

STRETCHING

Just five minutes of stretching at the end of your exercise session will help prevent injury, burn calories, maintain flexibility and even reduce the amount of muscle soreness you'll feel tomorrow! And although 5 minutes is good, 10, 15 or 20 minutes is even better.

The most important things to remember about stretching are:

- *Never stretch a cold muscle.* Always make sure you've broken a sweat before doing any big stretches.
- *Stretch to the point where you feel resistance, but no pain.* If it hurts, you're probably stretching too far. Ease off.
- *Stretch to your maximum position, then hold it for 15 seconds.* Static stretching (staying in one position) is the healthiest and safest way to stretch. Stretch as far as you can without feeling pain, and hold that position without moving for at least 15 seconds. Then relax and slowly ease off.