

GOLF FITNESS

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Advice from the Pros



Edited by GOLFGURLS.com
with CHAPMAN DEERING

GOLF FITNESS: Advice From The Pros
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INTRODUCTION

The following articles were written by professional golf instructors and fitness experts in an effort to help today's recreational golfer stay fit, play well, improve and enjoy the wonderful game of golf.

But the written word is no substitute for one-to-one guidance with your golf fitness instructor. We encourage you to take these ideas and make them a part of your golf fitness routine.

May every hole be a birdie.

~ the Editors at GolfGurls.com

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CHAPTER ONE

CAN TODAY'S GOLFER DO WITHOUT GOLF FITNESS AND EXERCISE?

*Just how important is golf fitness and exercise to a golfer today?
Can a good amateur or even professional golfer do without it
and still maximize their potential?*

Will they still be able to enjoy their game and see constant improvements or at least consistency in their quality of play?

Those golfers who ask these sorts of questions about golf fitness and exercise sometimes nostalgically cast their minds back to the so called good old days of the golf game when the game was strictly a leisure sport where one hardly needed to break into a sweat to thoroughly enjoy themselves on the course.

The modern golf game has changed dramatically and permanently. Golf is still very much the leisure sport that has given pleasure to thousands over the years even with the addition of golf fitness and exercise programs. If anything, these golf fitness and exercise programs have given many more people a chance to master the game much faster and really get to enjoy it.

Assuming that a golfer would want to skip golf fitness and exercise they would find

themselves faced with one major problem. Increasingly they would find themselves frustrated and would be faced with a situation where it would seem that the standard of their game is dropping.

Actually what would be happening is that the pressure of playing against golfers involved in golf fitness and exercise programs would be taking its' toll.

There are few things that are as infuriating and frustrating as seeing your opponent effortlessly run rings around you on the course. The secret? They have taken golf fitness and exercise seriously and you have not.

In all likelihood the golfer who is determined to do without golf fitness and exercises, just like in the old days, will increasingly find themselves in a position where they enjoy their game less and less. To prepare your body to properly perform specific movements takes time and practice. The effort spent improving your golf swing will pay off on the course. Through exercise and practice, you will be able to slip into the proper address position and perform an effortless, powerful golf swing and feel just as if you were sliding your hand into a warm soft glove.

CHAPTER TWO

A GOLF SPECIFIC WORKOUT WILL ENERGIZE YOUR GOLF GAME

A Golf specific workout designed specifically for your physical limitations will give you the greatest results in the quickest amount of time. You may not be interested in this approach, but I can tell you quite confidently, this is the missing link to your golf swing improvement. Your current physical capabilities dictate your golf swing. There is no other way to put it.

There are certain physical requirements that must be met to make an optimal golf swing with maximum power and efficiency. Have you tried to make a full backswing only to feel tight, restricted and tense doing so? Do you think the answer is hitting more balls or taking more lessons?

The answer is a golf specific workout designed to eliminate your swing faults and poor golf swing mechanics. The minute you improve these physical limitations, your golf swing will transform right in front of your eyes.

This may sound dramatic, but it's true. When you're able to make a full backswing (90 degree shoulder turn, with a 45 degree hip turn) with no muscular tension or restrictions, you will be able to generate maximum clubhead speed and power into the golf ball.

You will also be able to repeat this for 18 holes. This will result in less mishits, more fairways hit and scores that will drop quickly. Doesn't that sound like the outcome you have been hoping for, for a long time?

One of the most important components of a golf specific workout is core rotational strength and flexibility. The golf swing is a rotate back and a rotate through. This entails your core to have optimal strength and flexibility from a rotational standpoint. All other exercises should be a secondary priority when designing a golf specific workout.

The beauty of a golf specific workout is it can be done in your home with minimal equipment. For less than \$80, you can have a complete golf specific workout gym in your home, saving you hundreds of dollars a year in gym memberships, and also giving you back more time to play golf due to the convenience of doing it in your home with no travel time involved.

Knowing you're doing a golf specific workout that will enhance your golf game will motivate you to stick with it. Adherence is key to your success. So many people start fitness programs, only to quit before they saw any results. Don't fall into the same trap.

Understanding it will take a little time for your body to respond to your golf specific workout and will allow you to have realistic expectations. But I can tell you, the results may show up very quickly if your current physical conditioning is below par.

It's never too late to embark on a golf specific workout program. I have seen golfers in their 80's, who have increased their driving distance by up to 60 yards! They were not able to get the ball air born, and now can make a bigger turn hitting the ball more solid and much further.

This is something you can't ignore!

Your golf improvement program should definitely incorporate practice, a few lessons to get a basic understanding of golf swing mechanics and most importantly a golf specific workout.

CHAPTER THREE

5 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR GOLF FITNESS PROGRAM MORE “FUNCTIONAL”

Many of the top touring professionals know that winning on the tour today takes much more than a great game of golf. The field is far too competitive to leave any of the key contributing elements to chance. Preparing their bodies for play is a critical component to a golfer's success under the most competitive conditions.

How you structure your golf fitness program is essential to your overall performance on and off the course. Here are some ways you can ensure you are getting the most out of your training program while utilizing the strength of your core as a building block for success.

Specific to golf - Get rid of the traditional gym machines which focus on isolating specific muscle groups and require no stabilization work by additional muscle groups. Integrate some old and new fitness tools which allow you to move your body in a more functional setting. These include cable machines, fitness balls, medicine balls, balance disks, traditional dumbbells and don't forget about the power of using your own bodyweight.

Increase Core Stability - More efficient movement creates more efficient power.

Golfers maintain an athletic posture over long periods of time and require both trunk and core stabilization and endurance. By increasing your strength and endurance in the core region of your body, you provide both a solid base of support for rotation in addition to the proper transfer of power throughout the body.

Vary your Planes of Motion - A golf fitness program will have varying planes of motion as part of your weekly strength routine. Planes of movement include front to back motions, left to right and rotational exercises. Some good examples include multi-directional lunges and medicine ball wood chops.*

Integrate Multiple Elements into Each Exercise - Each weekly workout should address all of the important elements for golf including flexibility, core development, balance, strength and power. Integrated training techniques will develop your skills in each of these areas and produce a whole new level of play. Examples of integration include a 5 minute dynamic warm up, roughly 30 minute strength routine, followed by 10 to 15 minutes of stretches. Each workout can be broken down into strength development for several weeks, core stabilization for several weeks, and power development as you move into peak season.

Progress from Simple to Complex - Begin your exercise program by mastering the simplest forms of exercises first. Progress your golf training design to increase in complexity as your body grows and develops and as you learn proper stabilization of your core region. An example of progression for the legs may be to perform two leg ball squats prior to performing the one leg version.

Before any golfer, pro or otherwise, picks up a club, they look at the capability of their body versus the requirements of the swing. Utilize these 5 tips to create a golf specific program that brings out the best in you and the best in your golf game. Make this golf season your most productive yet!

** Don't know how an exercise is executed? We recommend referring to YouTube Videos to watch how these exercises are done.*

CHAPTER FOUR

10 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR ENERGY INSTANTLY WITH A GOLF PERFORMANCE DIET

A golf conditioning program should always be accompanied by a solid golf nutrition plan. In essence, what you eat determines how you play. So, which foods produce champions and which foods hinder play?

It goes without saying that proper nutrition is important for all of us. But, if you are serious about shaving valuable strokes off your scorecard, you need to make some tough decisions on seeing your diet through. If you travel for golf, or play in frequent tournaments, it is important not to fall into the trap of “settling” for fast food or a quick bag of chips or chocolate bar. Make a commitment to use some or all of the following tips and your energy will reach new heights in your next round.

- 1 Avoid caffeine and alcohol.** Both of these are diuretics and cause fluid loss. They also both affect performance. Coffee can over stimulate your mind or your muscles, making your performance uncontrolled. Excessive consumption of alcohol severely affects your coordination.
- 2 Avoid large amounts of food in the two hours leading up to tee time.** Food in your digestive system diverts blood away from your brain and muscles, affecting concentration and physical performance.

A meal two to three hours before play is preferred.

- 3 Don't skip meals.** Golfers need that slow and steady release of energy to see them through difficult or long hours of play. Smaller meals are better to help increase metabolism.
- 4 Eat 5 to 6 small meals throughout the day.** This gives your body the nutrition it needs to last.
- 5 Drink lots of water.** Think in terms of 8 to 10 glasses each day. Continue throughout your round to stay hydrated especially during the summer months.
- 6 Combine carbohydrates, proteins and fats at each meal.** This aides in overall digestion and ensures you are getting the proper nutrients.
- 7 Bring a snack or bag lunch.** Beverage carts are not known for healthy choices, so don't put yourself in a position to feel forced to rely on them.
- 8 Avoid high processed foods or sugar based foods.** They tend to raise blood sugar levels quickly and, then, drop rapidly causing fatigue.
- 9 Stick with the basics.** Don't try new foods just before you play. Stick with what you know your body responds to well.
- 10 Keep it simple.** There is no need to make elaborate meals or go to any great extent in preparation. A piece of fruit and bag of nuts will go a long way in replenishing energy when you need it.

As a golfer, especially if you are of a championship caliber, it is essential to have a wide variety of complex carbohydrates to maintain your energy through an 18-hole match or a 72-hole tournament.

Mentally your brain needs to stay conditioned to tell your body what to do, not to mention calculating distances, swing strength and maintaining focus. Follow these 10 tips and watch your scorecard drop to new lows.

CHAPTER FIVE

BALANCE AND YOUR GOLF GAME

Maintaining your balance throughout your swing can make a tremendous improvement in your golf game.

Golf professionals all have different opinions on improving your golf game, but most agree on one thing. Unless you keep your balance during the entire swing, you simply cannot have a good stroke. Keeping your balance should be easy right? If you are so tense that you're crushing your club, tensing your entire body and trying to hit the ball too hard, it's nearly impossible.

As a beginner playing golf, you're told quite often to not hit the ball too hard. Staying focused and hitting the ball with the center of the club will give you a longer shot than a swing that doesn't hit at the club's center, no matter how hard you swing. Establishing your balance frees you to hit the ball correctly.

Keeping your head still will allow you to focus on the ball. With your eyes on the ball, this creates a foundation for keeping you balanced. It is imperative that you keep your head perfectly still and ensure it doesn't move during your swing. Movements or distractions that disrupt your balance mean you lose focus on the ball.

Keeping your body relaxed is the key. Relaxing your muscles and body will prevent your head from moving during the swing.

Use a mirror to watch yourself. Or better yet, have someone take a video of your swinging the club, and then watch the results. You will quickly realize that you need to relax in order to keep your head still while you swing. Work on keeping your head in the same position from start to finish through your swing. Doing this will let you focus on the ball and you will turn your hands at the right time.

If you can master keeping your head completely still, you'll see several problems disappear altogether. Eventually, you will grip your club correctly every time, keeping your balance and keeping your head still, without even thinking.

A correctly formed follow through will also mean that you can keep your balance.

Concentrating on your balance, and keeping your head still will prevent you from swinging too hard or pulling your club away. The amount of strength you put into your swing will be just right, and you'll stay relaxed and finish successfully with a smooth swing.

Enjoying a great game of golf requires keeping your balance. This isn't a quick fix, it'll take time but you should start seeing improvement quickly. Focus on maintaining your balance, and your head in one position, and in almost no time at all you will be enjoying such an improvement your friends will be asking for your secrets.

CHAPTER SIX

EFFECTIVE GOLF FITNESS EQUIPMENT

If you are like most golfers, you have purchased hundreds of dollars of golf training equipment. How many gimmicky golf training aids do you have lying around? Now I want you to picture something. Put all the training aids together in your mind and picture using them all at the same time. What do you think would be the results?

I don't think it would be pretty and that's my point.

It's so easy to look for the 'magic bullet'. But the magic bullet is staring you in the face. You heard that right, it's YOU!

You swing the club and play the game...so why wouldn't you spend the time and money on improving YOU?

So stop buying the latest greatest training aid and focus on improving your own physical limitations.

So let's get back to golf training equipment.

I'd like to make a couple of suggestions.

I'm all for swinging a weighted club. You couldn't get more golf-specific than that. That would be a purchase that will give you a high return.

Next on the list would be exercise tubing. It only costs approximately \$20-\$25 and would be another very wise investment. The beauty of tubing is the ability to break down the golf swing into as many phases as you like and do resistance (tubing) training specific to that phase.

The next piece of golf training equipment is the stability ball. Any golfer with a bad back should have one. You can do so many stretches on it, and you can have this in your office, home or even when you travel since it's deflatable.

And lastly, hand weights. Another term is dumbbells. You can do dozens of golf-specific exercises with a simple pair of dumbbells. The cost is 50 cents a pound and they are very portable.

Other than the above golf training equipment, you could get one, maybe two trainings aids specific to your swing fault.

For example, if you're a slicer, the Inside Approach is a great device to use right on the range.

But dump all the old, ineffective training aids you have in your garage and focus on what will give you the greatest return on investment (both time and money).

And remember; if you are doing something that's not working...stop! Move onto something new and different. Don't get in a rut. Catch yourself before this happens.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CORE TRAINING FIX FOR GOLFERS

Core training for golfers is a must for developing maximum power and distance. As in all athletics, the core is your engine. Everything comes from the core! The modern golf swing is definitely a “core-focused” movement; unlike the older swing technique of lower body action dominant.

You probably have heard the term core training for golfers, but do you know what it means and how to implement it into your golf performance routine?

Your core is the middle section of your body, specifically your abdominal region. If your core is weak or restricted in rotational flexibility, you will have a minimal chance at hitting long drives.

I see this all the time in the senior golfer. No core strength or flexibility, resulting in a HUGE decrease in yardage off the tee. The senior golfer will say things like, “I’ve lost so much yardage off the tee the past few years”; “I use to hit my drives 50 yards further”; “If I could only get 20 more yards I’d be happy”.

This can be a very frustrating situation; but one that can be remedied easily and quickly and in the convenience of your home with minimal equipment. Improving your core rotational strength and flexibility does not require equipment in a gym or club.

You can do exercises as simple as grabbing a single handweight, getting in your golf posture, and rotating back and through holding the handweight in front of your stomach. You can also do stretches right in your office chair. Sitting upright and reaching around your chair, turning as far as you can to the right, then turning to the left.

These are just some very basic core training for golfers exercises, but they would give you a “kickstart” into doing a complete program for your core.

You will be amazed at how much power you acquire in your swing when you implement a core training for golfers program. Even if that’s all you did for the time-being, you’d be way ahead of the game.

But my guess is once you start slow and easy, you’ll get the “runners high” and want to do more. This does not have to be a gut-busting routine! You can spend as little as 10 minutes a couple of times a week and see results.

Don’t put it off any longer!

Start your core training for golfers today!

CHAPTER EIGHT

CORE FLEXIBILITY TRAINING IMPROVES GOLF SWING POWER AND DISTANCE

Core flexibility training is critical if you want to improve your golf swing power and driving distance. Your core is the engine to your swing. If your core is inflexible you will not be able to make a full backswing with minimal tension.

Picture your core being the middle of your body. That's as simple as you can get it. It is mainly your abdominals, but can also include glutes and lower back. This area of your body is the most susceptible to injury.

That's why the majority of amateur golfers have a low back injury at some point in their golfing career. They have never focused on core flexibility training, as well as core strength training for more power.

To produce more power and distance in your swing does not mean swinging harder with your arms. Haven't you tried that before? If so, did you hit it farther? I'll bet not.

Just like hitting a baseball, tennis ball or even throwing the discus in track and field,

you use your core for most of your power. You rotate with your core to create torque, then you unleash that stored up energy into the hit, whether it be a baseball, tennis ball or golf ball.

The more efficient you become with using your core, arms, shoulders and hands in a sequenced motion, the added distance will come quite easily. You'll be shocked at how quickly your driving distance increases.

Core flexibility training incorporates "rotation." Golf stretching in this manner warrants the best results in the shortest amount of time!

Every core flexibility stretch you do should involve some form of rotating. This is very important since the golf swing is a rotate (turn) back and a rotate (turn) forward. The more range of motion you can achieve in your core area the more power you will produce.

Here's a little test you can do while your sitting there reading this chapter!

Put your arms across your chest, keep your eyes focused straight ahead. Now rotate as far as you can to the right and make a note of how far it is. Did you get to a 90 degree shoulder turn (that's where you need to be.) Then rotate as far as you can to the left. How far did you get?

This will be a "wake-up" call for many of you. If you find you can't rotate at least 70 degrees of center, you'll have no chance at maximizing your power and driving distance.

We do this simple core flexibility test seated to remove cheating of the lower body. If you were standing, it would be very easy to rotate your hips and get a bigger shoulder rotation.

Being seated removes this compensation!

A seated rotation is "true" core flexibility and range of motion.

I hope I've educated you on the importance of core flexibility training to improve golf swing power and distance.

CHAPTER NINE

CORE EXERCISE TO IMPROVE YOUR DRIVING DISTANCE FAST

Core exercise for golf. You've probably heard this phrase mentioned on the television a time or to. This is the area that many pros work on the most with his or her golf trainer and it seems to be working for them. The winning pros are driving the ball longer and straighter than ever before.

When we talk about core exercise for golf, the key term that needs to be thrown in there is rotational. You see, the golf swing is a turn (or rotate) back and a turn (or rotate) through. So any core exercise for golf you do should incorporate rotational strength and flexibility.

One of the most difficult things for golfers to do is take a step back from their game and examine what they can do to improve performance. Strength training is a perfect example. What almost all golfers overlook is developing the strength and awareness of the region of their body that can lead them to their best level no matter what the age or ability.

That area is the CORE!

This area starts roughly at your belly button and goes up to the bottom of your sternum. It is the engine of your body and awareness of your core affects golf the most.

Think of it as the link in the chain that needs to be the strongest, not the weakest.

Greg Norman used to say when he wanted to hit it long he would get his belly button or belt buckle turning faster; which in other words is his or your core.

Two simple core exercises for golf that will quickly strengthen your core are **dead bugs** and **bird dogs**. These would be your initial exercises since I mentioned early on in this article you need to work from a rotational standpoint to strengthen your core specific to golf.*

Once you've accomplished the above exercises, you can move on to **standing cable rotations and planks**. This will hit your rotational strength right away.

You can then progress up to standing on your feet doing several different variations of rotational movements with a single dumbbell, standing upright and also in your golf posture.

When you approach your golf improvement program with a core exercise for golf, you will see your driving distance sky rocket past your playing partners!

** Editor's note: To view demonstrations of these exercises, check out [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and do a search for each specific exercise.*

CHAPTER TEN

CORE GOLF WORKOUT FOR A POWERFUL GOLF SWING

A core golf workout that produces a power golf swing is one that focuses on rotation. The primary movement in the golf swing is rotating your upper body back, then rotating it through to the finish. That is why it is critical you implement exercises that involve rotational strength and flexibility

There is a lot of confusion with golfers on what to focus on when trying to improve power in the golf swing. **Your power comes from your core.** Just like in any other sport, your core is the engine to the swing.

Participating in a core golf workout for more power in your golf swing does not take fancy equipment or for that matter a lot of time. Getting creative with what you have laying around your house or even your office will do just fine.

A good example is at your office. Your sitting in your chair in front of your computer and your back gets stiff. Don't just let it get stiffer, do a rotational stretch right there on the spot in your chair. Reach around the back of your chair with one hand, and leverage the other hand against your thighs to rotate as far as you can. Hold it for 10 seconds and go to the other side.

How simple was that? Try it right now as you're reading this article!

That would be considered one exercise for your core golf workout that will improve

your power golf swing.

Do this several times a day, and try to rotate farther each time you do it. You'll notice you can go much farther the more you do it.

How about a strength exercise for your core?

Get creative. Grab anything you have in your home or office that you can hold in your hands. While sitting or standing, extend your arms straight out in front of you and while looking straight ahead, rotate with your arms as far as you can to the right holding this object. Now rotate to the left. Do this a total of 20 times.

You'll notice you will be able to rotate farther and farther after each rotation!

How hard was that? No gym. No fancy equipment. Just a can of soup, or even a half gallon of milk. If you've got some hand weights gathering dust, that's even better. Try to increase your weight as time goes on.

Hopefully you're getting the idea of what a core golf workout is that will improve your power golf swing quickly.

As a golfer, always pay attention to the physical requirements of the golf swing. What position your body is in. What movement your body goes through. And at what rate of speed.

When you approach your golf exercise and golf stretching program with this mindset you're on your way to a power golf swing that will be the envy of your foursome.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

EXERCISES FOR GOLFERS PAY HUGE DIVIDENDS

Exercises for golfers may seem like an oxymoron, but I'm here to tell they are most definitely not. Golf is physical! Golf causes injury! Golf can very easily break down the body! To hit the ball maximum distance, your body has to have a higher level of golf specific strength and flexibility.

The above statements are fact.

To play your best golf you need to implement exercises for golfers as soon as possible. The sooner you start, the sooner you will see results on the course.

So what's the difference between going to the gym and plopping down on machines and doing exercises for golfers?

First off...do you sit when you play golf?

Then why would you sit in a "controlled" machine thinking it will improve your golf?

Golf is "on your feet" and in a dynamic position (golf posture.)

Because the demands for golf are so unique, you need to approach your golf improvement from a different angle than just going into a gym and thinking it will help your golf game.

Exercises for golfers doesn't just mean strength exercises. You've got to do golf stretching exercises as well.

Whenever I hear a golfer say he/she needs to stretch more...my first thought is "they are missing the boat." Golf stretching without golf exercise is not permanent flexibility.

Here's an example for you.

Stretch a rubber band. Now stretch it more and more. What happens to the rubber band? It gets brittle and eventually breaks.

Picture your muscles just like that rubber band.

The winning combination is golf exercise and golf stretching. This will give you the best results.

When putting together your exercises for a golfers program, take a look at the body position required to make a mechanically sound swing.

Once you realize this dynamic and very unique position, you can do golf exercises specific to this position.

Things to remember.

- Do the majority of your golf exercises on your feet.
- Do them in your golf posture if at all possible.
- Keep your knees flexed, just like your golf swing.
- Do as many rotational exercises as possible.
- Make sure to do the follow through side of the swing.
- Do a high enough repetition to promote golf muscular endurance.

Exercises for golfers can be fun and keep you motivated to stick with your program. Adherence is the main culprit for lack of results. Like any fitness or weight loss program, if you don't do it consistently you won't see the results.

Staying motivated by picturing the "end-result" on the course will be a huge help. Envision you on that first tee a more powerful and fit golfer. Picture blasting your drives by all your playing partners. And lastly, paint a strong visual of you having the lowest score consistently when you play in your normal golf groups.

I hope you now have a better understanding of exercises for golfers.

CHAPTER TWELVE

FITNESS FOR GOLF IS THE KEY TO REJUVENATING YOUR GOLF GAME

Fitness for golf is prevalent at every level. You hear about it all the time on the television and even teaching pros are talking more about the importance of fitness for golf. The reason being is the belief that your “physical limitations” are keeping you from optimal swing mechanics, power, distance and accuracy. For the aging golfer this is most prevalent.

Without a golf-specific exercise program, it is virtually impossible to maintain and/or improve swing mechanics. The human body declines rapidly without stress being put on it.

Muscles and bones need stress and pressure on them to remain strong, stable and injury-free. Without this stress the body weakens and breaks down quickly, resulting in a rapid decline in strength and flexibility.

This is death to your golf swing!

The old adage “use it or lose it” is very true. Haven’t you experienced a time when you were too busy with family obligations, work commitments and other stress-related issues and you felt you didn’t have the time to devote to your health and fitness?

What happened shortly after that?

Did your energy level go down? Did you start getting aches and pains and even newfound stiffnesses? How about your golf game? Did you feel like you didn't have the same amount of umph on the ball?

This is that declining strength and flexibility I'm talking about. And the ONLY way to stop this from happening is maintaining some sort of fitness for golf program if it pertains to your golf game.

There are also two forms of fitness. "General fitness" and "sport-specific" or fitness for golf in regards to you as a golfer.

There is a major difference between these two forms of fitness.

One that is very common is going into a gym, plopping down on the machines and isolating one muscle group at a time in a controlled environment. Picture for instance an abdominal machine. You lie down in it, grasp fixed handles that guide you through a set range of motion.

That would be considered "general fitness."

On the other hand, picture standing (just like you do in golf) holding a single hand weight (dumbbell) straight out in front of you, and rotating (turning) back and through just like your golf swing. That is an exercise that would be considered fitness for golf. It directly benefits your rotational strength AND flexibility, enabling you to make a bigger turn with more power.

This level of fitness rapidly declines with the older golfer. Abdominal strength and flexibility if not tested often, will decrease, and the ability to make a full backswing with stored energy will be less and less, resulting in a massive reduction in power output, therefore distance.

So the next time you're on the course and you get frustrated about your lack of distance off the tee, ask yourself when was the last time you worked on your BODY? Your answer will dictate your performance on a daily basis.

If you want to play your best golf, you need to exercise consistently.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ACHIEVE BETTER POSTURE AND IMPROVE YOUR NEXT ROUND

Golfers struggling to improve their performance on the course must typically focus on the fundamentals to get to a more consistent level of play. Often one of the most overlooked areas of play is the postural address or setup position of the swing. Most people are aware of the importance of their setup routine; however, many overlook the less addressed area of posture.

Proper posture and foot placement allows you to maintain your balance throughout the swing. Balance throughout the swing allows you to hit the ball squarely in the center of the clubface. Also proper body alignment can help to create a setup that leads to control. Postural alignment is an integral part of the quality of your golf swing.

Good postural alignment helps you create power and control the direction of the shot. Key pre-swing elements such as ball position and body alignment create the conditions that lead to control. The body angles that you create at address directly influence the path and angle on which you swing the club. They influence the body positions and movements; thus your setup directly affects all elements of the swing.

A physical fitness assessment can give you much information on achieving good

posture throughout your swing. Don't overlook the advantages of muscular strength and flexibility when considering the golf swing. These advantages can make the difference between playing great golf and constantly struggling to maintain your current level of play.

By identifying areas of weakness, you are able to direct your fitness regimen to retrain old muscle habits, improve muscle memory, coordinate spinal movement and thus improve your posture. Concentrating on the muscles that control the spine angle, your center of gravity and balance, you will improve the muscles necessary to correct current swing faults. This will obviously lead to better golf performance.

Retraining posture through correct technique, proper exercises and stretch routines can be perhaps the best thing you can do to improve your game.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

GOLF EXERCISES DON'T HAVE TO BE GRUELING

Golf exercises are viewed by the majority of golfers as “work.” That is why it is so difficult to convince golfers that golf exercises can be fun and don’t have to wipe you out physically.

I’ve worked with many golfers in person and with my online golf performance sites, who were shocked to realize how much fun and motivating golf exercises can be.

Don’t picture going into a sweaty, smelly gym and lifting god-awful weights. No, picture doing golf exercises that mimic your golf swing and have a direct impact on your power, accuracy and consistency.

This new outlook will be a huge motivating factor in the success of your golf exercise program. When you envision the end result, it makes it all worthwhile.

It’s also a double benefit!

Doing golf exercises that closely mimic your golf swing, will not only improve the strength and flexibility of your golf swing quickly, but reinforce your swing technique off the course. This double benefit will transform your game.

Get ready for powerful drives, accurate approach shots, and scores that will plummet.

Golf exercises can be done with very affordable and portable equipment saving you time, money and convenience. The thought of going to a gym; or having to join a gym to get started will keep you from starting indefinitely.

Your golf exercises can be done in your home, office or even a hotel room with exercise tubing, a pair of handweights, and maybe a stability ball if you want to get a little more creative.

They are not golf exercises if they are on a machine (especially seated ones.) How can a seated machine help your golf swing, when your golf swing is done on your feet, in a very dynamic position require timing, sequence of motion, and stability to name a few?

So next time your golfing buddy says he's doing golf exercises, ask him (her) what they're doing specifically. If he/she says they go to the gym and use the machines, you won't have to say anymore.

Fueled with the above, affordable equipment you are ready to embark on your golf exercises.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A SIMPLE EXERCISE FOR YOUR LOWER BACK

*Back exercise and golf. Doesn't that sound like a common denominator?
Of all the injuries in golf, the low back is the most frequent.*

The golf swing is one of the most (if not the most) stressful movements on the lower back. Picture this. You're in a static position at the start; then you try to rotate your upper body as far as you can go, while keeping the lower body as stable as you can.

This movement all by itself puts tremendous stress on the lower back. If you have a low level of rotational flexibility, you are at HIGH RISK for low back injuries.

Now picture having the strength to "uncoil" that backswing, maintaining your golf posture at between 80-100 mph. If you have not participated in a back exercise for golf, you will not be able to generate any power at impact, therefore your driving distance is inadequate.

Does this sound familiar?

It should. I see this all the time on the golf course. Especially with the senior golfers. They have physically declined over the years and have not done any back exercises for golf and can't generate and clubhead speed.

There is hope!

To remove the threat of low back injury and improve your ability to turn back and turn through with power, you just need to do a couple of simple back exercises for golf.

One example of a back exercise for golf that you should be doing several times a day is the **Lying Leg Crossover**.

Here's what you do:

Lie on your back with your legs extended.

Raise one leg and bend at the knee to 90 degrees and the hip to 90 degrees.

Clasp your raised leg with both hands and pull it towards the opposite shoulder.

Cross that leg over your extended leg, while your opposite shoulder stays on ground.

Pull and feel the stretch in your butt and lower back.

Hold and repeat once more.

Switch legs and do the opposite side.

This is a very simple back exercise for golf and no equipment is required.

Just do this back exercise for golf every day and you'll see a HUGE improvement!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

GOLF FITNESS EXERCISES WILL HELP YOUR SHORT GAME

The connection between golf fitness exercises and the short game often goes unnoticed. It is usually thought golf fitness exercises help us generate more clubhead speed, add more distance to our drives, hit longer iron shots, and play more consistently from the fairway. In this mix of benefits the short game is often lost when discussing golf fitness. Believe it or not golf fitness exercises can benefit your short game in a big way.

The idea of golf fitness exercises and their benefit to short game play came into focus during a conversation with PGA Teaching professional Christopher Smith. Christopher is a great instructor; he works with Nike Golf, is rated as a top instructor in the Pacific Northwest, and was recently featured in *Golf Digest Magazine*. Not too long ago Christopher and I filmed a couple of golf instruction videos together. One of the videos was on the short game.

The video we filmed was not your “typical” short game video, where we instructed you to place your feet here, clubface in this position, hands forward of the ball, etc, etc. It was a much better approach in the video and discussed concepts of the short game. Christopher presented ways to think about short game shots, and processes to improve your short game.

One area he touched upon was how finite of an athletic action chipping and pitching are in the big picture. For example, the muscular strength in the hands, forearms, and wrists are integral parts of the short game. In addition so are the motor skills of the nerves and muscles coordinating the movements involved in such golf shots.

Christopher's question to me in the video was in relation to these exact topics. He flat out asked me:

“Sean, are there golf fitness exercises that can help in the short game? I find as an instructor, physical limitations are showing up in some of my student's short game. This is limiting their ability to perform chips, pitches, and most shots from 100 yards in. What are your thoughts?”

I told Christopher there are absolutely golf fitness exercises that can benefit any golfer's short game. I first discussed the hands, wrists, and forearms. To perform chip shots and pitches the hands, wrists, and forearms come into play. In order to execute such shots consistently and correctly a level of strength is needed within these muscles. If the muscles within these parts of the body are weak and lack endurance, the ability to set the hands where they need to be, and hold the clubface in the correct position can be compromised.

The easiest way to correct this problem on a physical level is to implement a series of golf fitness exercises for the hands, wrists, and forearms.* These exercises will increase the muscular strength and endurance in these body parts. The end result will be an improvement in their short game on a physical level.

The second problem area indicated by Christopher with his student's short game centered upon the finite motor skills of these shots. These types of shots require a very high level of motor control. Motor control is centered upon the interaction of the brain, nerves, and muscles. It is essentially your brain telling your body what to do, how to do it, and in what order. This is a result of your brain coordinating movements of your muscles through the nervous system. The execution of your brain “telling your body what to do” can be either efficient or inefficient.

If your brain, nervous system, and muscles are operating efficiently, the execution of finite motor control movements such as short game shots are easy. On the other hand, if your brain telling your nerves, and consequently your muscles what to do is inefficient. The execution of finite motor control movements, again such as short game shots will be more difficult.

Motor control is the second area in which golf fitness exercises can be of benefit to the short game. The types of golf fitness exercise beneficial to the short game are balance exercises.

These types of golf fitness exercises incorporate your brain, nerves, and muscles. They have many benefits when it comes to the golf swing. Outside the benefit of creating higher levels of muscular strength and endurance, these exercises assist in motor control.

Motor control is the interaction of your brain, nerves, and muscles. The interaction can either be efficient or inefficient. Efficient motor control is good, especially for finite muscular activities such as short game shots. Golf fitness balance exercises “challenge” your nervous and muscular system interaction. Over time as these two systems are “challenged” through exercise they become more efficient. Essentially they operate together more efficiently. Resulting in higher levels of motor control and the ability to execute finite motor skills (i.e. short game golf shots.)

Golf fitness exercises are often overlooked as a benefit to short game shots. The reality is different than many individuals think. Golf fitness exercises can assist the golfer’s short game on a physical level. It does this in two ways; golf fitness exercises increase the strength in the muscles involved in short game shots. Secondly, the short game is a finite motor control activity. Golf fitness balance exercises can improve a golfer’s motor control abilities, allowing them to execute finite activities such as short game shots with greater ease. Bottom line, golf fitness exercises can benefit every aspect of the golf swing and the amateur’s golf game.

** To see how a golf fitness exercise is executed we recommend searching YouTube videos.*

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

A GOLF EXERCISE PROGRAM WILL MAKE YOU A WINNER!

It's no secret that a golf exercise program can put you heads and tails above your playing partners and competitors. Why do you think all the Pros are doing it? Golf is no longer just the leisure game it used to be. It is now recognized as an athletic sport. As with all other athletic sports, your body's strength plays a crucial part in how well you play the game.

FACT: A stronger body plays better golf. Most strength-building workouts can be beneficial to some degree, but a golf exercise program will enable you to hit longer -- and straighter -- drives with less effort and hit more accurate shots, which will consequently lower your scores.

GOLF TIP: Strengthen Your Back and Prevent Low Back Pain -- so that you can play 18 holes without fatigue

Did you know that doing even just one exercise will greatly improve the strength of your back so that you will be able to play 18 holes, or hit balls all day without any pain?

I call this powerful little exercise the "Lying Superman."

You won't believe the amazing difference this exercise can make in your strength until you actually do it -- so go for it! All you have to do is lie on your stomach on the floor with your hands at your sides. Raise both your upper body (chest), arms and legs as high as you can. Hold it for a count of 10. And that's it! Just do this simple exercise for 2 sets every day and you can say goodbye to low back pain!

Playing golf at an optimum level requires muscular strength, power, and endurance. Contrary to what most people think, long practice sessions and hitting hundreds of balls will not improve these components. In fact, they will only result in physical injuries (from overuse) and a great deal of frustration.

Participating in a golf exercise program is the answer!