



On a Roll :

How Foam Rolling Can Improve Performance and Ease Chronic Pain

Do your muscles constantly feel stiff and inflexible? Did you ever wish that you could have your own personal massage therapist available to you at all times?

Maybe it's time for you to get on a roll, a foam roll that is. Self Myofascial Release, or Foam Rolling, is a technique that can help aid in recovery and improve mobility, function and performance. The process was born out of a need by athletic trainers, therapists and strength coaches who needed a way to address their athletes and patients requirements for soft tissue massage, but time and/or money did not allow for a therapist's regular treatment. By having them use a 6" round roll made of "ethafoam", they were now able to perform treatments independently, allowing for quicker recovery and more benefit from session to session.



During training and activity, muscle tissue is broken down at the cellular level. During the natural repair process, inelastic tissue is laid down and physiological waste products are produced. Fascia, the connective tissue that envelopes all of muscles, can also become adhered to the muscle, altering the dynamics and fluidity of your muscle contractions. This can also happen from chronic inactivity and overload patterns such as poor posture and sitting at a desk all day. This all can lead to muscles being overactive or hypertonic, causing lack of mobility and strength.

Foam Rolling works by undoing these unwanted processes by breaking up adhesions and tender points (knots). The pressure of the muscle meeting the roller causes an inhibition of the nervous system in that area, thereby allowing for a relaxation and more freedom of movement. Almost all muscles of the body can be treated this way, other than directly on the low back and/or neck.



Other than using the foam rolls, tennis balls, baker's rolling pins, and special massage balls can also be used to create a similar response. Because exaggerated muscle tension and muscular imbalances cause major undue stress on the joints, many orthopedic issues can be resolved with correct use of this technique.

Anecdotally, we have seen clients who have recovered from debilitating chronic pain within weeks of being on a corrective training program implementing the rollers. We've also seen individuals whose flexibility and range of motion by 150-200% within minutes!

To find out how you can benefit from Foam Rolling, contact us to set up an individualized Corrective Flexibility program based on your specific needs.



*Eric D'Agati is the Founder and Director of **ONE Human Performance**, a fitness and wellness company based in both Pine Brook and at The North Jersey Y in Wayne. To find out more about Eric and **ONE Human Performance**, visit www.onehumanperformance.com or call 973-882-3366.*

