

Healthy Habits

from Prime of Life Fitness

Warm Ups: Waste of Time or Wise Move?

Do you warm up before you work out, or just dive right in? Do you stretch before or after your workout?

New studies in the field of exercise science are shedding light on some long-accepted wisdom about warm ups and stretching. Latest research indicates that a dynamic warm-up is better than static stretches to begin your workout.

In a dynamic warm-up you move gently, using the same muscles and joints that you'll use in your workout, just in a slower, less intense manner. So if you're a runner, your warm up would be a walk or a light jog. If you're a golfer, you might walk and take a few easy practice swings.

The goal of your warm up is to elevate your body temperature so the working tissues become warm and pliable before you dive right in to the most intense part of your workout.

Static stretches before your workout, though, can be dangerous and counter-productive. Performing static stretches on cold muscles can lead to muscle strains and has been shown to make athletes in certain sports weaker during their workouts.

Action Item: For optimal safety, begin your workout with a gentle, dynamic warmup, gradually building up to your normal intensity level. And save your static [stretching](#) for the end of your workout, when your muscles are thoroughly warmed and pliable.

For more ideas about how to take the pain out of your workouts, download the [free e-book, *The All Gain, No Pain Workout*](#).



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