



Basically, I have compiled some a brief overview for you of the *warm-up*, how to keep 'warm' and then finally, the *warm-down*.

What is a WARM-UP?

The warm up activities are a crucial part of tag rugby training or competition. However many teams forget or neglect the warm up before training or competition. The importance of a structured warm up routine should not be under estimated when it comes to the prevention of sports injury.

An effective warm up has a number of very important key elements. These elements, or parts, should all be working together to minimise the likelihood of sports injury from physical activity.

Warming up prior to tag rugby achieves a number of beneficial things, but primarily its main purpose is to prepare the body and mind for more strenuous activity. One of the ways it achieves this is by helping to increase the body's core temperature, while also increasing the body's muscle temperature. By increasing muscle temperature you're helping to make the muscles loose, supple and pliable.

An effective warm up also has the effect of increasing both your heart rate and your respiratory rate. This increases blood flow, which in turn increases the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the working muscles. All of this helps to prepare the muscles, tendons and joints for tag rugby.

Keeping in mind the aims or goals of an effective warm up, we can then go on to look at how the warm up should be structured.

It is important to start with the easiest and most gentle activity first, building upon each part with more energetic activities, until the body is at a physical and mental peak. This is the state in which the body is most prepared for tag rugby, and where the likelihood of sports injury has been minimised as much as possible.





So, how should you structure your warm up to achieve these goals? There are four key elements, or parts, which should be included to ensure an effective and complete warm up. They are...

- 1. The general warm-up**
- 2. Dynamic stretching 1**
- 3. The sports-specific warm-up**
- 4. Dynamic stretching 2**

All four parts are equally important and any one part should not be neglected or thought of as not necessary. All four elements work together to bring the body and mind to a physical peak, ensuring the player is prepared for tag rugby. This process will help ensure the player has a minimal risk of sports injury.

Download the document outlining these elements specifically for Tag Rugby players either [HERE](#) (in PDF format) or [HERE](#) (in Word format). The IRB website referenced in this document can be found at www.irbrugbyready.com

To summarise, it is important to complete a warm up before every session or game. It is also important to keep warm between matches and complete a warm down after a training session or match. The above routines take a bit of time but the benefits include improvement in performance and reducing the chance of injury.

I hope this information is of benefit to you and that you continue to have an enjoyable and injury-free tag rugby season.

Des Ryan - Fitness Education Manager, Irish Rugby Football Union.

