

## AFX DANCE PROGRAM

Foot and ankle strength and mobility are critical for dancers, not only for optimal performance, but also to reduce the risk of foot and ankle injuries, which account for approximately 57% percent of all dance related injuries. It has been reported that many common foot and ankle injuries in dancers occur as a result of poor “intrinsic” foot muscle strength. A lack of well-cushioned or supportive footwear in most dance forms creates an even greater need for adequate strengthening of all the muscles in the feet and lower legs.

### PRECAUTIONS

- » If you have an existing injury of the foot or ankle, you must consult with a qualified healthcare practitioner before beginning this program;
- » If any sudden pain or discomfort is experienced during the program, stop immediately and consult a qualified healthcare practitioner;
- » Ensure at least 48 hours recovery between exercise sessions and gradually increase the number of sets and repetitions.

### GUIDELINES

1. Please refer to the AFX Instruction Poster for more information regarding device set-up and directions for use;
2. Perform the strengthening exercises in the order shown;
3. **Weeks 1 to 7:** when 12 repetitions can be performed through a full range of motion, increase the resistance so that you are able to perform at least 8 repetitions. Work your way back up to 12 reps and repeat this cycle. Note: for more details on increasing resistance, refer to AFX Instructional DVD or the AFX poster;
4. **Weeks 3 to 7:** when you can perform 2 or 3 sets of 12 repetitions for all strengthening exercises, increase to the next resistance level;

5. Stretch before and after each exercise for 15 to 30 seconds using the stretching exercises shown below. For advanced stretching techniques, please refer to the AFX Stretching Program.

### TRAINING PROGRAM - 3 sessions per week

#### Week 1: Intro

- » 1 set of 8 to 12 reps of each exercise (refer to Guideline 3)

#### Week 2: Adaptation

- » 2 sets of 8 to 12 reps of each exercise (refer to Guideline 3)

#### Weeks 3 to 7: Strength Phase

- » 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 reps of each exercise (refer to Guideline 4);
- » Only progress to 3 sets of each exercise if your feet and lower legs do not feel overly fatigued during activity the day following exercise;
- » **Optional:** Include eccentric loading for all exercises shown below (see AFX Eccentric Loading Program).

#### Weeks 8 to 12: Muscular Endurance Phase

- » Begin with 1 or 2 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions for each exercise, progressing to 3 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions;
- » When you can perform 3 complete sets of 20 repetitions, increase the resistance and return to 3 sets of 15 repetitions;
- » Progress again to 3 sets of 20 repetitions and increase resistance using the process outlined above;
- » If a plateau is reached, reduce the resistance level and perform 1 set of each exercise to exhaustion. When 50 repetitions can be performed, increase the resistance level and repeat this cycle.

*After completing the training program, it is recommended that you follow the program below to maintain the improved performance that you have acquired. For further improvements in performance, continue to follow the program as listed for Weeks 3 to 7.*

### MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (2 to 3 sessions per week)

#### Each session includes:

- » 1 set of 8 to 12 reps for each exercise
- » 1 set of 15 to 20 reps for each exercise

**EXERCISES**

Perform in the order shown. Prior to performing exercises, complete a 5 minute warm-up including: walking in place, heel raises, foot rolls, etc.

1. Stretch Evertors



» Ensure toes are flexed  
» Hold for 15 to 30 seconds

2. Eversion (foot rotates outward)



» Ensure toes are flexed

3. Stretch Invertors



» Ensure toes are flexed  
» Hold for 15 to 30 seconds

4. Inversion (foot rotates inward)



» Ensure toes are flexed

5. Stretch Plantar/Toe Flexors



» Hold for 15 to 30 seconds

6. Plantarflexion & Toe Flexion



» Focus on arching the foot and flexing the toes

7. Stretch Dorsiflexors



» Hold for 15 to 30 seconds

8. Dorsiflexion & Toe Extension



» Focus on engaging the toes