

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Niagara This Week - Fore the Ladies  
"Fit for the Fairway"

Ladies, how many of you dust off the clubs and get out on the range or the golf course and start working on your game without getting your body ready for the sport. As a recreational golfer who may not have played over the winter it is vital that your re-entry into the game in the spring includes exercises that will help you with your balance, flexibility, strength and power. Golf is a relaxing, low-impact sport that is great for the legs (walking), the arms (driving and putting), and the back (bending and reaching.)

Simple exercises designed to build core strength and increase flexibility will not only help you to play better golf, you will look great, have more fun and feel confident on the golf course. Five key areas prone to injury are the shoulders, lower back, elbows, wrists and knees. To alleviate problems in these areas you should be warming up at least 15 minutes before your tee time or practice time and if possible maintain a simple home exercise schedule that can be accomplished in 15 to 30 minutes. You will be surprised at how a few simple exercises will help you to achieve stability and strength in your swing.

Ten "First Tee Stretches" that will prepare you for your game or lesson can be done easily at home and at the course. Using a golf club for balance you can start with your legs, working on the quadriceps muscles, hamstrings, calves and hips. Using the club shaft to stretch your shoulder muscles can be done simply by holding the shaft of your club vertically behind your back and pulling the club up with your top hand and then reversing the motion. Stretching the neck, forearms and trunk area will strengthen these muscles and help you to establish a strong stable swing and follow through.

The "Fit for the Fairway" program has been incorporated into the "Get in the Game" and "Stay in the Game" Golf Programs for women. For more information visit [www.gogirlgolf.ca](http://www.gogirlgolf.ca).