

## **Incorporate Movement Preparation into your Pregame Routine**

When it comes to preparing for a workout or athletic activity, there has been a recent paradigm shift. Gone are the days of stretching to get warmed up. Movement preparation, or an active warmup, has taken its place.

Movement preparation better prepares the body for the activity about to take place. This enhances performance, and also reduces injury risk.

A light jog is always a great way to warmup for any activity. In the weight room, some time on the elliptical, rower or stationary bike works well too. Weighted arm swings, body weight or bar squats, and standing rotations with light weight will adequately prepare the body.

For athletics, a more in depth warmup will be needed. Athletic events require power, explosiveness, moving in and out of stretched positions quickly, and multi-directional mobility. Here, we will cover some basic movements that can be used for any activity, and can make up a full warmup if need be.

- Leg swings: Swing one leg front and back 20-30 times, extending the reach each time. Repeat with the other leg. Next, move to side to side swings, again, 20-30 times.
- High knee runs: Move slow, concentrate on reaching the knees higher, staying light on the toes
- Butt kicks: Jog slowly, making sure the heel strikes the middle of the glute. This will warm up the hamstrings and stretch the hip flexors a bit.
- Shuffles: Stay low, on the balls of the feet. Adjust your height based on your ready position in game play
- Carioca: When swinging the rear leg behind, keep the chest squared to open the hip. On the cross in front, bring the knee high toward the chest.
- Toe jogs: Stay on the balls of your feet and toes only to fire the calf muscles.
- Heel walks: Walk slow, never letting the toes hit the ground. This will stretch the calves and ready the tibialis (muscle on the front of the shin).
- Knee lifts to chest: Take one step forward, left one knee, and pull it to your chest with your hands. Lift high on your toes on the plant leg. Alternate legs for 10 reps on each.
- Frankenstein walks: Place your hands out in front of you chest high. With each step, swing one leg up, trying to touch your hand. Keep your leg straight, keep the arms still, and stay tall with your back. If you are unable to reach your hand, just swing each leg up as high as it goes. Alternate legs for 10 reps on each.