Dear Colleague,

Welcome to our third newsletter of the Dance Education Network of the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science. The goal of the Dance Education Network is to reach out to educators and dancers in order to provide information on IADMS and IADMS initiatives.

**Items in this Newsletter include:**

- An endorsement of IADMS from Christopher Wheeldon
- IADMS Resource Paper Stretching for Dancers (excerpt)
- IADMS Dance Medicine and Science Poster on stretching

Christopher Wheeldon is a former dancer with the Royal Ballet and New York City Ballet. He finished his dance career in 2000 to concentrate on choreography. His work is in great demand, and he has created a large and varied body of contemporary ballet for New York City Ballet, The Royal Ballet, The Bolshoi Ballet and an impressive roster of companies around the world.

“The challenges asked of today’s dancers by directors and choreographers alike are great. In demanding excellence of performance we must achieve it in the studio first, and that requires healthy bodies and minds every single day. Dancers need support on all levels to be one hundred percent fit and happy. A fit body allows for technically brilliant performance and a happy and grounded mind allows for a generous and thoughtful interpretation.
IADMS provides vital support systems for all those educating and caring for dancers internationally thus ensuring world class performances in the future.

Christopher Wheeldon, Honorary Member

Did you know that membership in IADMS is open to any individual who is actively connected with the healthcare, education, administration, and supervision of dancers and/or is a member of the dance community? The benefits are particularly relevant for dance teachers who work long hours in their private studio and have limited opportunity for personal development and networking.

You can benefit from membership in the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science by:

- Increasing your knowledge of dance medicine/science and being able to add a new dimension to the care of dancers with whom you work; networking with other professionals in the field, providing a wide resource base for you and your dancers.
- Receiving the Journal of Dance Medicine & Science (JDMS), the official publication of IADMS, featuring original scientific articles, review articles, case studies, abstracts from current literature, editorials, consensus statements, book reviews, news and notes, letters to the editor and a special topic oriented issue every year. All individual memberships (but not school, company, or corporate members) also receive free access to JDMS articles online.

IADMS Stretching for Dancers Paper

Stretching remains a controversial area of discussion for dance teachers.

This paper is intended to provide information on stretching, more formally known as flexibility training. It will discuss briefly the different types of stretching, along with their advantages and their disadvantages. In addition, it will provide practical applications to the dancer: when to stretch, which tissues to stretch, how much and how often to stretch, as well as information on age and gender differences.

This is an excerpt from the publication. You can view the full paper by following the link at the end of the excerpt.
**Stretching for Dancers – Summary**

**Ballistic stretch**: A brief, bouncing, swinging stretch
- **Advantage** – useful for coordination
- **Disadvantage** – high risk of injury

**Dynamic stretch**: Controlled, dance-like movements that prepare the body for activity
- **Advantage** – improves coordination without risk of injury
- **Disadvantage** – not as effective as static stretch in producing long-term gains in flexibility

**Static stretch**: Held for 30 seconds
- **Advantage** – useful in maintaining flexibility
- **Disadvantage** – needs to be regular to produce long-term gains in flexibility

**Prolonged stretch**: Held for 20 minutes or more
- Should be avoided

**When to stretch**
- **DO** stretch after class when muscles are warm
- **DO NOT** stretch preceding performance or a major rehearsal, due to detrimental effects on jumping

**What to stretch**
- **DO** stretch muscles and their connective tissue (fascia)
- **DO NOT** elongate ligaments and joint capsules

**How long to stretch**
- Three to five bouts of 30 seconds static stretches are sufficient to stretch muscle tissue

**How much to stretch**
- Depends on your body
- “Tight” dancers need to stretch more than “loose” dancers
- Increasing “loose” dancers’ hyper-mobility can reduce their joint stability
How often to stretch

- Once a week to maintain joint range of motion
- Three to five times per week to increase range

Gender issues

- Females are generally more flexible than males of similar ages

Age issues

- Children become less flexible during their skeletal growth spurt
- Adults become less flexible with increasing age

About the author: Brenda Critchfield works as an athletic trainer for the 35th Engineer Battalion, 1st Engineer Brigade, United States Army at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, USA


IADMS Poster on Stretching

Stretching for Dancers is a large, color poster featuring a young male dancer. It offers teachers and dancers a brief overview of the concept of flexibility and makes recommendations to help dancers gain flexibility in a safe manner. Text is drawn from the Stretching for Dancers resource paper authored by Brenda Critchfield.

Dimensions of each poster: 24 inches x 36 inches
   61 centimeters x 91.4 centimeters

The poster on stretching is one of a series of posters including:
Bone Health and Female Dancers
Motor Learning

To purchase this series of Posters visit the IADMS Website:
“In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn.”
Phil Collins

Best wishes,

Maggie Lorraine, Dance Education Network Subcommittee
Margaret Wilson, IADMS Education Committee Chair

IADMS Education Committee: Education@IADMS.org