

## **“Am I Going to Sprain My Ankle This Season?”**

**Take These Simple Tests to See If You Are at Risk  
and Also to Improve Your Reaction Time and Running Speed**

Each year many athletes sprain their ankles. Some of these are from contact (example: landing on someone’s foot) but many are from a lack of control of the athlete’s body. This comes from poor balance and a lack of hip strength. Most athletes don’t train balance and when we see them at the Epicenter this is an area of deficiency.

Numerous studies show that athletes with decreased balance have a higher incidence of ankle sprains. This lack of balance decreases their reaction times in games when they are forced to change direction quickly and also reduces straight ahead sprinting speed.

Take these tests to assess your balance.

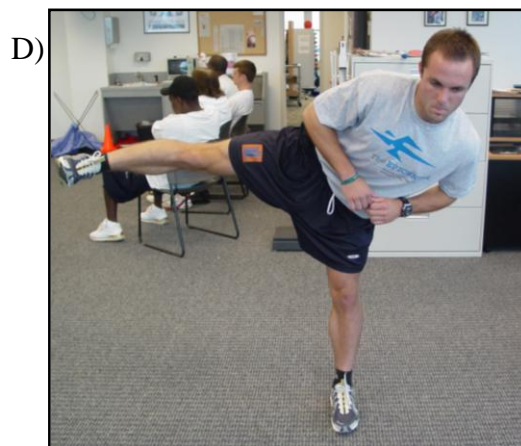
### **Test 1 – Single Leg Balance – Eyes Open and Eyes Closed**



**Standing on one leg, pick one knee up in the air so your thigh is parallel with the ground. Slowly turn your head to the right and then to the left while maintaining your balance. To make this exercise harder you can close your eyes or stand on a pillow. You should be able to perform this test one minute without losing your balance. Make sure you compare both legs.**

## Test 2 – Single Leg Balance Reach to the Floor with Side Kick

A quick way to assess balance and hip strength is to perform this test. The inability to perform this test for one minute without losing your balance means your body is not performing at its optimal level. Lack of balance is one of the key missing ingredients in most athletes' "diet" of training.



Starting in a standing position with one leg up in the air (thigh parallel to the ground) (A), bend your knee and squat down to touch the ground (B). Touch the ground with the opposite hand of the leg you are standing on. Return from that position to your start position (C) and then perform a kick out to the side and return back to (A).

You should be able to perform this test for one minute without losing your balance. If you have trouble, you are more likely to sprain an ankle this upcoming season and need to perform this exercise daily (3 sets of one minute).

For more information on ways to improve your foot speed, quickness, recover from injuries, etc, contact Alan Tyson at [ArchitectSports@gmail.com](mailto:ArchitectSports@gmail.com).