

Training Tips: How to Avoid Injuries while Exercising

Weightlifters, athletes, and those seeking to lose weight all of one thing in common - the desire to get results fast. Working out regularly is a key element of a serious workout program.

However, if your muscles haven't fully recovered between work-out sessions, you may not be able to put in the gruelling work-out you planned. You also increase your odds of sustaining an injury that could derail your efforts.

Many start their workout program with the intensity of a marine drill sergeant - "if 3 sets of 10 are good, 10 sets of 10 MUST be better!" Only to wake up three or four days later, certain they have barely survived a bus rolling over them during the night.

There is an invisible line between good-for-you and way overboard. If it hurts, STOP. If you are feeling fatigued, rest. Feeling tired is one of the first clues you are not giving your body the time it needs to recover.

Tired muscles are susceptible muscles. Susceptible to injury; injuries can and will side-line your efforts, putting you back on the couch.

With a little understanding, you can avoid training injuries. Here are a few tips to keep you on the road to success.

- Start with baby steps. Whether weight lifting, running or a step class, start at a point where it feels easy. This is good for your mind (I CAN do this, is a great motivator to continue!) and eases your body into increased activity.
- Include time off between activity days, to allow for adequate recovery of your muscles. When muscle tissue is working strenuously, tiny microscopic tears occur. You want this to happen. Muscle cells respond by healing the tears and becoming thicker, to handle the newly increased activity demands. Muscles come back stronger, more capable of meeting the demands you're putting on them.
- Take an ice bath after your workout session. Ten short, but cold, minutes helps increase the healing process along by cooling hard worked muscles off, flushing lactic acid out of muscle tissue, and reducing swelling, stiffness, and pain.

Ice baths shorten the amount of days needed for muscles to recover, by speeding up the natural healing process. Muscles recover in less time, which increases the amount of time you can workout and reduces your odds of sustaining an injury.

With sensible training and thoughtful recovery practices, a happier, healthier and more active you are just around the corner.

After sensible training and thoughtful recovery practices, you will not only see, but feel how well your efforts pay off.