

YOUTH

HEALTH BULLETIN



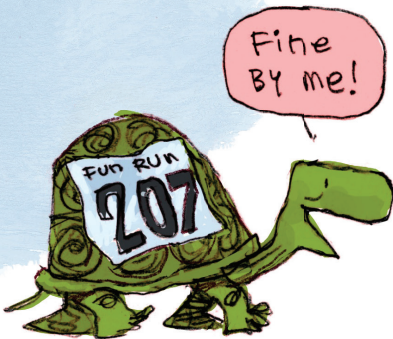
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC START SMART: WARM UP AND STRETCH!



nothing like a nice **SLOW** WARMUP.



Fine BY me!

Playing sports and doing other activities are great ways to get exercise and have fun! It is important though, to start off by getting your body ready to play. You do this by warming up and stretching. Warming up gets your muscles, heart, and lungs ready to do extra work. When you play sports or do other exercise, you move your muscles more and make them work harder than normal. That is a good thing, but if they aren't ready for it, you can get hurt or feel bad. Stretching helps your body loosen up and be ready to move and bend quickly.

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How do I warm up?

It is important to warm up your body before starting to play a sport or do heavy exercise. Warming up for five to 10 minutes helps to focus your mind and prepare your body for doing extra work.

Activities that move your whole body or as much of your body as possible at once, get your blood pumping. These can be things like jumping jacks or squat jumps (bending down to touch your toes, and then jumping up into the air with your hands above your head).

Another way to warm up is to start with the activity you are about to do but do it slower. For example, if you are going to swim, start out doing a few slow warm-up laps. Focus on your form instead of speed. If you are going for a run, warm up with a few minutes of fast walking or a light jog. If you play a sport, focus on the muscles that you are going to use the most. For example, if you play baseball, you might warm up your shoulder by throwing the ball softly first, focusing on the movement instead of using all of your power.

Stretching the right way

You want to stretch muscles that you have already spent a few minutes warming up, so that they are ready to be flexible.

When you stretch, you want to feel your muscles reach as far as they can go in a certain direction,



but not hurt. When you can feel that your muscles can't go further, do not try to make them. Hold your stretch right there for 15 to 30 seconds. Try to hold your stretch still and not bounce.

You can count out loud while holding your stretch if it helps you stay focused, or you can count in your head.

Always stretch both sides of your body. If you do a right-side stretch, always do a left-side stretch, too.

When you are stretching, remember to breathe! You want to make sure your muscles are able to get plenty of oxygen, too.

Practice to play

Besides warm-ups and stretches, practice sessions are important for many sports or activities. If you belong to a team, go to as many team practices and games as you can. This will help you and your teammates work together.

Although you should practice regularly, don't overdo it. Allow for a day off for rest between days of activity or switch up your activities. If you run a lot one day, try swimming or strength training the next day. Your doctor or coach can help you make a training plan that's right for your age, skill, and goals.

REFERENCE:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/sport-safety.html>

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

Written by:

Katherine Jury, MS

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Cartoon illustrations by:

Chris Ware (© University of Kentucky School of Human Environmental Sciences)

