

The Shape of Golf

Author: John D. Sinclair, CSCS

Over the past five years, public interest in the game of golf has exploded. A certain golfer named Eldridge Woods deserves much of the credit (you may know him as Tiger). Almost single-handedly, Tiger has literally reshaped the game – as well as its participants. How is this guy so much better than everyone else? Is it his ability – probably? Is it his attitude, maybe? Is it his work ethic, perhaps? One thing is certain; in the history of golf, no other golfer has achieved his level of physical fitness. Tiger Woods has revolutionized his sport with superb skills, amazing practice habits, and unmatched strength and endurance. If you are still unsure about whether or not you should get in better shape, let the game of golf (and Tiger) give you another great reason.



Have you ever wondered whether or not playing golf qualifies as a legitimate workout? Skeptics will tell you that golfing doesn't require an individual to be in better than average condition and that the game is nothing more than an excuse to get outside or to visit with friends. Tiger may have something to say about that! Historically, golfing has been considered a leisure activity – but that view will soon become "history".

Physical Effects of Golfing

For the purposes of this discussion, any golfing activity will be based on walking and not riding in a cart. It is important to understand that playing the game of golf can not only be an extremely fun and rewarding experience, but it can also help to create and maintain a healthy lifestyle for millions of individuals. Here's what you can expect:

18 HOLES	MEN	WOMEN
Calories Expended	1252	904
Perceived Exertion	High	High
Muscles Worked	All	All
Aerobic	Medium-High	Medium-High
Improved Flexibility	Yes	Yes
9 HOLES	MEN	WOMEN
Calories Expended	626	452
Perceived Exertion	Medium	Medium
Muscles Worked	All	All

Aerobic	Medium-Low	Medium-Low
Improved Flexibility	Yes	Yes

These estimates are based on moderately active people between the ages of 25-50.

These charts clearly illustrate the importance of golf from a caloric standpoint. A pound of body weight is equal to 3,500 calories. Men can burn 1250 calories, and women can burn close to 1000 calories playing one 18-hole round! If you compare that to a regular workout at the health club, it is equivalent to 2 – 3 hour-long workouts (depending on intensity). Wouldn't you rather mix in a round of golf once a week and spice up your workouts rather than doing the same old thing or worse yet, nothing at all?

Physical Requirements of Golfing

Contrary to popular belief, playing golf is quite physically demanding (we won't even mention the mental demands). If you don't believe me, strap a bag over your shoulders and go play 18 and see how you feel when you get home! The terrain of the course, as well as your own abilities have much to do with this, but by all measures, playing a round of golf is a great workout.

If you are serious about properly conditioning yourself to compete at a high level, the following guidelines will help tremendously:

1. **Flexibility.** Golf is a sport that requires the body to achieve full ranges of motion (ROM) in several joints of the body. Full ROM is only possible with adequate flexibility. Stretch your entire body each and every day. See our recommended [Stretching](#) exercises located in the Virtual Exercise section of your GetPHIT Plan for more details.
2. **Trunk Stability.** The trunk or "core" of the body is the pivot point about which your upper body rotates. It is critical that the muscles and connective tissue affecting the trunk are strengthened and properly managed. This will greatly increase your potential and reduce your risk for injury and soreness. See our recommended [Stability Ball](#) exercises located in the Virtual Exercise and How To sections of your GetPHIT Plan for more details.
3. **Power.** Power is different than raw strength. Power is defined as work done over time or strength times speed. Anyone can get stronger, but the ability to produce strength in less time is the key to any explosive movement – like swinging the golf club. See our recommended [Power/Medicine Ball](#) exercises located in the Virtual Exercise section of your GetPHIT Plan for more details.

Note: These three guidelines are implemented into the following workout program:

Golf Workout Routine

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<u>Power</u> Med Ball	<u>Stability</u> Swiss Ball	<u>Play Round</u> (if possible)	<u>Power</u> Med Ball	<u>Stability</u> Swiss Ball	<u>Play Round</u> (if	DAY OFF

Jumping	<u>Abdominal</u>	18 holes	Jumping	<u>Abdominal</u>	possible)	
Cleans	<u>s</u>	Walking	Cleans	<u>s</u>	18 holes	
Sprints	Crunches		Sprints	Roll-outs	Walking	
<u>Flexibilit</u>	Sit-ups	<u>Flexibility</u>	<u>Flexibility</u>	Up &	<u>Flexibility</u>	
<u>y</u>	Leg Lifts	Upper body	Upper	Under	Upper	
Upper	<u>Flexibility</u>	Lower body	body	Bicycles	body	
body	Upper		Lower	<u>Flexibility</u>	Lower	
Lower	body		body	Upper	body	
body	Lower		<u>Practice</u>	body		
<u>Practice</u>	body		Driver	Lower		
Driver	<u>Practice</u>		Short	body		
Long	Chipping		irons	<u>Practice</u>		
irons	Putting			Chipping		
				Putting		

All of the exercises above (except the practice ones) are described in detail within the My ePHIT.com website. Read them carefully and set up your plan today. Cardiovascular movements are optional but recommended. Sets, reps, and weight amounts will also be included after your GetPHIT Plan is constructed.

Do not attempt to perform any of the recommended exercises (especially power movements) **without clearance from your physician and proper instruction.**

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS ARTICLE IS NOT INTENDED NOR IMPLIED TO BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE. ALWAYS SEEK THE ADVICE OF YOUR PHYSICIAN OR OTHER QUALIFIED HEALTH PROVIDER PRIOR TO STARTING ANY NEW TREATMENT OR WITH ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING A MEDICAL CONDITION. NOTHING CONTAINED IN THE ARTICLE IS INTENDED TO BE FOR MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT.

Copyright © 2001 My ePHIT.com L.L.C. All rights reserved.