or if you are suffering from any injuries please feel free to call us at the clinic on 9580 1985 to book in for your **FREE** assessment, 1 Forbes Drive, Aspendale Gardens.

