

LOSS OF UPPER BACK FLEXIBILITY AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

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Stiffness in the upper back is common, especially as we get older. Unfortunately, this is a key area of rotation in the golf swing, and if there is a lack of flexibility here, the body has to compensate elsewhere. With these compensations comes lack of power and inconsistencies in the swing, and potential overuse in other areas of the body. One way to test torso rotation to see if it is adequate, is to sit with your knees together, place a club behind your head, and rotate your upper body as far as you can (without letting the knees separate or your body bending to the side). Click on pic for a video.



Seated Rotation Test

If you are unable to reach 45 degrees or further with little effort, then there are several stretches and exercises that can greatly improve this! Check out the following exercises to improve this motion and help you achieve a back swing and follow through with greater arc of motion (which can generate more power!). Click on the following picture to watch full videos.

A-Frame Stretch



Open Books



Torso rotation with lower body stability



Wall Angels



Body-swing connection:

Loss of flexibility through our upper back (torso) can lead to several swing faults such as loss of posture, reverse spine angle, flat shoulder plane, over the top, C-posture at set up, and hanging back. Any of these can lead to loss of distance and power, as well as ball strike inconsistency. The body will try to make up for the loss of motion by cheating somewhere else. Oftentimes, this leads to low back pain from the lumbar spine trying to compensate and move in ways it's not designed to move. Overtime, the site where the pains shows up, is often not the culprit! A full body movement assessment with a certified golf fitness/medical professional can help you find the root of any problems or loss of distance over time and design an exercise program that is specifically for you.

Let us help you play better and feel better on the course! For a Golf Physical Assessment by a Titleist Performance Institute certified Golf Fitness Instructor, contact Robyn Smith at (616)481-4761 or contact any Hulst Jepsen Physical Therapy location. We have physical therapist who have specialized in the body-swing connection and can help you get back to playing your best golf.