

Care and Protection of the Things We Need to Produce Great Food

- Our raw and finished food products
 - Refrigeration, hot holding, air-tight containers
- Our equipment
 - Knives, ovens, pans
- Our workspaces
 - Cleaning, sanitation
- Care and protection of our most important asset is frequently lacking
 - General wellness
 - Mental health
 - Physical health



Culinary Stretching

Physical Challenges of a Culinary Career

Typical Culinary Movement Conditions

Movement Programs in Other Industries

Benefits of warmup and stretching

Basic postural guidance (three point weight balance on foot, hips over feet, posture checks while working)

Demonstration and guided practice –full body Stretching



Physical Challenges of a Culinary Career

- Awareness and training for acute injuries
 - Burns and cuts
 - Less attention for other physical challenges
- Standing for long periods
- Fine motor movements
 - High demands on upper body and smaller muscle groups
- Repetitive motion
- Prep tables built for 5 ft-7 in person
- Posture issues
- Lifting of heavy items
 - Awkward mechanics

Typical Culinary Movement Conditions

- Hip and shoulder pain
- Spine and neck disorders
- Hand, wrist pain and stiffness
- Culinary posture
 - Shoulders rounded
 - Neck forward





What Other Industries Are Doing

- Warehousing and Construction
 - Physically demanding jobs
- Start of Shift Warmup/Calisthenics
 - Movement becomes part of the workplace culture
- Why do companies do this?
 - Because they care about their employees?
 - Reduced incidence of injury and related costs
 - Minimizes work disruption
 - It's cost effective

Why Stretching?

- Myofascial pain
 - Deep, aching pain in a muscle
 - Pain that doesn't go away or gets worse
 - A tender knot in a muscle
 - Trouble sleeping due to pain
 - A general feeling of being not well, called malaise
 - Tiredness
- Stretching can help





Stretching 101

- Short warmup before stretching
- Stretch to the point of resistance
 - Disregard the the “no pain, no gain” mantra
- Slow, controlled movements
 - Dwell on any points of tightness
- We will be doing isometric stretching
 - Muscles are engaged without moving



Benefits of Warming Up Before Stretching

- Increase heart rate and blood flow to muscles
- Increase body temperature
 - Warm muscles contract more efficiently than cold muscles
- Joints loosen up
- Your nervous system connects with your muscles
- You will be able to work more comfortably and efficiently

Time to move

- Standing posture check
 - Three points of balance of each foot
 - Big toe, heel and mid outsole
 - Hips centered over feet
- Full body warmup
 - Focus on hands, wrists, upper body
 - Do it right
 - Slow, controlled movement
 - Experiment with different directions, angles
 - Dwell on any points of tightness
 - Don't stretch to the point of pain
- Front Neck Semi-Circles
 - Great for a mid-shift stretch
- Standing deep squats



Post Isometric Relaxation (PIR)

- How to do PIR
 - Place target muscle into a light stretch
 - Isometrically contract muscle for 4-5 seconds
 - As muscle relaxes, exhale and move muscle to next comfort barrier
- Scientific research supports PIR for myofascial pain relief
 - immediate pain relief in 94%, lasting pain relief in 63%, as well as lasting relief of point tenderness in 23% of the sites treated¹



¹ Myofascial pain: relief by post-isometric relaxation, K Lewit, D G Simons, Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation . 1984 Aug;65(8):452-6

Forearm, Wrist and Finger Stretches

- Radial- Ulnar Stretches
- Wrist Stretches
- Finger Stretches
- Thumb Stretches



Neck and Shoulders

- Neck Flexion
- Shoulder Flexibility Check
- Scapular Stabilization (ITYW)
- Shoulder Hyperextension
- Bicep Stretch
- Shoulder horizontal flexion



Back, pelvis and hips

- Trunk Flexion
- Trunk Rotation
- Trunk Extension
- Hip Rotation
- Quad Stretch



Your Challenge

- Use stretching to improve your wellness
- Promote cultural change
- Introduce stretching in the kitchen as you grow into leadership positions



Want to learn more

- Recommended books from the St Paul College massage and exercise science faculty
 - Aaron Mattes' Specific Stretching for Everyone (\$20)
 - Aaron Mattes' Active Isolated Strengthening (\$40)
- \$60 for the pair on Amazon
 - Less than the cost of a decent knife
 - An investment in your health

