

What is Foam Rolling?

Foam rolling is a self-myofascial release technique. The fascial is the soft tissue that holds the muscles together. Foam rolling helps to align the fibers of the fascia in the direction of the muscle movement to decrease restrictions.

What are the benefits?

Foam rolling has a variety of benefits when done on a regular basis. The greatest benefit is increased range of motion and flexibility. Foam rolling can also decrease muscle and back pain. Decreasing the restrictions and increasing flexibility can help to improve performance and posture.

What equipment is required?

The most commonly used equipment is a foam roller or "stick". The foam roller is a cylinder of dense foam that uses body weight to perform the technique. The "stick" is a handheld tool that can be used on one's self or to assist others.

If a foam roller or "stick" is not available, many other household items can be used. Items most commonly used are soccer balls, lacrosse balls, and tennis balls. If those are not available, items like a rolling pin or frozen water bottle can be used instead.

Which body part can be foam rolled?

The most commonly foam rolled spot is the lower body. When rolling the lower body, the front, side and back of the thigh, the calves, and gluteal muscles are easily treated with a foam roller or handheld tool. Upper body foam rolling focuses more on the upper back and shoulders in order to improve postural restrictions. Handheld tools can be used for the upper arm and forearms.

How to foam roll?

When using a foam roller, bodyweight is used against the roller. Laying down on the foam roller is the easiest way to accomplish this. Once laying on the foam roller, gently move back and forth on the roller as it moves along the body part. When using a stick roller, press the middle of the stick over the body part and roll the stick up and down. When tight or uncomfortable areas are found, focus the treatment on those areas. The following videos can be used as a reference:

[Lower Body Foam Rolling](#)

[Upper Body Foam Rolling](#)

[Lower Body using Roller Stick](#)