

Because they're new and different, the Rossiter stretching techniques usually produce some very common questions. Please note, I've listed the questions at the top and again with the answer below. Here, are the very simple answers!

General

How exactly do these techniques work?
What's so special about connective tissue?
How long will the results last?
What is Richard Rossiter's background?
How did he come up with these stretches?
How often do I have to do the stretches?
Do I HAVE to have a partner?
How long should a typical workout last?
Are there any side effects?
Can I do them if I've had surgery?
Can I do them if I've had a cortisone shot?
Can I do them if I've had cancer?
Is this like chiropractic treatments?
Can I do Rossiter with other modalities – chiropractic? Physical therapy?
Massage therapy? Occupational therapy?
Is this considered a treatment or procedure?
Why are the back techniques done on the thighs?
Don't the stomach muscles support the back?
How many workouts will I need?
What can I do if I'm sore the next day?
What are the contraindications?
Is there anything that can be done to prevent an injury?
What if I don't get better?
Do doctors approve of the Rossiter System?
Should a workout be done everyday?
What if a joint pops?

Weight

How much weight should I take?
What if I can't give enough weight?
Is it possible to take too much weight?
Would stepping on an injury hurt it more?
Can I still get relief even if I don't take enough weight?

Stretching

Is it possible to pull a muscle while stretching?
How does stretching help an RMI (Repetitive Motion Injury)?
Will stretching help my arthritis?

What is Richard Rossiter's background? How did he come up with these stretches?

The Rossiter techniques were developed by Richard Rossiter, a former helicopter pilot whose flying-related shoulder pain became so severe when he was in his late 20s that he began looking for non-drug, non-surgery approaches to pain relief so that he could remain a commercial helicopter pilot in Alaska. He eventually found help in a type of bodywork called Rolfing, which targets and loosens the body's connective tissue from head to toe. Impressed with the amount of pain relief it offered, he came a connective tissue specialist, trained at The Rolf Institute in the 1983, and began working with a variety of clients, including factory workers suffering from low back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome and other overuse-related pain problems and injuries. Eventually, he developed these powerful two-person stretches to help people prevent injury and maintain connective tissue in its normal, flexible state so that they could avoid the damaging effects of drugs, splints, cortisone shots and risky surgeries for structural pain problems. His goal is to bring these break through stretching techniques to every individual, family and setting in the U.S. – homes, schools, offices, factories, gyms and athletic fields, health clubs, art and music scenarios, universities, and more.

How often do I have to do the stretches?

Again, it depends on several factors. If your pain is new, maybe you need to do a workout only once or once a month. If your pain is chronic, you may have to do them every day or every week. Once you get used to a workout, you'll get a much better sense of your own body – how quickly it responds to these techniques. And your willingness to work hard plays a role, too. The harder the your stretch, the better results you'll get in a shorter time. And then you'll do them as regularly as you need them to prevent injury or deal with symptoms as they arise. The good news is that you're in control – you determine how frequently, how hard, how much and how hard you work at this program.

Do I HAVE to have a partner?

Yes. A regular Rossiter workout requires two people, because you get much better results than one person stretching his/her own body alone. These are designed as powerful two-person stretches because of the combined power of two people working toward a common goal. The Rossiter System does have some one-person, static stretches featured at <http://www.rossiter.com>.

How long should a typical workout last?

No workout should ever last more than 45 minutes. The first workout or two might take an hour, until both of you get good at the techniques. But once you're familiar with the techniques, you should be able to do a complete workout in 20-30 minutes.

Are there any side effects?

You may have some slight bruising in a day or two, especially from the Hole in the Shoulder technique. And your muscles may feel a little tender or sore.

But that will go away in time. If you do more than the recommended number of repetitions, or stretch way too hard, you may get some bruises or soreness.

Can I do them if I've had surgery?

Yes, you can do the workouts if you've had surgery as long as you've been released by your doctor/surgeon and you're able to perform the stretching techniques. The only exception is low back surgery or surgery to treat sciatica pain, herniated disc, disc surgery, etc. That kind of surgery is a reason not to do the Rossiter back techniques. The Rossiter techniques for low back pain are designed for the anatomy of the low back in its natural form and state. Once the back has been subjected to surgery, the original tissue is permanently scarred and altered and does not react effectively to these techniques and cannot resume its natural function once it has been altered by a knife, scalpel or injections. If you've had back surgery, you can still do the upper-body stretches.

Can I do them if I've had a cortisone shot?

If you've had cortisone shots injected directly into the back specifically for pain, no, you cannot participate in a Rossiter Back Workout. But if you've had cortisone injected anywhere else in the body, you can participate in a Rossiter workout as long as you know that the results will never be as effective as they are on non-cortisone tissue. Once cortisone is injected into an area, that area is never the same – it develops scar tissue, otherwise healthy tissue degenerates, and it never reacts to a Rossiter technique the same as positively as normal tissue does. Short-term, cortisone relieves pain by killing tissue. Long-term, cortisone destroys tissue and weakens your body's immune system.

Can I do them if I've had cancer?

Because so little is still known about what causes cancer or causes it to spread, we prefer that you not do a workout if you've had cancer within the last five years. We follow standard medical guidelines for considering cancer to be in remission.

Is this like chiropractic treatments?

No. In a chiropractic treatment, a doctor of chiropractic does some manipulation techniques to you. In a Rossiter workout, a "Coach" helps another person out of pain by using techniques that specifically elongate and loosen connective tissue. All the real work is done by the PIC (Person In Charge). The Coach is only there to assist you.

Can I do Rossiter with other modalities - chiropractic? Physical therapy? Massage therapy? Occupational therapy?

Yes, you can. Rossiter is not an end-all approach for everyone. Rossiter recommends that when doing different modalities, however, you stick to one modality at a time so that you can compare which is most effective and which produces the best results. If you're mixing them up simultaneously,

you'll never know which approach produced the best results. It's your choice.

Is this a treatment or procedure?

No.

Why are the back techniques done on the thighs? Don't the stomach muscles support the back?

The thigh muscles are the strongest muscles that contribute to balance in the back, and everyone who has back pain usually has some knots in his or her thigh that respond to these techniques. Why mess with something that works? It's not an accepted medical approach for relieving back pain, but more than 20 years in the field have proven these techniques effective. And maybe that's why traditional medicine has been so ineffective – it's targeting the wrong causes!!

How many workouts will I need?

The number of workouts needed varies from person to person depending on the injury or need. There is no right number, but usually you can tell a difference after 2 or 3 workouts. Again, this will depend on how long you've had the problem, how intense it is, and how willing you are to work on it.

What can I do if I'm sore the next day?

Expect to get sore. You are using muscles you may not have used in a long time. Some Tiny Torques or Mr. Twisters can help get rid of residual pain.

Is there anything that can be done to prevent an injury?

Use common sense, exercise and stay in shape. Avoid dangerous areas.

What if I don't get better?

If you don't see a difference or your problem is getting worse, see a doctor. Make sure you give the technique a fair amount of time, which will depend on the individual. Don't put off going to the doctor if you feel the need. Most structural problems are problems of not enough space in the body and are easily remedied by the Rossiter System. Just like any other system the Rossiter System has its limitations. Don't use this when in doubt. "When in Doubt - Don't!"

Do doctors approve of the Rossiter System?

Sure, numerous doctors approve of the techniques and have endorsed them. Most doctors who have taken the time to do a Workout like the techniques.

Should a workout be done everyday?

The workouts should be done at most two or three times a week. But they can be done daily very easily. Just back off on the weight a little if these are being done daily. You'll get a little sore from doing them, just like going to the gym and getting sore from that workout.

What if a joint pops?

If it did not hurt, ignore it.

Weight w/Answers

How much weight should I take?

Take weight until it is uncomfortable. Usually, the more weight you take, the better off you are. I like to think of the weight as eye-popping. It should be uncomfortable but not so hard or painful to make you feel like jerky away suddenly to remove your arm/leg or whatever. If weight is applied slowly, you should be able to handle more. If you are having trouble with the weight, take less but also expect lower levels of results. BUT WEIGHT SHOULD BE AS UNCOMFORTABLE AS HELL! (Coach, please adjust for drugs. Drugs often dampen or heighten pain feelings).

What if I can't give enough weight?

As a Coach, you should work with what you have. And you can use some tricks to add weight even if you're not big or bulky. When doing the Traps on a big person, for instance, ask the PIC to stretch toward the floor first. It'll help you add weight into the shoulder better. Also, use just the tip of your elbow for any Traps technique. When adding weight with the foot, use the area closer to the heel or the heel itself to add power to the weight.

Is it possible to take too much weight?

It's possible, but rare. As a PIC, simply take weight until it is uncomfortable. Someone taking NSAIDs, such as Motrin® or Advil®, will not be able to feel his or her own pain as well as someone not taking drugs. As a Coach, be more aware of how much weight you apply in instances like that. If ever in doubt, back off. Or set up a comparison by stretching only one side of the PIC's body (the good side). Then, let the PIC compare how that feels to the un-stretched side. If the PIC likes the feeling, can tell the difference and wants to continue the Workout, go ahead and do it. Remember, you're working together and the PIC is in charge. Your job is to assist.

Would stepping on an injury harm it more?

It depends on the kind of injury you have. If you have a chronic, long-term injury from repetitive use, you won't harm it any more. (This might be an injury like chronic arm pain from working at a computer all day, doing assembly-line work in a factory, sitting too much or throwing a baseball for an entire season). If you want to participate in a Workout, start slowly. Work through the techniques slowly and make sure you're getting results. You can't harm an existing, long-term injury by touching your own pain. Doing a workout will hurt, but it won't harm. If your injury is a sudden injury - such as getting hit with a baseball bat, catching a finger in a car door, being kicked, falling - those should be checked by a doctor first. There's no reason to step on an injury like that. It's OK to work in the area surrounding a traumatic injury to reduce pain and swelling, but never add weight directly to an injury like that.

Can I still get relief even if I don't take enough weight?

If you don't take enough weight, you can compensate by stretching harder and further while Locking and doing the techniques. The ideal approach is to accept good weight, Lock Up strongly and get in a good stretch.

Stretching w/Answers

Is it possible to pull a muscle while stretching?

As long as no one is grabbing and pulling you, this is not a concern. The stretching in the Rossiter Workout is safe.

How does stretching help a repetitive motion injury (RMI)?

Stretching helps to lengthen or add space to a damaged, overused, overworked area.

Will stretching help my arthritis?

These techniques cannot cure arthritis, but they can help ease the pain of tight, rubbing joints and can improve quality of life issues by helping people regain mobility, looseness and movement.

How do I know if the PIC (Person In Charge) is really stretching?

As Coach, you will feel tissue movement under your foot and you will the color of the palm of the PIC's hand change color from pinkish to whitish.

Will stretching every day leave stretch marks?

Stretch marks are not a concern, as the stretching in the Rossiter system is done in the connective tissue.

Techniques w/Answers

How do I know what technique to do for my specific problem?

First, the book is designed to allow everybody to pick and choose the techniques they want. Typically, everyone starts with the same Level 1 Workout: Forearm Up, Forearm Down, etc. Then as the PIC gets more experience and begins to see which techniques work better, the two of you will naturally begin to use more powerful and more specific sets of techniques that are designed for that particular problem. Every participant chooses the techniques they use. As one problem eases, it's natural to choose other techniques to address pain problems that pop up or exist elsewhere in the body.

Are the techniques safe?

In the 15 years Rossiter & Associates has taught these techniques in workplace settings, no one has ever been hurt.

What if I do a technique wrong?

Should I go back and do it again, or will someone get hurt, and is it still effective?

If you skip a technique or do it wrong, go on to the next one and try to get better with each technique.

Where did these techniques come from?

The techniques come from Rossiter & Associates and from the hard work of Rossiter-certified Coaches. Techniques are constantly updated and added.

Will certain techniques help specific problems or areas?

As you advance in the levels, techniques will deal with more specific problems. See the Master Index for site-specific solutions.

What is the purpose of the Lock Up?

The Lock Up integrates the stretches into the body and to makes them LAST LONGER by stretching out the whole body, from the tips of the toes to the tips of the fingers. Doing a Workout across the whole body ensures the techniques work to their maximum benefit. Active participation by Coach and PIC is absolutely important for recovery. Locking also is one way to actively involve the PIC in the workout.