

American Cheerleader

June 2010

Summer Beauty Special
Get great skin, smooth legs and the cutest swimsuits inside!

Cheerleader of the Month
Caitlin Hering

"So You Think You Can Dance"
Stars Tabitha & Napoleon's Cheer Love Story

Change the World
Pro Spirit gives back to those in need

CRAZY ABOUT CAMP

15 ways to make it your best week ever

Why you should go for All-American

Tips to keep camp drama-free

skater girls

ROLL INTO CAMP IN STYLE



by Ann Taylor Lashbrook

personal trainer

roll with it

Use a foam roller to ease tight muscles and prevent injuries.

As an athlete, tight, sore muscles are part of the game, but we've got tips for treating your tired limbs to a little TLC. You may have seen a foam roller lying around your gym or been introduced to this amazing piece of equipment while in physical therapy. Foam rollers offer many of the same benefits as a sports massage, without the big price tag. And with a bit of experimentation, you can target just about any muscle group.

These exercises work by using your body weight against the foam roller to soothe tight muscles, improve flexibility and increase range of motion while boosting blood flow and circulation to specific areas of the body. Foam rolling can relieve a slew of muscle and joint pains, such as iliotibial (IT) band syndrome (a common injury to the thigh associated with various athletic activities) and shin splints.

The foam roller focuses on massaging the soft connective tissue, also called fascia, located just below the skin, which wraps and connects the muscles, bones, nerves and blood vessels of the body.

Here are some basic moves you can do on your own to stretch your muscles and tendons and stay limber. All exercises should be performed slowly for one to two minutes, but you can do these for extended periods. Feel free to work certain areas longer if you find them to be tighter. You want to apply sustained pressure on the muscles while softening and lengthening the areas you're rolling. These exercises can be intense, so be patient and focus on relaxing and breathing as you roll. Move gently, and be aware of how your muscles feel as you go. If anything burns or is painful, stop the exercise and consult your coach or athletic trainer before returning to it.

Get a Foam Roller

You can find foam rollers in a variety of qualities and price ranges at sporting goods stores and mass market retailers like Target and Walmart. Log on to americancheerleader.com to win the **GoFit Foam Roller** (gift set), along with a **Core Performance** instructional DVD led by Mark Verstegen, a worldwide trainer of pro athletes and creator of the Core Performance System.



Win It on the web!

Shin Splints Fighter
This exercise is ideal after running, tumbling, plyometrics, jumping rope or anytime you feel tension in your shins. Using your hands for balance, place the roller just below your knees and roll down towards your ankles. If you feel tension on the sides of your lower legs, try rolling on either side of each shinbone.



IT Band Release

1. Lying on your side, propped comfortably up on your hand, begin to roll down and up your leg only on the outer edge, applying even pressure to the entire length of your thigh.
2. For a more intense option, try propping yourself up on your elbow, which will put more pressure on the roller and allow you to execute the movement with more tension.

Quad Release
Perform this exercise from a modified plank, using your hands for balance. Begin rolling with the roller just below your hipbones and finish above your knees (don't roll over your knees). This might not feel as intense as the previous exercise, but it's still effective.



Foam rolling is a great form of restorative exercise to add into your regular training. Perform these exercises after practice or a workout. They'll help keep you limber and injury-free all summer.

PHOTOS BY JOSH TARGOVNIK; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MACHEL HOBE