



Rugby players guide to Foam Rolling

Rugby is a physically demanding sport with varied fitness attributes required throughout the game. Players need to have the ability to accelerate and sprint at maximal pace for short periods whilst maintaining a fast striding pace for the duration of the average move. They need to have the ability to recover quickly in order to repeat not just acceleration but also being able to jump and change direction all whilst using the upper body muscles for passing and during contact with other players. The physicality of the sport can lead to injuries through the demands placed on the body but also from impact injuries such as AC joint separations, shoulder dislocations and contusions, along with hamstring strains and ankle sprains due to bursts of speed and rapid changes in direction.

Players are now more aware of their bodies and the need to take care and prep for the season both in the gym, with stretching and with the help of therapists. The use of foam rolling in Rugby is even more prevalent now, with media coverage of England teams and Saracens using it with their players in the dressing rooms and in training.

Pre – Gen Preparation for Training and Competition.

Warming up is often overlooked but should be part of your injury prevention routine.

Alongside a dynamic warm up to increase the temperature of muscles the blood flow and oxygen to muscles, foam rolling can increase range of motion at joints and to prepare the muscle and fascia for the demand it is about to undertake.

By rolling specific muscle groups which will be used during a training session, you can actually delay the onset of Fatigue, increase flexibility and a significantly increase the Range of Motion of the muscle.

Re gen: Cool Down

Often overlooked in favour of sitting down and resting after a training session or a game. It is an important part of removing waste products such as lactic acid. Foam rolling as part of a cool down, can reduce the negative effects of delayed onset muscle soreness while not having a negative effect on results or performance, allowing more frequent exercise sessions.

Foam Rolling Techniques for Rugby

It is important to roll the body from the ground up rather than focus on just one area of tightness. To Foam Roll each area, you use a slow systematic roll of about 1 inch per second. (See individual exercises for variations).

If while rolling you come across a knotty sore spot. Hold the pressure statically on that point for 20 – 30 seconds.

Below are suggested areas to address to Prep the body for training or game day.



☒ CALF



4 Roll Forward/Back



4 Spans

☒ QUADRICEPS



4 Roll Forward/Back



4 Knee Bends

☒ HIP/GLUTES



4 Roll Forward/Back



4 Cross Friction

☒ SIDE TORSO



4 Rolls Back/Forward



4 Arm Sweep