

## INJURY PREVENTION WARM-UP ROUTINES FOR FOREST WORKERS

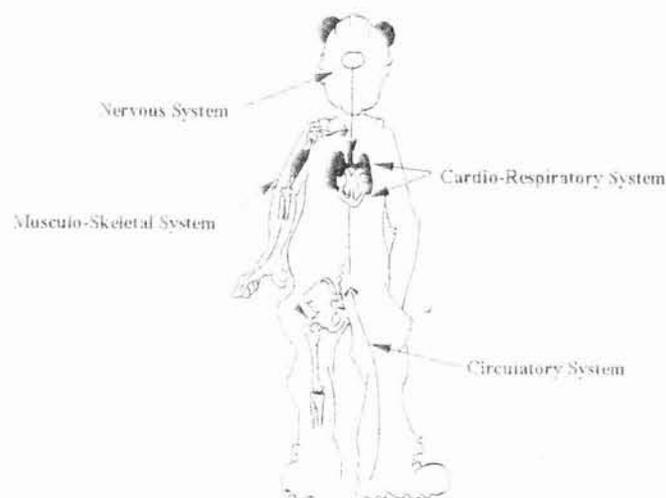
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### INTRODUCTION

Soft tissue injuries (sprains, strains and torn muscles) are a far too frequent occurrence with many forest workers. The main reason for this is the lack of any warm-up routine being undertaken by forest workers prior to their starting work, or after a break. This report details a series of short and effective warm-up stretches specifically designed for forest workers. The correct use of these warm-up exercises and stretches should help prevent the occurrence of soft tissue damage to forest workers.

### Smart Workers Prevent Injury

Your body is a complex machine of finely tuned systems



Many hours of **planning, preparation and maintenance** are put into ensuring your tools and machinery (e.g. chainsaws), can sustain maximum production.

**BUT**

How much effort is put into the **preparation or maintenance** of the most expensive and irreplaceable piece of machinery you have - **Your Body?**

## A Warm-Up Prepares Your Body For Work

Your body is a complex machine that requires efficient operating systems to sustain a high work output. To do this you must allow your body enough time to **WARM UP BEFORE YOU START WORK**, just as you do with your machinery.

### THE BENEFITS OF A WARM-UP

Increases your ability to react quickly by preparing the **NERVOUS SYSTEM**

The **CIRCULATORY SYSTEM** increases blood flow to working muscles to provide fuel

Prepares the **MUSCULO-SKELETAL SYSTEM** (muscles tendons and joints) to perform controlled and efficient movement



Improve **MENTAL ALERTNESS**

Increase **BODY TEMPERATURE**

Prepare **CARDIO-RESPIRATORY** (heart-lung) system for work

**A WARM WORKER WILL PERFORM MORE EFFICIENTLY  
AND IS LESS LIKELY TO SUSTAIN AN INJURY**

**YOU SHOULD WARM UP**  
Before every shift  
and  
After each smoko

## Smart Workers “Adopt a Programme”

As forest work demands a range of highly co-ordinated, physically demanding and often repetitive activities. In order to minimise stress and prevent injury, all workers should perform:

### A Warm-Up Programme

- Warm up muscles
- Stretch muscles
- Start work slowly



### A Maintenance Programme to Prevent Injury

- to protect your body from work stress and wear and tear

- Strength levels
- Fitness during injury
- Flexibility in muscles and joints
- Food and fluid



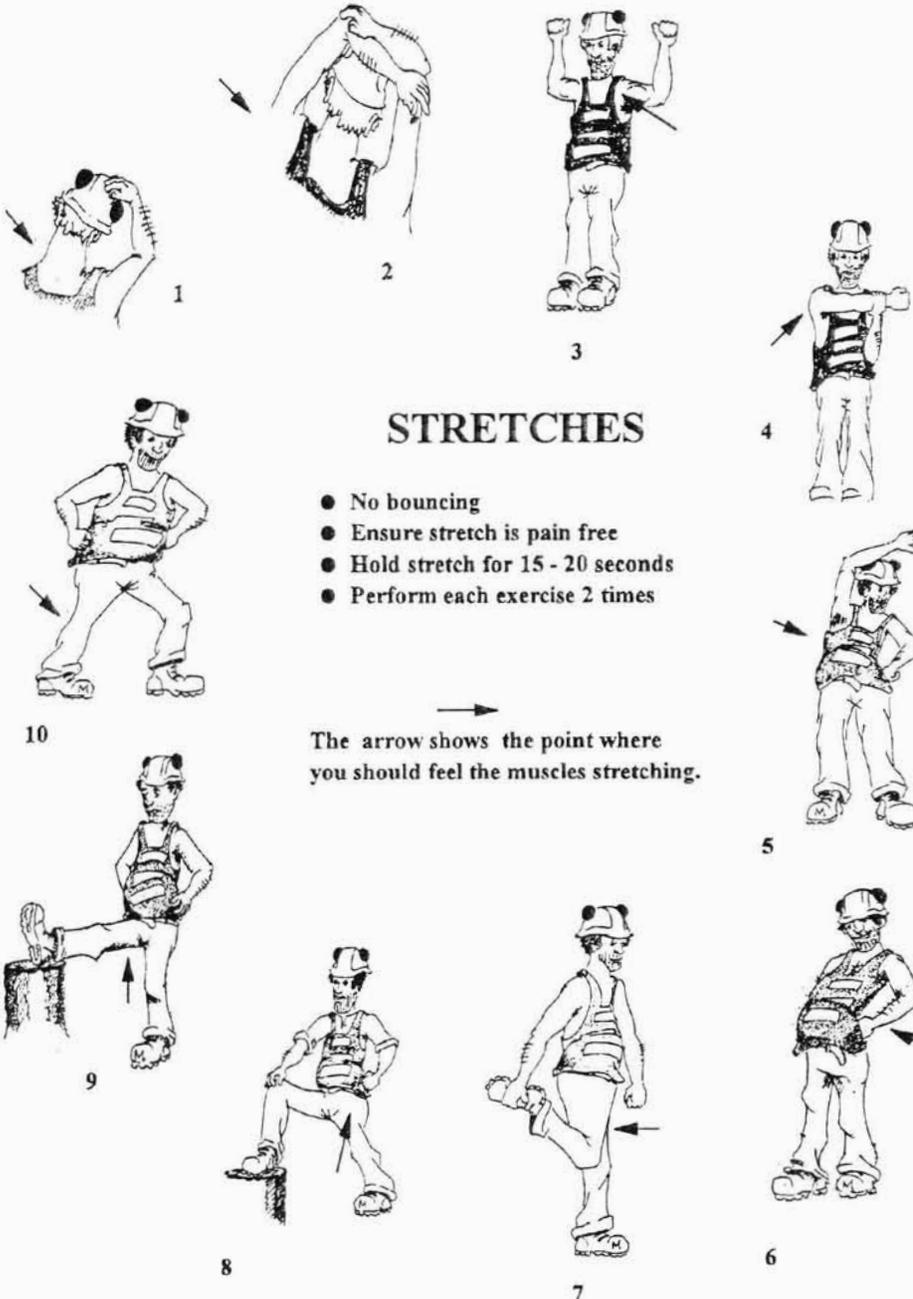
### Smart Workers

Warm Up and Perform Preventative Maintenance

You do this for your machinery and tools, so why not for your body too!!!

## WHOLE BODY WARM-UP

**Perform 3 - 5 minutes of light activity**  
(If you walk 5-10 minutes to your work site then use this as your warm-up)  
**followed by 5 -10 minutes of stretching activity**



**Also allow your body 5 - 10 minutes to warm up when you start working.**

This warm-up period allows your muscles and systems to “switch on” and “work together” as efficiently as possible. Gradually increase your work pace to maximum effort - the time required will depend on the intensity of the job. The higher the intensity, the longer the time required.

## Smart Workers Perform Preventative Maintenance

### Maintain Effective Strength Levels

Muscles, joints and ligaments (your tools) need to be strong and able to work efficiently over prolonged periods of time. There are two particular muscle groups that need to be strong to support correct posture and movement.



Abdominals



Upperback

### Maintain Good Flexibility

*Your stretching programme should be repeated:*

- **During your shift** (meal or machine refuelling breaks)
  - To prevent muscles tightening up during shifts and causing fatigue.
- **At the end of your shift**
  - To relax tired muscles and promote recovery.
- **At home**
  - To improve flexibility in tight muscles and help recovery from work

## Maintain Your Fitness Levels During Injury

Forestry work demands **stamina**.

Stamina is a measure of how efficiently oxygen can be taken in and utilised to produce energy. High levels of stamina allow working muscles to perform sustained physical activity.



If your job demands a high level of physical conditioning and you sustain an injury that demands time off work, it is important that you maintain your stamina during that time. The activity that you choose to perform will depend on the nature of the injury. Stamina levels will drop very quickly with inactivity making your return to work more difficult.

## Maintain Your Fitness Levels Outside Work Time



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