

# Foam Rolling & **Self Myofascial Release**

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# INTRODUCTION

Foam rolling, or self-myofascial release, is superior to static stretching in that foam rolling addresses specific muscle dysfunction in two ways. On a microscopic level, dysfunctional muscle fibers become entangled and lose the ability to glide and relax. As a group, these segments of abnormally functioning muscle fibers become facilitated and as they accumulate, they form into a trigger point. As a result, these areas lose that ability to move fluid through the circulatory and lymphatic systems, becoming painful with altered contraction. As these areas progress and the altered contractions become more pronounced, the entire muscle will become facilitated and over-contracted. This creates abnormal global movement patterns of the joint associated with that particular muscle.

Foam rolling addresses these areas of facilitated muscle by compressing and releasing pressure on the muscle fibers thereby increasing the ability of circulatory and lymphatic fluids to move in and out of the tissue.

Static stretching however, attempts to elongate entire muscle groups including areas of facilitated muscle fibers as well as the tendons and other tissues. This is often contrary to what the central nervous system will allow. As a muscle elongates and loads, muscle spindles within the muscle activate and reflexively shortens muscle tissue. As a result of continued tension on the muscle, microscopic tissue damage may result, leading to further facilitated tissues.



## GASTRONEMIUS / SOLEUS

- Balance on hands, rolling from knee to ankle
- Perform exercises with toes pointed up, out, and in
- Progress with increased pressure by crossing one leg over the other



Starting Position



Beginner Movement



Advanced Movement



# HAMSTRINGS

- Balance on hands, rolling from glute to the knee
- Progress with increased pressure by crossing one leg over the other



Starting Position



Beginner Movement



Advanced Movement



## ILIOTIBIAL BAND

- Begin with roller just inferior to iliac crest - gluteus medius
- Continue inferior to the greater trochanter down to lateral knee
- Rotate leg to change emphasis



Beginner Movement



Advanced Movement



## QUADRICEPS

- Balance on elbows, face down with quadriceps on roller
- Roll from upper hip down to knee
- Increase pressure by crossing one leg over the other



Beginner Movement



Advanced Movement



## GLUTES AND PIRIFORMIS

- Sit on side of hip area with ankle of opposite foot across knee
- Balance on hand and one foot
- Roll from top of flute to middle and rock from side to side



Beginner Movement



Advanced Movement





## PERENNIALS

- Balance on hands, roll from knee to ankle
- Perform while shifting from anterior shin to lateral leg





## TIBIALIS ANTERIOR

- Balance on hands, roll from knee to ankle





## LATISSIMUS DORSI/TERES MINOR

- Lie on side with shoulders perpendicular to the ground
- With arm bent, roll out teres minor
- Roll latissimus dorsi from top to bottom





## THORACIC MOBILITY

- Begin with arms crossed, roll from upper to lower thoracic spine
- Roll from right to left to emphasize each side
- Place hands behind head and extend spine over roller



Starting Position



Advanced Movement



Intermediate Movement