

Muscular Flexibility, Strength, and Endurance

Flexibility

Flexibility is the ability of a joint to move through an entire range of motion, without hindrance.

It is an important component in preventing muscle and tendon injuries while working out or performing daily activities. Stretching is most important before and after working out and before performing any strenuous activity.

Stretching can be dangerous and can lead to muscle and ligament injuries if done improperly. Some keys to making sure your stretching properly are to hold each stretch for about 30-60 seconds, do not bounce, never place a joint in a position that it doesn't naturally reach, and never stretch a muscle when it is not warm.

If you need instruction on stretching please ask the LifeQuest staff. We would be happy to help you develop a flexibility routine that stretches all major muscle groups.

Muscular Strength

Muscular Strength is the maximum amount of force that one can generate in an isolated movement.

Muscular strength and endurance have been linked with several health benefits:

- increased bone density
- increased connective tissue strength
- increased lean body mass
- anaerobic power and capacity

There are several ways to strength train: free weights, bands of synthetic materials, selectorized equipment, or by performing exercises that use your own body weight for resistance, i.e. push ups, sit ups, and dips.

The American College of Sports Medicine recommends strength training two times per week incorporating exercises for all major muscle groups a minimum of one set, 8 to 12 repetitions. If you have specific training needs the LifeQuest staff would be happy to help you design a program to help you reach your personal goals.

Muscular Endurance

Muscular endurance is the ability of the muscles to repeatedly perform a submaximal task or to maintain a submaximal muscle contraction for extended periods of time.

Muscular endurance can be tested through a push up or sit up test. Normative values for age groups have been defined and are available. The only way to increase your muscular endurance is to perform the specific exercise to voluntary fatigue. You will find that if today you can only perform 20 push ups before failure, two days from now you will likely be able to perform more repetitions.

The body responds to the stresses it is put under. To focus your training on endurance, perform multiple sets of high repetition, low weight, resistive exercises. If you have specific training needs the LifeQuest staff would be happy to help you design a program to help you reach your personal goals.