
Elastic Muscle

The length of your bones is set by your genetic heritage and childhood nutrition. It cannot be altered, except by arduous, long-term surgery and drugs. But the range of motion of your limbs and spine is determined more by the habitual movements you make. It can be improved dramatically by simply changing those movements.

Knowing how to improve your range of motion is crucial to athletic power. The length of your stride, the degree you can bend and twist without strain, the arc through which you can move your arms, even your speed of movement, all depend on the flexibility of your joints and the length and elasticity of your muscles. Muscles cannot apply their full power unless you can move limbs freely throughout their full range.

We all know well how a stiff neck or back or shoulder restricts our movements. Yet many athletes we ask, don't make the mental connection between the temporary limits imposed on movement by stiff muscles and joints, and the permanent limits imposed on performance by poor flexibility.

Most athletes do stretch, but often in a perfunctory or incorrect way, and with only a vague notion of the benefits. Many consider stretching an unimportant part of their training. I hope to convince you otherwise because, without good flexibility, you will *never* be able to apply your full power.

