

The Wellness Express™

Jump on the train to good health

When Does Exercise Become More Harmful than Helpful?

Presented by: **Creative Healing**

Can you feel it? Spring is in the air. As the mercury starts its ascent up the thermometer, many of us come out of hibernation; put away our winter clothes and go outside to enjoy the renewed warmth. For some, the improved weather provides just enough motivation they need to launch that new exercise program.

However, as you begin to train more intensely, all too often nagging injuries arise. Your chiropractor wants to ensure that when you start exercising, you follow some good habits to help prevent injuries from occurring.

When do good intentions turn into bad results?

Exercise is one of the best things you can do to keep healthy. This is especially true for your muscles, bones and joints. However, any time you shift from a more sedentary lifestyle to one that is more physically demanding, there is a greater likelihood for strain on these tissues. Small imbalances, or slight weaknesses, can become exaggerated as you begin to place a greater workload on your body.

How do I prevent injuries before they occur?

One of the keys to preventing those injuries is to get advice from an expert before you begin a new exercise program. Schedule a check-up with your chiropractor to see if everything is aligned and working properly. If your body starts off in better balance, you will reduce the risk of strains and sprains later.

Another good way to prevent injury is to increase the intensity of your exercise gradually. If you are planning to start a new exercise program, consider consulting with a personal trainer. A knowledgeable trainer can provide you with proper instruction and give you a detailed program that outlines how far and how fast you can safely go.



Exercise of the Week

Hip Thrust, Single Leg

(Consult your chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise.)

Start on your back with both feet on the ball, legs straight. Arms out to the side, palms up. Lift one foot a few inches. Pushing down into the ball with your other foot, lift your hips toward the ceiling. Stop when body is straight. Hold for 5-10 counts. Return to starting position. Alternate legs for 4-8 repetitions. Note: for greater difficulty, change the arm position.



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Drink plenty of fluids.

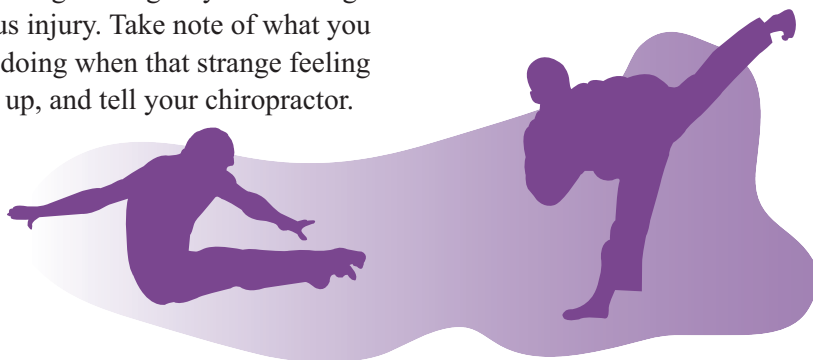
As the temperature increases, our bodies tend to perspire more with exercise. Proper hydration keeps your circulatory system flowing so that every cell of your body receives the nutrients it requires. Signs of dehydration usually include a dry mouth or excessive thirst, but may also include nausea, headaches and fatigue. On average, you should consume about 2 liters of water per day, but this amount may need to be increased on the days that you are more physically active.

Warm up properly before exercising.

Some light movements before starting a workout routine help to get the musculoskeletal system primed for an increased workload. Five to ten minutes of light calisthenics, followed by some stretching of the muscles to be used most in the workout, helps prevent injury.

Listen to your body.

Every person and every situation is different. Even the experts do not always know how far you can go on any given day. Only you do. Your body will let you know when it has had enough. Rest when you need to. Stop to catch your breath and if something does not feel right, it probably is not. Listening to the body's early warning signs can go a long way in reducing serious injury. Take note of what you were doing when that strange feeling came up, and tell your chiropractor.



Get treated for *smaller* problems before they become bigger ones.

It is not usually wise to push through an injury, even if it seems very minor. Little aches and pains are clues that something is wrong, and it is almost always easier to fix shortly after they first appear. Waiting too long before addressing an issue usually leads to other problems, as the body tries to compensate for injured or weak areas. Once you have multiple areas of pain and dysfunction, it is more difficult to treat, and it also becomes more difficult to diagnose the main problem.



Exercise is good for you - but keep in mind that too much exercise too soon can lead to problems. Consult with your doctor of chiropractic before planning a new exercise program so you can keep your actions aligned with your intentions, and your body aligned to work for you, and not against you.

Quote to Inspire

"Physical fitness can neither be achieved by wishful thinking nor outright purchase."

- Joseph Pilates



Wellness Express™ newsletters are written and designed exclusively for chiropractors

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