

## Top Tips for a healthier lifestyle

### The benefits of... **stretching and flexibility**

Being flexible simply means to be able to move a muscle through its complete range of motion around a joint freely. Regular stretching increases a muscles ability to do this, allowing greater and easier movement and functionality.

The benefits of flexibility include:

- Improved coordination between opposing muscles
- Improvements in muscle length (important for posture)
- Increased blood supply to muscle during exercise
- Helps the body to relax
- Less soreness after exercise and therefore reduces chance of injury
- Regular stretching allows maintenance of flexibility as we age

There are two main ways of stretching muscles and improving flexibility:

1. **Range of Motion** - this is simply mimicking the movement of any exercise before doing it. Used primarily as a warm-up.
2. **Static** – this is stretching in order to lengthen a muscle and increase its range of motion. Best done when the muscle is already warmed up as stretching a COLD muscle can result in injury!!

*Note: females are naturally more flexible than males!!*

