Exercising with Ankylosing Spondylitis

What is Ankylosing Spondylitis?

- Ankylosing Spondylitis is a form of arthritis that primarily affects the spine (Khan 2013).
- Inflammation found in the vertebrae of the spine can lead to chronic and severe pain and in some cases cause a forward curvature in the spine (Khan 2013).
- This particular type of arthritis can result in a loss of flexibility; however regular exercise for just 10-15 minutes a day can increase flexibility of the spine and strengthen the muscles that support it (Pietrangelo 2013).

Exercises For Your Spine

- Swimming is a low impact exercise that can help increase flexibility not only in the spine, but the hips and neck as well (Pietrangelo 2013).
- Yoga increases flexibility and reduces tension throughout the spine. It’s important to focus on slow and controlled movements along with deep and controlled breathing (Pietrangelo 2013).
- Poses that are especially aimed to help with flexibility of the spine are the cat cow pose as well as child’s pose (Slater 2011).
- Sitting on a physioball while focusing on rotation of the trunk and/or the head is a great way to increase flexibility of the spine as well as the neck (Slater 2011).

If you are diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis, one of the most beneficial things you can do for your body is to focus on maintaining good posture in every aspect of your daily routines as well as maintaining mobility of the spine (Slater 2011).