

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHILE WARMING UP

➔ The more you practice self-massage on a daily basis, the quicker you will see the resulting effects during warm-ups and the more useful self-massage will become during a workout. Do not wait; starting to use self-massage will immediately revolutionize your warm-ups! At first, stiffness and pain will appear, and self-massage during your warm-ups will not last long enough to correct it. On the other hand, if you keep at it too long, you could overrelax your muscles and ligaments. Just as with stretching, it is only by doing it every day that you will see the best results. The clearest study on this subject is by Cavanaugh's team in 2017; they observed a decrease in activation of the hamstring muscles following self-massage of the

quadriceps. The authors attributed this effect to the perceived pain in the quadriceps, which led to relaxation of the hamstrings. With regular self-massage, sudden pain disappears, and there are fewer and fewer restrictions to using this technique during warm-ups. However, athletes who are new to self-massage should wait for a few weeks after starting a training program before using self-massage and then only for short durations at first.

➔ This same study by Cavanaugh advises caution when distinguishing between self-massage for short-term mobility and self-massage for warm-up purposes. When self-massage is used at the beginning of a workout, the intensity should not cause pain. On the other hand, self-massage that

aims to improve mobility in the long term, when spaced adequately from other training sessions, can provide relief in terms of pain tolerance.

➔ Just like warming up the nervous or cardiovascular systems, a progressive approach comes from common sense. For optimal results, gradually increase pressure on soft areas; do not crush them from the outset, or you risk causing physical or even psychological resistance in future sessions.

➔ Just as with stretching during warm-ups, it is essential to plan a method for neuromuscular reactivation to avoid any risk of overrelaxation. Without fail, your self-massage should be accompanied by energetic and progressive exercise.