

5 Simple Moves To Eliminate Pain, and Take back your life!!

By: Keith Scott

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Keith Scott is devoted to helping people of all ages, abilities, and levels realize their true potential. His unique ability to serve the person's total physical health along with their performance enhancement goals has made him a highly sought after and extremely unique specialist in the field. What distinguishes Keith from other trainers and coaches is that his approach combines correcting physical dysfunctions and managing injuries, while at the same time maintaining focus in helping people excel in their sport and/or their daily lives.

Keith holds National Certifications in both the sports medicine field and the sports performance field, and in addition, has an advanced degree in exercise science and sports medicine. Keith backs up his certifications and education with over 18 years of working "in-the-trenches" in both a sports medicine and sports performance setting. He has worked along the side of some of the top orthopedic physicians, physiatrists, physical therapists, performance coaches and various coaches from all sports throughout the years, which have provided a tremendous hands-on education to go along with his formal education in the field. Keith has experience working directly with athletes at all levels: youth, high school, college, Olympic hopefuls, and top professionals.

In working as a *Sports Performance Specialist*, Keith has had the opportunity to help hundreds of athletes each year realize their true athletic potential through his unique programs and tireless dedication to their needs and goals. Athletes

that train with Keith have excelled during their sports season and continue to do so as they play at the next level. As a *Certified Athletic Trainer*, Keith specializes in sports injury recognition, rehabilitation, therapeutic exercise, and physical assessment.

Keith is a regular contributor to Men's Fitness Magazine and continues to write fitness related articles locally as well.

Today, Keith's passion is continuing to apply his knowledge and experience in helping everyone across the board with their fitness and health goals. Total health, outstanding fitness and personal excellence are always a given when working with Keith Scott.

Introduction:

Everyone experiences painful joints or muscles throughout their lives. Some live with pain on a daily basis, while others 'hurt' during times of physical stress.

Whether that pain comes from over doing it, or an acute injury such as a sprain or strain...we all experience pain in our lives.

While not all injuries can be prevented, doing the right things can certainly decrease the chances of severe injury and at the very least soften the pain associated with them.

Chronic pain sufferers are everywhere. Doctor's offices and physical therapy clinics are filled to the brim with people that live day after day with painful joints, and muscles. How people learn to deal with pain and dysfunction is the key to living pain free or just treating the symptoms.

While most will reach for the Advil or other pain medications that are out there, others just simply "ignore" the pain, and live with it, becoming worse as time goes on.

There are other options however.

In this report, I am going to show you 5 simple things that anyone can do to help alleviate painful joints and muscles, quickly and effectively.

1. Soft-Tissue Work

Foam Rolling

The benefits of good, quality soft-tissue work are enormous. I have witnessed incredible results from people that incorporate soft-tissue work into their daily lives. Before we go on, what is soft-tissue work anyway?

To answer that we have to understand what soft-tissue is and how it works to a degree.

What is soft-tissue?

Soft-tissue consists of the muscles, muscle tendons, ligaments, and connective tissue found throughout the body. This soft-tissue is affected by almost everything we do and can be influenced positively or negatively depending on how we treat our bodies.

When you injure yourself, or when a physical 'issue' pops up, your body will find a way to protect itself, so the situation does not worsen. When the body does this, it forms knots, adhesions, and other things that will inhibit you from moving too much and making things worse. While this is a good thing, after the healing is done, you are still left with those painful knots and adhesions. Most people just live with them.

Foam Rolling:

Foam rolling, to be technical, is a form of self-myofascial release (SMR). SMR allows the muscle to relax and this in turn can help rid the areas of the unwanted scarring, knots, and ugly adhesions. Muscles need to be strong and supple at the same time through an entire range of motion. Foam rolling helps the body achieve this. Just as I believe that stretching is essential for good overall muscle health, foam rolling is in the same category. While stretching elongates the muscle tissue, foam rolling helps to ensure proper muscle quality.

Foam rollers come in a few different shapes and sizes. Made from a dense piece of cylindrical foam, you can usually purchase foam rollers in 1 foot or 3 foot lengths. Most round rollers are 6 inches around.

Foam rolling is simple to learn and with practice, you can set up a routine for your whole body within a short period.

If you do not have a foam roller, I highly recommend you get one ASAP. They are cheap, and can last for years. Do a quick Google search, and you can find a company that will ship one right to your front door.

Technique and protocol:

Foam Rolling can be done to most major muscle groups in the body. Once you learn to do one area, you simply apply the same technique and protocol to the other muscle groups and you are on your way!

Simply place the foam roller under the middle of the muscle and then apply pressure from your body. Once you are in the right spot, “roll” your body up and down for the entire length of the muscle. If you find that painful spot (which you probably will) stop rolling, and try to apply a little more pressure and hold this for about 3 seconds. Continue this for about a minute or more and repeat on the other side.

Check out the example below on how to foam roll your calves:

Foam Rolling the Calves:

- Start with the foam roller under your upper to middle calf.
- Place your right leg over your left leg (shin) to increase the pressure.
- Roll the entire calf from top to bottom.
- Once you find a “hot spot,” apply pressure for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Continue to roll top to bottom, repeating the process again.
- Repeat this on the opposite leg.



Again, you can apply these same principles and techniques to the other areas of your body, such as your hamstrings, quadriceps, upper arms, and upper back. Remember: Think of Foam Rolling as a self-massage technique. The cool part is that YOU control the action and receive the benefits immediately. I have used foam rollers for years to help not only myself, but 100s of clients as well deal with all kinds of pain and physical issues.

2. Stretching

(Flexibility)

I know it seems obvious and you have probably heard that you need to stretch all of the time. Stretching is valuable and important, however, many people go over board with it. As with most things, it is *part* of the answer. Although I never spend huge amounts of time with my clients on flexibility, it is important to over all physical health and pain reduction. If you are not flexible or worse, overly tight (as most people are), you will have more knots and adhesions, which lead to more pain. Keeping the major muscle groups flexible will ensure pain relief and better overall functioning of your entire body.

Stretching Rules:

- a. Stretch each muscle group for 20-30 seconds. Once you get into your 'stretch,' hold the position for about 30 seconds. This will ensure that permanent changes are taking place in the connective tissue and will help improve flexibility much faster.
- b. Do not bounce. Hold still while you stretch. Although bouncing may seem logical and make it appear that you are increasing your range of motion, you may just be doing damage to your muscle, tendon, and ligaments.
Don't bounce!
- c. Don't Hurt! Stretching will usually be a little uncomfortable, especially in the beginning. However, it should not be painful. Many people stretch until they reach a point of pain. This is not a good practice. Your body will try to fight back if you go too far, and this will only cause more pain and more tightness. You should feel a stretch and some discomfort, but never in the form of pain.
- d. Stretch *after* your workout or thorough warm up. Too many people replace their warm up with stretching. Stretching cold tissue is never a good idea and will lead to injury, pain and a waste of your time. Warm up for at least 10 minutes first. Better yet, stretch at the end of your workout. Studies suggest that stretching before a workout really doesn't help prevent injury at all. If you stretch after, your tissue will be warm and supple and much easier to stretch and make gains in your flexibility.

If you don't have time to stretch your entire body, that is OK. Below I have included some stretches for the major parts of your body that I feel are essential and important for full body health and pain reduction.

Just by incorporating a little stretching into your routine each day, you will start to feel better physically. Remember, it is essential to combine all of these "pain reduction" techniques to your overall program. Together, they will work small miracles.

Ankles and Lower Legs:

1. Calf Stretch (Knees straight)

- Start by standing facing a wall about 2 to 3 feet away.
- Take one step forward with your left foot and place your hands on the wall in front of you.
- Bend your left knee slightly
- Lean forward, against the wall until you feel a stretch in your right calf muscle.
- Make sure to keep both heels flat on the ground.
- Keep your right knee (back leg) straight and hold still for 20-25 seconds.
- Repeat on the opposite leg.



2. Calf Stretch to heel raise – knee bent

- Stand on a small ledge with the balls of both feet in contact with the ledge only. (Heels should be hanging over the back of the ledge)
- Knees should slightly bent for the entire exercise.
- Push up on both feet, so your heels are raised in the air and balls of your feet are the only thing that is contact with the ledge.
- Slowly bring your heels back down, but allow them to drop below the ledge so there is a stretch on your achillies tendon.
- Hold the stretch for approximately 15 seconds.
- Repeat for the required reps.



Low Back and Hips:

1. Lying hip rotator stretch

- While lying on your back bend one of your knees to 90 degrees and rotate your leg in (like you are going to cross that foot over your opposite knee.)
- Grab onto the bent knee with one hand and your ankle of the same leg, with the other hand.
- Pull your bent leg up towards your chest, being extra careful not to torque the knee (apply even pressure.)
- Pull your ankle and knee evenly until you feel a stretch deep in your glute area.
- Once you feel that stretch, hold it for the required amount of time.
- Repeat with the opposite leg



2. Cradle Walks Stretch

- Start by standing with your feet shoulder width apart
- Step forward with your left leg and lift your right leg

- Bend your knee and raise your right foot toward your left hip with your inner part of your foot/ankle facing toward the ceiling.
- Hold your right foot with your left hand and your right knee with your right hand
- Slowly and gently pull your entire right leg up toward your chest.
- Release the right leg and step forward.
- Repeat with the opposite leg.



3. Rectus stretch

- Start by standing and grab onto one of your feet
- Pull your foot up behind you as you bend your knee
- Make sure to pull your leg in a straight line and do not twist your leg or knee to the side.
- You should try to pull your lower leg towards your butt
- Pull up on your leg until you feel a stretch in your thigh and then in your hip flexor as well.

- Repeat for the require number of reps and perform the same on the opposite leg.



Shoulder Complex:

1. Chest/Shoulder stretch

- Start by standing at end of a doorway facing perpendicular to door.
- Place the front of the shoulder and inside of bent arm on surface of wall.
- Move the bent elbow so it is the same height of shoulder.
- Both feet should be behind the doorway.
- Lean forward, into wall causing the shoulder to be pushed back and the chest to be stretched.
- Position your upper body away from stretched arm.
- Hold stretch the stretch as long as the required time asks.
- Repeat with opposite arm.



2. Stability Ball lat stretches

- Start by kneeling on the floor with a stability ball placed in front of you
- Position both hands on top of the stability ball with your arms extended out in front of you.
- Push down, into the ball as you lower your upper body towards the ground.
- Move your body down until you feel a stretch in your upper back and shoulders.
- Hold the stretch for the required amount of time.



3. Mobility

Joint Mobility and flexibility is not the same thing. Mobility refers to the range of motion about a specific joint. Your muscles can be flexible and that does not mean you will have good, quality mobility around that joint. Having mobile joints is essential for good movement, static and dynamic posture and overall physical health. Not to mention if you are active, having good mobility is essential to prevent injury and eliminate pain.

I feel that there are three major areas that you need to have good mobility: (a.) the ankles, (b.) the hips, and (c.) the shoulders. So, that is what I want you to focus on right now.

By performing the following mobilizations within your program, you will start to feel major improvements in your whole body.

Ankle Mobility:

1. Knee to Wall Mobilizations

- Stand about a foot away, facing a wall. Push one of the knees forward into the wall.
- As you bend your knee towards the wall, keep your foot flat against the floor, making sure your heel does not come up.
- Progression is to start as far from the wall as possible without the front heel coming off the ground.

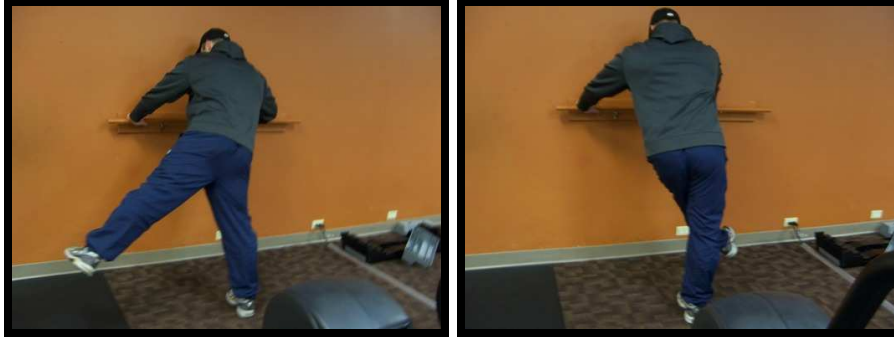


Hip Mobility:

1. Leg Swings- Front to back, side to side

- Standing, hold on to a solid object or place one hand on the wall to the side of you and balance on one leg.
- Swing the other leg forwards and the backwards.
- Make sure that your trunk and lower back stay rigid and do not bend.
- Keep your hips facing forwards and the knee of your swinging leg straight.
- Change legs and repeat.





4. Walking knee huggers

- Start by standing, and pull one knee to your chest
- Return the stretched leg to the floor and take a step forward.
- Repeat with the opposite leg



Shoulder Mobility:

1. Behind the neck band or tube pull

- Start by standing with a piece of tubing or exercise band in your hands.
- Bring your outstretched arms over your head while holding onto the ends of the band or tube with each hand.
- Keep your elbows straight for the entire motion.

- While keeping your arms stretched out over your head and elbows straight, pull your arms away from one another, stretching the band or tube.
- Slowly return to the starting position



2. Dumbbell Arm Swings

- Grab a light dumbbell with one hand
- Slowly swing your arm up and down (over your head, to your waist) while keeping your elbow straight.
- Perform 10-15 swings (up and down count as 1 rep)
- Repeat on the opposite side.

4. Strength

(Activation)

We already covered the importance of “releasing” your knots and adhesions to help bring relief with pain and dysfunction. On the opposite side of the coin is muscle strength, or to put it better, “muscle activation.”

When you are in a state of injury or chronic pain, some of your muscles will knot up and cause major issues, while other muscle groups will simply shut down and stop doing their jobs. This is not good.

When a muscle group shuts down, it will cause a major kink in the “kinetic chain” that will cause dysfunction around the joint. When this happens, it can cause other issues and pain. Many people never think of activation, because most people don’t understand what it is. However, it is one of the most important aspects to recovery and living a pain free, functional life.

When you “re-activate” a muscle group, you are essentially resetting the muscles to work the way they should. When this occurs, the body will work as intended, and in most cases pain and problems will go away.

Combine good muscle activation with soft-tissue work, and some stretching and you are almost guaranteed to feel better!

As with mobility, there are key areas that I feel need to be worked on to achieve good function, eliminate pain and live without restrictions. Follow the exercises

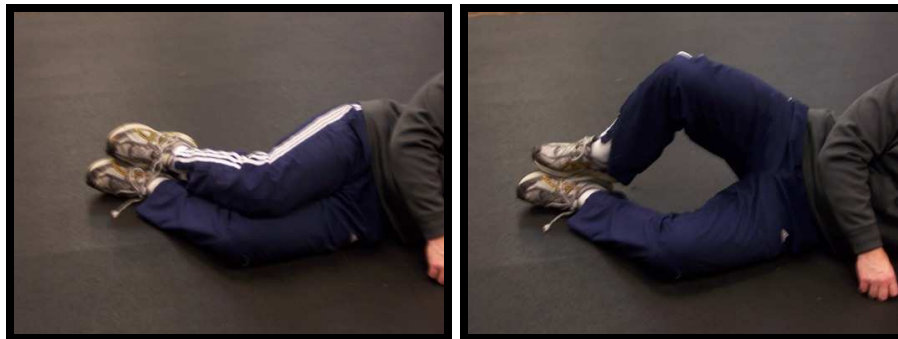
below and see if they help bring your body some balance and get rid of that pain you have been living with.

Even though some will seem “easy” and seem like they are not doing too much, trust me when I tell you they are doing exactly what is needed. In my experience, these areas *need* the most activation with most people. Just by getting the hips, and shoulder area, activated, you will start to feel better and be able to function close to 100%.

The Hips:

1. Clamshells

- Start by lying on your side with your knees bent to approximately 90 degrees
- Slowly open your top leg (keeping your knee bent the entire time) until you feel a stretch
- Make sure to only move your top leg. Keep the rest of your body locked down and still.
- Repeat for the required number of reps.
- Flip over and repeat on the opposite leg.



2. Glute Bridges – 2 leg

- Lie down supine (face up) on the floor
- Your arms should be out with your palms facing the floor
- Bend your knees to 90 degrees with your feet flat on the floor.
- With your feet down, drive your heels into the floor and raise your hips up, and squeeze your glutes.
- Hold the position at the top of the movement for approximately 5 seconds.
- Lower your hips to the floor without touching.
- Repeat for the required amount of reps.



The Shoulders:

1. DB internal rotation

- Start by sitting on your knees, next to a bench.
- If you don't have a bench, you can lie face down on a bed or table
- Place your upper arm at a 90-degree angle to your torso, and your elbow flexed to 90 degrees on top of the bench.

- The upper arm will be supported by the bench or table
- Hold a light dumbbell in your hand, and internally rotate the upper arm
- The dumbbell should move towards your hips
- Keep your wrist fixed and do not cheat by bending your wrist or moving your upper arm
- This should be a slow, controlled movement.
- Perform for the required number of reps.



2. Counter top ABC's

- Standing over a counter top, place a towel on top of the counter
- Start by placing one hand on the towel, making sure to keep your elbow straight.
- Try to place all of your weight directly over your arm and towel
- While pushing into the towel as much as you can, trace the alphabet with the towel on the counter top.
- Go through the entire alphabet without stopping.
- Add more pressure as you get comfortable with the movement.
- Repeat with the opposite arm.
- Repeat for the require amount of sets.



5. Recovery

I included recovery in this list because it is one of the most important and overlooked methods that can be employed to help bring you out of the world of pain and into the world of freedom and function.

People tend to push harder and harder and go right through pain and problems without ever thinking of the importance of allowing their body to recover. More so, *proper* recovery is never even mentioned by most people.

Below, I listed what I feel are the most effective modes of recovery. Following these steps will not only help to ensure that your muscles and joints have the best opportunity to heal, but also help ensure that pain stays away and you are able to do more each day with increased energy and better overall function.

Sleep / Rest:

Most people do not get nearly enough rest. Whether that is in the form of a good night's sleep, a nap each day or just overall relaxation, people tend to get less and less sleep all of the time. If the body does not have a chance to rest and recover as it needs to, it will be less responsive to the daily struggles and demands that are placed on it. What is the result? More spasms, knots, pain and chance of injury.

If you cannot get a good night's sleep, then try to incorporate naps into your schedule. Just a 10 minute nap a day can do wonders for you and your recovery. Healing can only take place when you are at rest and the best time that this happens is during deep sleep. Make sure you are getting enough rest.

Water:

Staying hydrated is a huge component of recovery. Many people go through their daily lives in a constant state of dehydration. Without enough water the body cannot repair itself. This happens at the cellular level, but the damage is big enough to see. Drinking enough water daily is essential for good health, healing damaged tissue and allow the lymphatic system to do its job. One of the major jobs of the lymph system is to get rid of all of the toxic "crap" that builds up in the body. Once that is gone, blood can bring healing nutrients to the muscle and tissues that need it. Drinking enough allows this process to work unimpeded.

I suggest drinking enough water throughout the day that you never have to worry about being dehydrated. Start off in the morning with a big glass of water and drink periodically throughout the day. It is recommended that you drink at least half of your body weight in ounces of water. Although this might seem like a lot, it is needed!

Active Rest:

What is active rest? Active rest is when you are resting or recovering from a physically stressful day, but still doing something active to help the body heal. It is important to note that this should not be considered part of your fitness workout, only this is a method that will aid your body in healing.

Just like water helps the lymph system do its job, active rest can also aid the system in a similar way.

Moving keeps the system flowing and helps it to do its job. Many people take complete rest, with no movement. Although there are some times when this might be necessary, in most cases, some light movement is just what you need.

Taking a walk, riding a bike, or doing some very light resistance training can all be forms of active rest.

The bottom line is to plan some kind of light movement on your “rest” days.

Modalities – Heat, Cold, Massage. :

The use of heat and cold for recovery is often taken for granted. Hot and cold therapy works... and it works well. The question is always when should I use cold and when should I use heat?

Cold:

- If the injury, problem, pathology, etc... is new, meaning it just happened, and is an acute, fresh issue, you should always use cold in the beginning. The rule of thumb is to use cold therapy for the first three days. Sometimes you can go two days, but in most cases, three days is the time period that using cold is going to do the most good. Using heat during this acute stage is not recommended and will make things worse.

Heat:

- After the initial three days since the insult occurs, it is advisable to switch to heat. This is a great time to switch over because the body will be ready to really build itself back up now that the initial inflammation is over. Heat will help to bring in a fresh supply of blood and nutrients that your joints and muscles need.

Massage:

I already covered the importance of getting deep tissue massages for pain control and normal function, however it is important to note that any kind of massage can be vital for good recovery.

Massage will also help the lymph system to do its job better and get rid of waste.

At the same time, a good massage will help bring nutrients into the areas that need them.

Massage is a great way to control and get rid of pain as well.

Don't underestimate the power of massage for good recovery, pain control and better function. It is truly one of the best modalities around.

Conclusion:

I hope that you have taken some or all of these suggestions to heart and are going to incorporate them into your life in some way. I have personally used all of these methods on hundreds of people throughout my career and have seen the amazing physical benefits.

Pain is not fun, it hurts! If you can do a few things each day to bring your body into proper balance, you will start living a pain free life and your former restrictions will be lifted forever.

Remember, much of this is just changing your daily behaviors. If you live with pain, or worse, live with restrictions you need to change something so you can

start living again. Incorporating these methods *together* will help bring your body relief and balance faster than you think.