
Never Get Injured Again

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Let's get one thing straight.

The reason you get injured isn't a lack of flexibility.

In fact you're probably getting injured because you've got too much flexibility....even if you haven't got much range of motion.

Confused?

Let me explain.

If you can put your body into a position you need strength in that position.

Do me a favour, stand up and lift your knee as close to your chest as you can, chances are if you're anywhere around average you can get your knee up pretty high.

That's the range of motion of your hip in this particular plane of motion.

Now do you imagine if you had to step up to that height without pushing off the other foot or using your hands to help you, you could do it?

For 99.9% of people the answer will be "*Not a chance.*"

And herein lies the problem.

You do not have strength throughout the full range of motion of the joint. Which means when you inevitably do put your self in a position like this, or at least close to this, and then apply load to the joint or muscle its likelihood of being injured goes through the roof.

But Sam, I hear you cry, I thought it was muscle tightness which leads to an increased risk of injury.

Hold on, I'm getting to that.

Once your nervous system detects that a joint lacks the strength to hold itself in place throughout its entire range of motion, it panics.

It recruits every other muscle in the vicinity to jump in and lend a hand holding the joint in place.

Most of these muscles are not designed for this task and so get tired and annoyed very quickly. This leads to tightness in these muscles because they are working so hard.

However these muscles were never designed to actually move the joint, so as a safety precaution against catastrophic injury the nervous system decides it's easier just to stop the joint moving as that way it can't ever be placed in a position in which it doesn't have strength.

So it locks the joint down, by reducing range of motion to prevent it from falling out.

Why Yoga Is Not The Answer

Most people's reaction to this lack of range of motion is to stretch the joint and muscles thinking this will improve things.

Hence the modern obsession with yoga, but...

Imagine your muscle is an elastic band. What happens as you stretch it and make it longer?

It gets thinner. And thinner equals weaker.

As the muscles get weaker your joint becomes more unstable.

So stretching is the last thing you want to be doing.

So What Is The Answer?

If instead you were to strengthen the weak muscles so you gained strength throughout that entire range of motion your nervous system would relax as the joint became more stable. Meaning the surrounding muscles could also relax as the primary muscle starts to do its job. And you GAIN flexibility as the nervous releases the now stable joint.

Now when you consider that every joint also affects the joint above and below it you can start to see how a lack of strength in one point can affect the entire body.

Now it's beyond the scope of this document to work through your entire body scanning for weaknesses. (That's exactly what I do in my coaching programs however) but I can give you some pointers as to the biggest problems I see.

Baby Got Back

Your bum and more specifically the muscles of the hips are the most important muscles in the whole body when it comes to correct posture and injury avoidance.

Why?

Because they're the biggest muscles wrapped around the biggest joint. They also happen to be bang slap in the middle of the body and so affect everything above and below them as well.

They need to work perfectly and that means you must have strength throughout the full range of motion of your hip or your going to have problems.

Testing The Glutes

To do this test you'll need a mate.

1. Lie on your side in as straight a line as you can, so the hips are pushed forwards.
2. Then turn the foot of the uppermost leg so its toes are pointing towards the floor as much as you can and raise the leg as high as you can straight up towards the ceiling.
3. Now get your mate to push down on that leg with a lot of force whilst you try to resist with all your strength.

Does your leg sink quite a way before you can adequately resist the downward force your mate is applying?

If so congratulations we've just established that your range of motion is much greater than your strength in this area and your nervous system is probably having a panic attack every time you take step. This will be having chock on effects up and down the body and means you are much more likely to get injured.

Luckily it's easy to fix.

Practice single leg squats forcing your knee not to cave as you do them.

You can see a video on how to do these [here >>](#)

If you want my help with this I run a coaching program designed to help you avoid injury, improve performance and ultimately get you in the best shape of your life which can be found at my website [here >>](#)