

Introduction to Safe(r) Exercise

Benefits

- Improved psychological balance (especially when complemented by nutrition, rest, etc.)
- Reduced injury and illness
- Greater sensitivity to bodily problems
- Improved confidence

Precautions

- See a doctor, especially if you have medical conditions, past injuries, are on medications or experience problems/pain
- Avoid pain -- some of the exercises will cause discomfort, but you shouldn't experience pain or a pins/needles/tingling sensation while performing them. You certainly should not experience any sharp, acute pains.
- Start Slow
- Your Personal Training Rate -- You should be perspiring and breathing deeply while exercising, but should also be able to carry on small talk
- Adjust exercises as needed by your body
- Avoid eating immediately before exercise. Ideally an hour or more.
- Don't drink a lot of water right before exercise. A couple cups 30 minutes or so before, then sip throughout activity.

Time

- 2-3 times per week, about 20-45 minutes per event
- Don't over-train!

Kinds of Exercise

- No one exercise or kind of exercise is “right” for everyone
- Dynamic Stretching -- prepares the body for activity, reduces the chances of injury due to rapid movement
- Static Stretching -- increases gross range of motion, should be done *after* dynamic activity
- Body-weight Calisthenics, also should be done *after* dynamic activity
 - General
 - High-Intensity
 - Slow
 - Cardiovascular endurance (jogging, jumprope)
- Resistance -- elastic bands, weight vests, dumbbells, kettlebells, etc.

Afterward

- If soreness is a problem or concern, drink or eat supplemental protein during and within 30 minutes of concluding exercise.
- Do not engage in dynamic activity after a deeply-fatiguing exercise routine.
- Be sure to get a good night's sleep and a day of rest.

Other Recommendations

- Know why you are doing this
- Set goals, and reward yourself for achieving them
- Give it time
- Attempt to curtail harmful habits like smoking, excessive alcohol consumption (more than 2 servings per day), excess intake of sugars and refined wheats
- Remember that diet, rest and the like can be just as important as exercise
- Don't over-do it -- exercising too much, or trying to make too many life-changes at once. A little activity every day, even if it is just a walk, with more intense activity every other day or so, is more than adequate for most people.
- Mix it up. Change your exercise routines from time to time, usually about every three months, or when you find you can do 40 or more reps of any calisthenic.
- It is okay to ask for help (but consider the source)
- Invite a friend to exercise with you