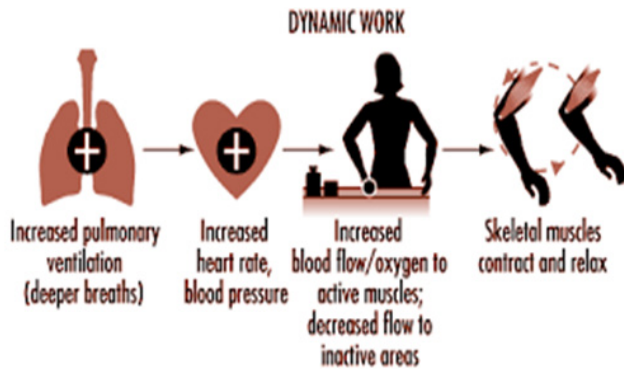




Northeast Public Power Association Safety Corner

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Stretch and Flex Awareness

Stretching is a vital part of a healthy fitness regimen. Pre-shift stretching and warm-up exercises reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries by reducing fatigue, improving muscular balance and posture, and improving muscle coordination.

Stretching Reduces Fatigue

- Stretching increases blood supply and nutrients to joint structures and soft tissues.
- Stretching increases soft tissue temperature and allows for greater elasticity of tissues.
- Stretching increases joint synovial fluid (lubricant for bones and articular cartilage) that allows greater range of motion and reduces joint degeneration.
- Stretching increases a joint's ability to move through a greater range of motion with less energy required to do so.
- Stretching decreases tightness and resistance in tendons and muscles.

Stretching Improves Muscular Balance and Posture

- Soft tissue structures often adapted poorly to effects of gravity and poor postural habits.
- Stretching realigns soft tissue structures, thus reducing effort to achieve & maintain good posture in activities of daily living.

Stretching Improves Muscle Coordination

- Stretching enhances nerve impulse velocity (the time it takes an impulse to travel to the brain and back to the muscle).
- Stretching helps opposing muscle groups work in a more coordinated fashion.



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