

# NERANG PHYSIOTHERAPY

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The *difference* is obvious

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## Cramp

I often get asked the question, what causes cramp? Cramp is not a simple thing like a lack of Magnesium or dehydration.

It is also interesting to note that cramping often happens when we are at rest or early in the morning or after much activity as in towards the end of a sports game.

So why does it happen at rest? Well the main reason for that is that cramping occurs in the presence of a lack of oxygen in the tissues. This results from poor control of the blood flow to the tissues by the Sympathetic nervous system.

When we are at rest the natural rate of blood flow will slow as we are not active. If the nervous system controlling blood flow is under-functioning then the natural rate will be below normal rate.

This leads to tissues receiving less blood flow than normal, bringing less oxygen to the tissue resulting in them cramping.

A slower blood flow rate also results in less water and magnesium getting to the tissues, so all these factors now result in cramping. Treating all 3 will help reduce cramps.

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## Strength does not mean injury-free

There is a common perception these days that if you are strong in the muscles you have less chance of being injured.

This is not necessarily true. Just because we have big muscles does not mean we can avoid things like muscle strains, ankle sprains and others. The main reason is that the more strength we gain the more flexibility we lose.

In order to keep the body functioning well and remain pain-free, one of the best things we can do is focus on flexibility. If we are able to give in to mechanical stress we can prevent a lot of sprains and strains.

Generally as we build muscle bulk we begin to lose the space around the muscle, the sheath of the muscle being mostly in-elastic, therefore it can only give so much before it becomes so tight

around a muscle that it begins to strangle the muscle.

This process can actually weaken the muscle as it runs out of space in which to contract fully. This weakness then leaves one susceptible to injury.

So there seems to be a pattern of increasing strength leading to increased tightness and then weakness. So too much strengthening can actually result in weakness...ironic I know.

So ideally we want to strengthen in accordance with our flexibility. What we can do is measure our natural range of motion before we embark on any strengthening programme and then keep measuring this as the programme continues. If we get to a point where we are losing our range of motion that will be OUR natural limit.

Go any further and we are then getting into the phase of tightness that leaves us unable to give into mechanical stress and injury can occur. Stay flexible.

## News

Summer Gould, Nutritionist now working with us will be offering a FREE 30 minute consult to talk about your nutrition and your health as related to general health, pain and inflammation. For your FREE consult give us a call on 5596 4711 and get your life back on track.

## EXERCISE OF THE MONTH:

### The Triangle

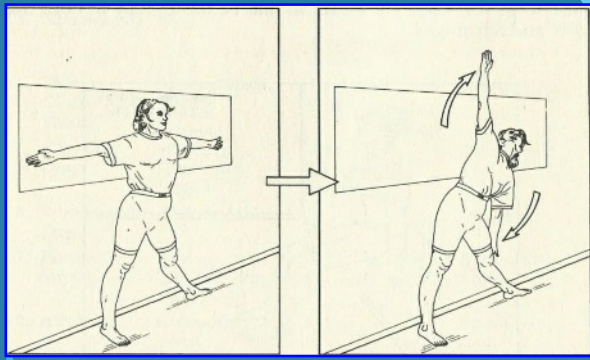
The triangle is getting your lower back, hips, and thighs to work together without having any one group of muscles opting out or taking over.

**Going to the left:** Stand back to the wall arms out to your sides and feet wider than your hips. Turn your left foot out to the left 90 degrees or as close as you can to 90 degrees so that you do not rotate your right hip counterclockwise in any manner.

Keeping your hips squarely against the wall, drop your left arm down behind your left knee and extend the right arm above your head, palm facing out.

Look up at the back of your hand as you hold this position and breathe deeply in through the nose and out through the mouth. Hold this position for 45 to 60 seconds or until you feel a release in the right side of your body, all the time keeping your thighs tight.

Do exactly the opposite for the right side. If you do this once a day at least you can aid in keeping your back flexible. Do not do this if it causes pain, rather see your Physiotherapist and once fixed you can do this.



## BRAIN TEASER OF THE MONTH

1. Every two weeks a man sits down and writes two words on 60 sheets paper. Why does he do this?
2. A man opened the door, screamed, and then was found dead a few minutes later. No gunshots were heard in the area. What happened?

Answers below.

### Have a laugh



## Healthy living column Health tips:

A glass of wine for a sore throat?

The study from The Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry is the first to research wine's effects on germs in the mouth. They found that both red and white wine kill the bacteria that cause dental plaque and sore throats. And red wine is slightly more effective in fighting bacteria than white wine is.

What was more surprising was that the scientists learned that neither wine's alcohol nor its acidity is responsible for its antibacterial properties. Instead, it's due to a group of organic compounds found in the alcoholic beverage.

The researchers isolated the compounds, including lactic, malic, succinic and tartaric acids. They then neutralized the compounds' acidity and tested their bacteria-fighting capabilities.

They learned that, when isolated, these compounds were more effective at killing bacteria than wine. Each compound killed more than 99.9% of the oral streptococci and Streptococcus pyogenes bacteria they were inoculated with. Because of this, the researchers think that something present in wine may decrease its ability to kill bacteria.

Wine? Wine not!

### Tip of the month:

If you enjoy walking for health, try adding one more dimension to the walk. Apart from eyeing the lovely scenery and breathing in the fresh air, for a minute or 2 every now and then during the walk, focus on one part of your body and feel what it is doing. For example you could focus on how your right heel is landing on the surface, or how your left hip feels when you push off. These little focal points will incorporate your brain a bit more and add to the health benefits of walking.

Answer:  
1. The man owns a small business with 60 employees. He is signing his name on their payroll checks.  
2. The man was on an aeroplane when he fell to his death after opening the door.