

Importance of Golf Fitness

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Whether you are an avid, everyday golfer or just picking up a club for the first time, here are some important things to consider. Did you know there are several factors which can determine how well you will be able to swing before you ever touch a club? The key factor is your overall golf fitness level which consists of your strength, stamina and flexibility.

I will start with what I believe to be the most important aspect to your fitness level, flexibility. Flexibility allows a golfer to reach the optimal body position through the various phases of the golf swing. A limitation in your flexibility (or tightness) may mean you cannot achieve the necessary range of motion and therefore a disruption in the swing occurs. A common flexibility problem golfers concentrate on is their core. An inflexible core can cause problems with your backswing as well as your follow-through. Did you know a more problematic area is in your hips? If you have a limited range of motion in your hips, it is almost physically impossible to avoid swaying during your backswing or sliding in during your follow-through. This is just one example of how your body can help or hurt your golf game.

The other two areas of focus are strength training and conditioning. These components have been around athletics for many years. However, golf has overlooked these areas for a variety of reasons, but mainly due to the fear of ruining a golf swing. Research has shown that having a balance of strength training, conditioning and flexibility can dramatically improve your golf game. Hand and wrist strength will improve your club control throughout the swing. Strong legs and a strong core give you the ability to maintain your posture throughout your swing. This will reduce your chances of having a poor swing and more importantly, help reduce the risk of pain or injury in your back. Research has also been conducted on the effects of upper body strength as it relates to golf. Most studies have concluded the power of your swing is generated from your upper back, chest and shoulders. A weak upper body may limit your ability to drive the ball as far as you are capable. Also, many golfers wonder if incorporating a cardio portion to their workout will help their golf game. I contend that your ability to finish your round directly relates to how well conditioned you are. If you neglect the conditioning portion of your workout, it is difficult to finish strong and enjoy your entire round!

Many golfers play daily without ever going through a golf-specific workout program and do very well. However, if you want to improve your golf game and your overall health, I

would highly encourage you to contact a Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) certified golf fitness instructor who can help you identify and correct your physical weaknesses. The TPI has identified a variety of golf specific tests which can show you how each area of your body may hinder your swing. For optimal results, the new Sanford POWER Center offers both a certified golf fitness instructor and two certified Golf Tec instructors who can work together to help you achieve your perfect swing!



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