

Feeling stiff? When stretching may not be the right answer...

Have you ever been told that you should stretch your tight hamstring? Wondering why your daily stretching routine hasn't helped? Discouraged due to recurring injuries despite your effort in a proper warm-up stretching routine? Unfortunately, managing that tight hamstring may not be as simple as stretching alone, and this applies to every muscle in your body.

Stretching is often used as an effective way to help treat a muscle that has undergone physiological change causing it to shorten. A truly shortened muscle is able to fully relax; yet it remains short. This typically affects your flexibility and is most noticeable during specific activities.

When stretching becomes ineffective is when we try to stretch a muscle that feels tight, but has not truly shortened physiologically. A muscle that is tight but not "short" is often a muscle that is unable to fully relax due to some underlying cause. Rather than stretching this muscle, the most appropriate way to treat it is to find the reason why it is unable to relax.

The reason for why a muscle will not relax may vary person to person. It may be due to a previous injury to the muscle or tendon. It may be protecting other areas from further harm. It may be due to weakness within the muscle itself.

If you find yourself frequently stretching with no success, visit us at the Human Performance Centre for a personalized treatment approach to get you back feeling the way you deserve.



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