

Stretching Exercises

Stretches/exercises focus on strengthening the areas around the knee in order to provide more strength and stability

- Acl is a ligament, it can't be strengthened on its own
- Need to make sure the rest of your body is able to do the stabilizing work so not all is relied on the ACL
- prioritize posterior chain strengthening and landing stabilization exercises when training female athletes with specific hopes of reducing ACL injury
- Exercises that strengthen the posterior chain (or the muscles on the back of your leg like the glutes, hamstrings, and calves) help to protect the ACL when put under stress
- Having adequate strength in your hips and thighs is key to providing support for your knees and preventing ACL injuries

Broad Jump - stand with feet shoulder width apart, jump forward landing on both feet, quiet landings

- Why?
 - Helps practice reps of soft landing
 - Repetitions of landing helps simulate quick movement of knee
 - improves the reaction of fast-twitch muscle fibers throughout the body
 - Practice proper landing technique until it becomes second nature

Calf Raises - 2 sets of 10-15 reps

- Why?
 - Strengthens along posterior chain, calf muscles
 - increases balance

Jump & Hold - vertical jump, stick landing for 2-3 seconds

- Why?
 - focus on explosive movement upward, and soft, cushioned landing
 - increase power production in the glutes
 - Practice proper landing technique until it becomes second nature

Lunge Step/Walking Lunge - step into lunge, 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions

- Why?
 - increase flexibility
 - loosen up your hips and hamstrings
 - Strengthen the thigh (quadriceps) muscle

Normal Squats – 1-3 sets of 8-12 repetitions, good for increasing knee mobility

- Why?
 - Strengthen the thigh (quadriceps) muscle

Nordic Hamstring Exercise (Hamstring Leans) - kneel on ground, let partner hold your ankles, slowly lean forward, 3 sets 10 reps

90/90 Single Leg Balance - balance 15-30 sec one leg, 1-3 sets of 8-12 repetitions on each foot, bend leg in 90 degree angle, hold up arms with hands up, elbows bent, hold balance, hold for 20 sec

- Why?
 - improves your balance by solidifying your base of support
 - strengthens your core (mainly your hip flexors)
 - improves power production in your glutes

Single Leg Bridge - lay on back with one knee bent slightly, one leg straight, hold this position for 10-30 seconds, 1-3 sets of 10-12 repetitions.

- Why?
 - isolate and strengthen the gluteus muscles and hamstrings

Single-leg Reach - SLDL, 1-3 sets of 8-12 repetitions

- Why?
 - increases unilateral, lower body strength
 - improves joint mobility and stability
 - enhances balance