



CrossFit Training for Athletes: Rationale and Value

ALEX MÉNDEZ, PT

What is CrossFit?

- ▶ Greg Glassman
- ▶ More than 15,000 gyms nationwide
- ▶ Closest competitor, Planet Fitness, has 1,100 gyms
- ▶ Biggest fitness trend in the world?

What is CrossFit?

- ▶ Google describes CrossFit as a high-intensity fitness program incorporating elements from several sports and types of exercise.
- ▶ Training philosophy that coaches people of all shapes and sizes to improve their physical well-being and cardiovascular fitness in a hardcore yet accepting and encouraging environment.
- ▶ Cultural phenomenon as well breeding community with its own language.

The Case of CrossFit

- ▶ Sports science history
 - ▶ Focus on L-MICT (low to moderate intensity continuous training)
 - ▶ Popularity of L-MICT propagated by running craze in the 70s, developing sports science discipline, and lack of specialized equipment
- ▶ Current trends
 - ▶ Obesity continues to rise
 - ▶ Obesity linked to most prevalent and costly medical problems in US
 - ▶ HIIT (high intensity interval training)

The Benefits of CrossFit



- ▶ Improved body composition
- ▶ Improved VO2 max
- ▶ Improved work capacity
- ▶ Improved BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor)

The Benefits of CrossFit

- ▶ In the military
 - ▶ 25 million limited duty days each year across the services
 - ▶ Stress fractures alone result in \$100 million in medical expenses
 - ▶ Personnel expected to regularly engage in fitness training activities
 - ▶ HIIT improves fitness while reducing volumes, especially running

The Deficits of CrossFit-Only Training for the Athlete

- ▶ Name has connotation of non-specificity of training
 - ▶ “Jack of all trades; master of none”
 - ▶ Each sport has unique energy systems requirements and position-specific demands
 - ▶ Rotational athlete requires aggressive hip-shoulder separation, appreciable single-leg work, and end-range shoulder external rotation

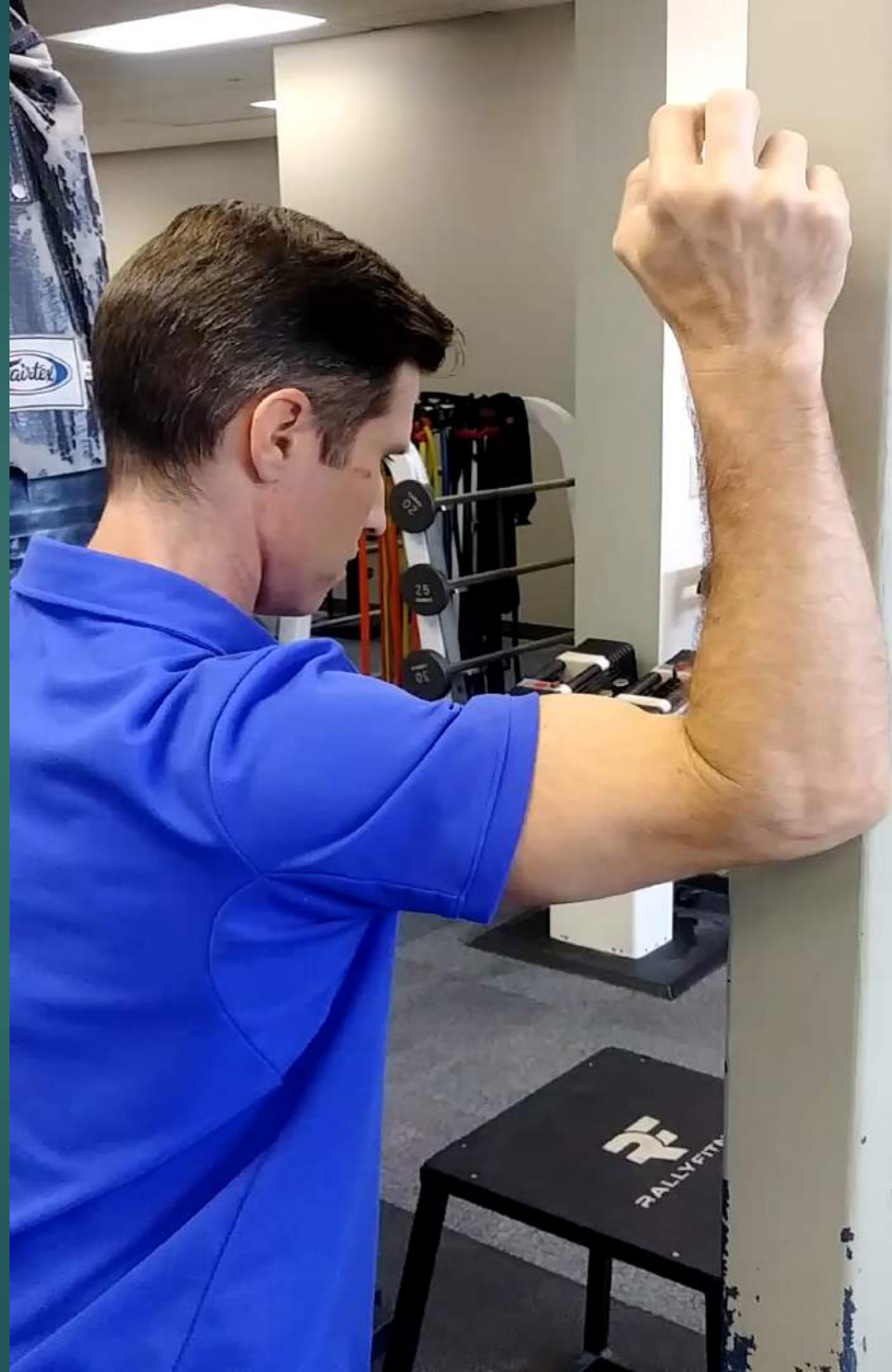
























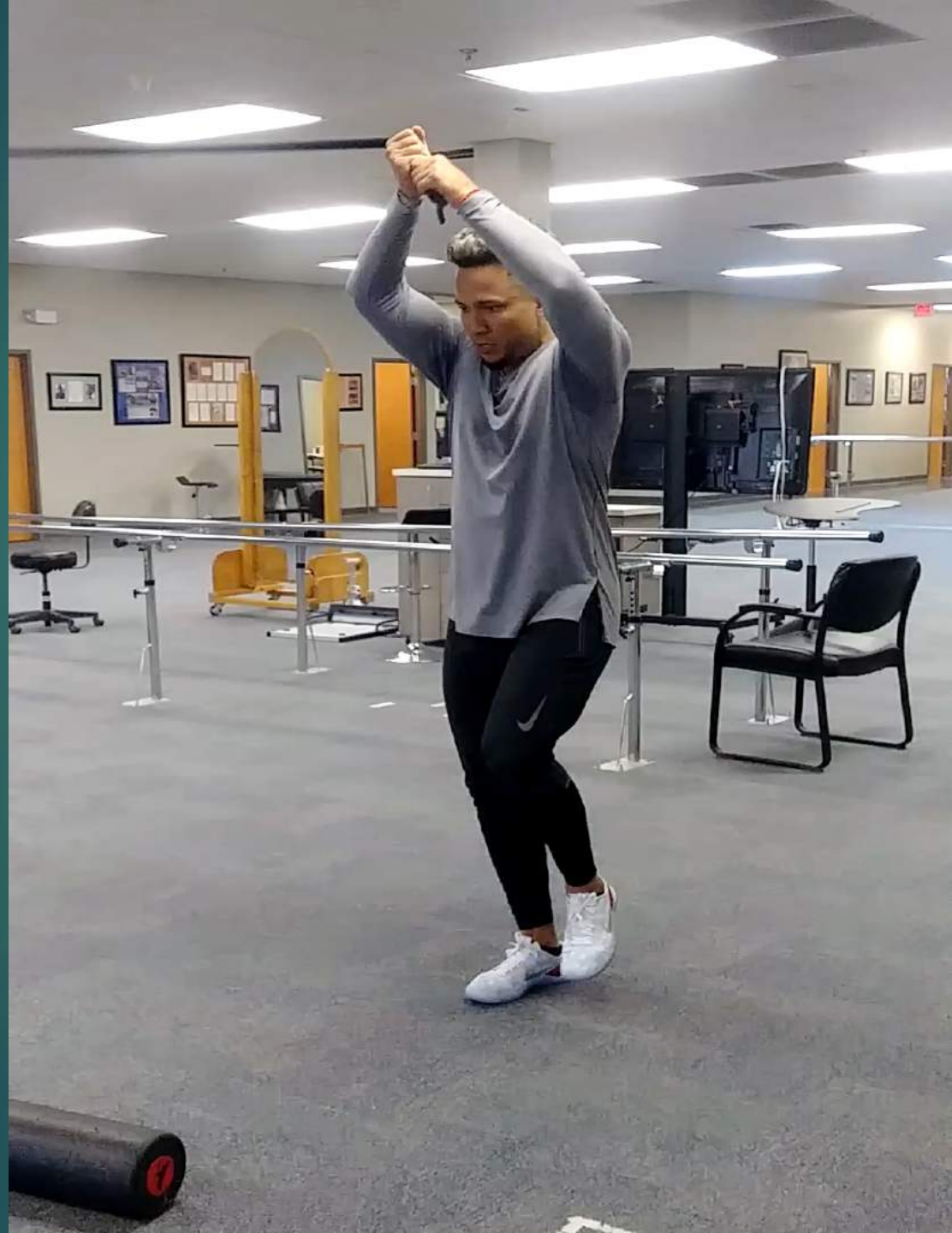




























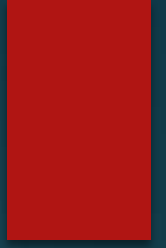
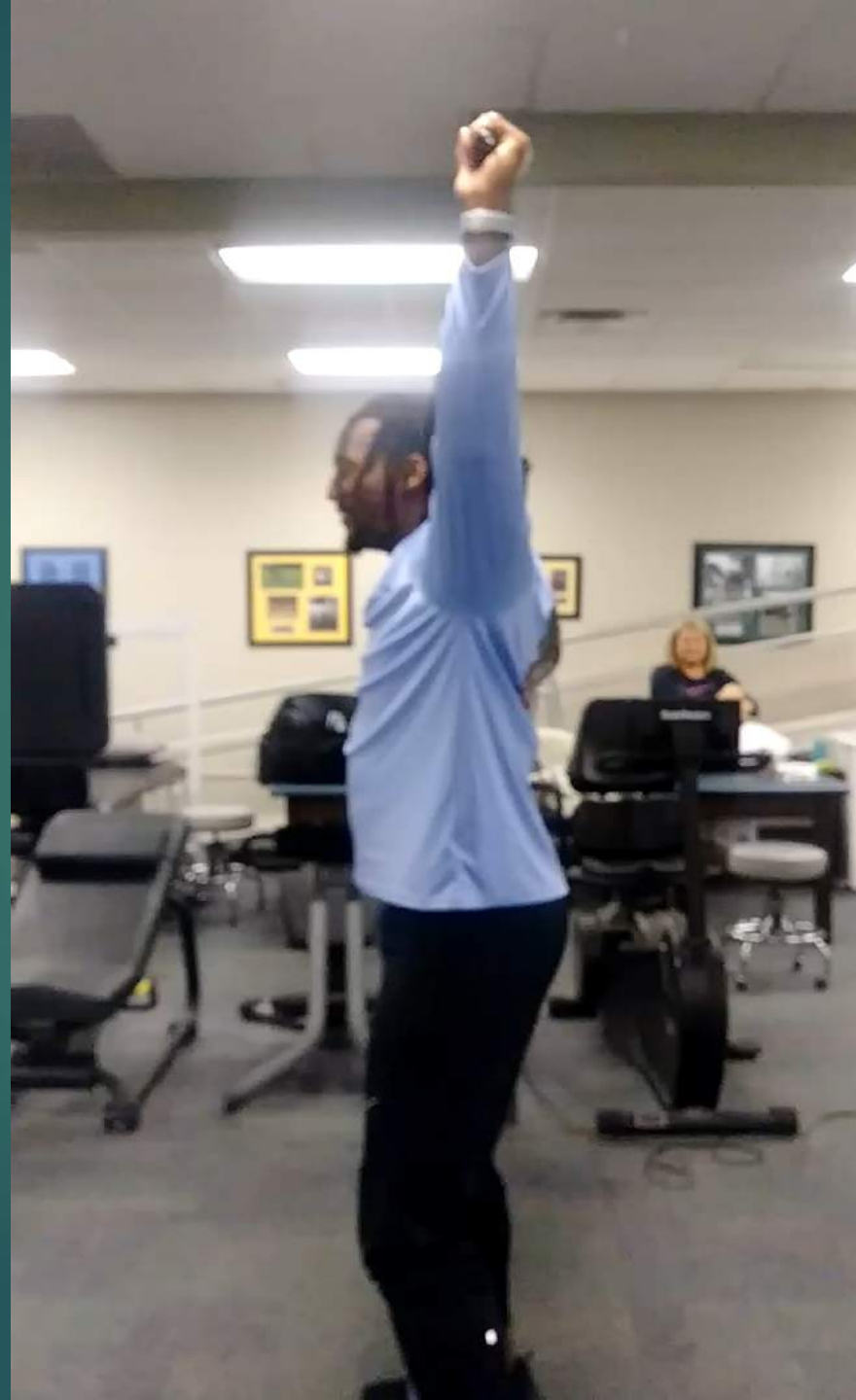
Movement Competency and CrossFit

- ▶ Functional screen
 - ▶ Gary Cook's FMS
 - ▶ Kelly Starrett's archetypes
- ▶ Olympic weight lifting technique and programming



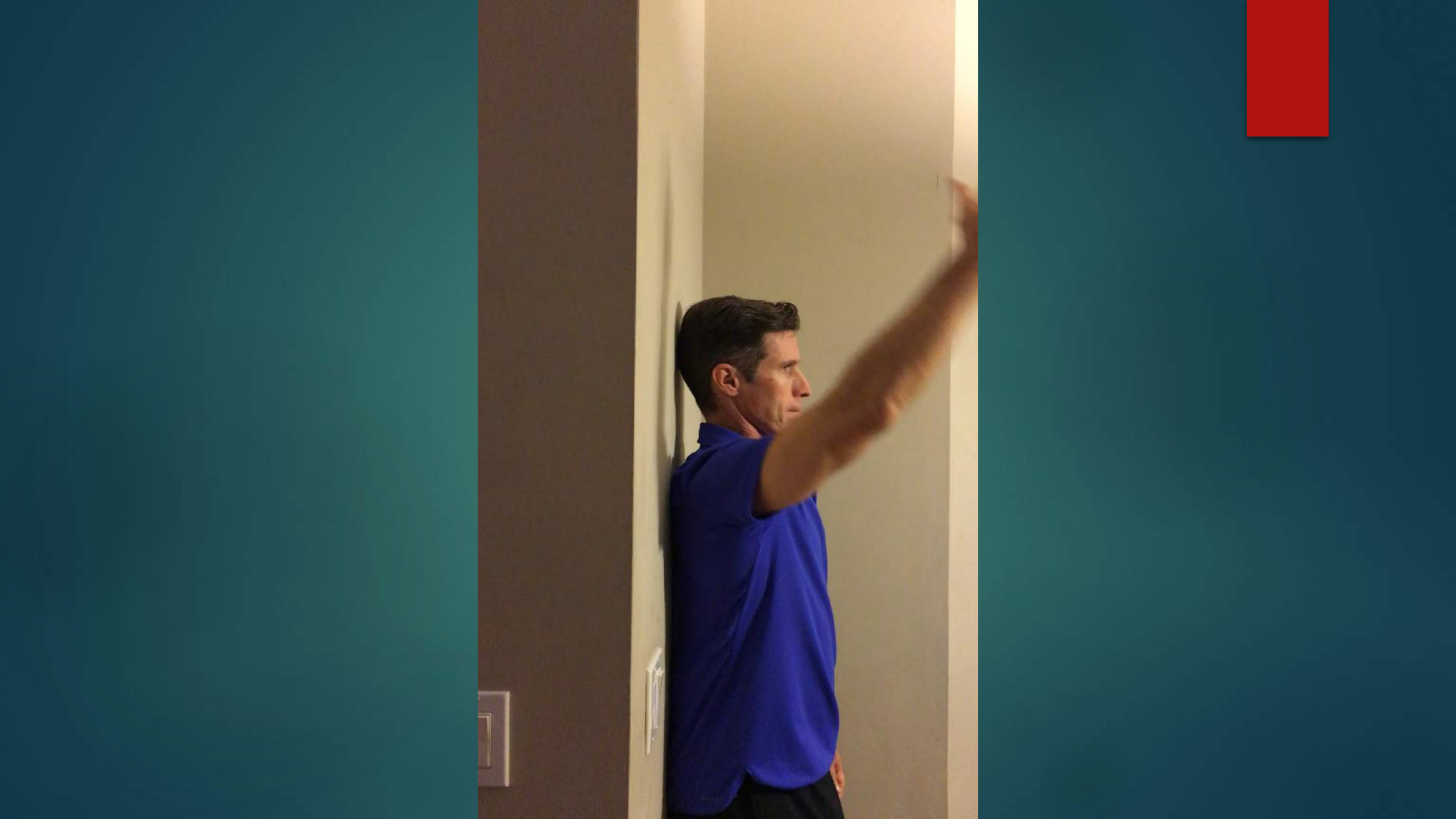


















Summation

- ▶ FMS
 - ▶ First move well, then move often

References

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