



Essential posture belt drills

Selected drills to counter the effects of poor posture.

 I've recently been advocating a 'posture belt' as a specific and individual way of training as a golfer. This idea (introduced in the June issue) is unique to golfers as it counterbalances bad posture associated with the golf swing and an overuse of flexed positions. Bad posture and flexed positions may arise when standing over the ball for long periods (e.g. short-game practice) and in everyday occurrences such as using a computer, driving and travelling.

Using a posture belt (along with rubber knee band and compression suit) helps golfers with separation, compression and rotation. This counterbalances bad flexed postures into extension. My posture belt drills outline a sequenced set of exercises uniquely designed to gradually load up the body and steadily achieve dynamic rotation and correct sequencing within body segments in relation to the golf swing.

To begin, a rubber band is placed around and above the knees to reinforce 'firing' through specific muscles such as gluteals and lower abdominals. The posture belt is attached around the waist. It works on specific upper-segment muscles such as serratus anterior, rotator cuff, rhomboids, middle and lower trapezius and triceps.

Here's a sample of drills I give to tour players. I've selected just three of more than 30 drills to reflect the stages that gradually load up the body.

The stages are:

1. Awareness and Feel,
 2. Flexibility/Mobility,
 3. Dynamic Posture,
 4. Balance, 5. Kinetic Chain, 6. Dynamic Rotation.
- A sequence of these exercises can be used for strength and conditioning or a quick warm-up routine before golf.

IMPORTANT: Before you do these exercises, talk through them with your local trainer or physiotherapist. If you have any existing injuries, I strongly recommend that you do these exercises under supervision. And if you experience sharp pain or soreness, stop immediately.

Contact Ramsay McMaster on 0407 432 282 for advice about golf-specific fitness training. Call the Melbourne Golf Injury Clinic on (03) 9569 9448 to purchase a Golf Fitness Survival Kit or a posture belt.



Balance drill: Golf Christmas tree balance on one leg

Establish the golf 'Christmas Tree' position with arms outstretched. (Ensure the rubber band is above your knees.) Slowly lift the left leg and hold your balance on the right foot. Roll between the toe and heel of the right foot. Move onto the left foot and compare the difference. Work the weaker side a little more. Ensure your spine, trunk or hips do not sway. This drill promotes and improves balance in the golf swing. It enhances awareness of ground force and weight transference. It also challenges dynamic posture and identifies muscle and proprioceptive imbalances.



Kinetic chain drills: Golf Christmas tree with fast stomps and waggles

Set up in the golf 'Christmas Tree' position and bend your hips to about 90 degrees. Tuck your arms straight back and behind (maintaining a pistol grip). Make some small fast stomps. Feel light on the bottom of your feet as if you're stomping on hot coals. There should be minimal sound from your feet landing on the ground. This will allow more side gluteals to work that are essential for good technique. Waggle the back of your shoulder blades (to simulate the turning motion of the golf swing). Raise yourself up to an address position and back down to 90 degrees. This drill places the spine in a good posture, thus improving body awareness in the address position over the ball. It promotes a feel of certain muscles 'firing' against gravity. It reduces 'slumping' and enhances proprioception. It maintains your 'core' stability, especially through the lower body, pelvic region and shoulder-girdle complex.

Dynamic rotation drill: Golf Christmas tree with sumo stomps

Adopt a 'sumo' wrestler's position and hold the tubing with a pistol grip. Tuck your bottom underneath and keep your chin tucked back. Raise the left leg back so the heel hits against a wall. Rotate the upper body in same direction as lower body movement. Perform this drill five times to the left and repeat five times to the right. Ensure your neck, then trunk, then hips and then feet rotate in the correct sequence. This dynamic movement challenges both rotation and balance in relation to the swing. It facilitates the correct feel of rotation and control through the knee, limiting injuries caused by over-twisting. Dynamic movements give a neutral and centred feel, limiting sway and knee collapse, which is common in the mid-handicap golfer.

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