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Media Release – Exercise for Good Health and to Reduce Injuries
From: NZ Register of Exercise Professionals



Exercise for Good Health and to Reduce Injuries

The benefits of physical activity and exercise far outweigh the risks of injury; however, ACC statistics show that:

- There were nearly 40,000 new claims for fitness training and gym related injuries in 2013. This is 9% of all sports claims.
- 59% of injuries to young men were categorised as “lifting carrying and strain”. This is most often from lifting weights.
- 37% of injuries to middle aged women are loss of balance or personal control most often associated with gym classes such as aerobics, yoga, Pilates and boxing.

While not all injuries can be prevented, there are some basic steps you can take to ensure your exercise programme is not interrupted unnecessarily from injury.

Warm up and recovery

Warming up prior to exercising means you are prepared both mentally and physically by increasing the blood flow to muscles, increasing the overall body temperature and making us more alert. By performing mobility exercises and stretching after exercise you increase muscle range of movement, which decreases the chance of injury by allowing an effective range of movement at joints.

Taking the time to prepare your body by warming up will also improve performance during the exercise session. It's well worth the short time needed.

Adhering to prescribed exercise

Through regular exercise we become more in tune with what our body is capable of, and see the results of our investment in our health. However, nothing can replace the training and experience of an exercise professional when it comes to making sure the correct amount, and the right type of exercise is prescribed.

By getting the correct exercise advice, and following it, you can ensure that you do not attempt exercises that are inappropriate for your exercise level, or train at an intensity or volume that does not take into account your current health profile.

Many injuries do not occur in isolation, rather they are the result of ongoing movement patterns that create an imbalance over time, leading to an injury.

You don't need to be the expert - a registered exercise professional will be able to guide you on your way.

Using correct technique

It doesn't matter how well an exercise session is planned, if exercise technique is not correct then not only will injury be risked, but also results may be slowed. Weights that are too heavy, movements that are uncontrolled, and focus on the wrong muscle group can all lead to injury. There are a lot of myths out there about exercise speed and range, some of it is fact, but much of it is based on 'enthusiastic amateurs' sharing what they believe, rather than registered exercise professionals sharing what they know. Even if you are not regularly working with an exercise professional, get a check in on your technique to keep yourself on track and injury free.

Working in a safe environment

Injuries can often occur due to external factors such as an incorrectly loaded weights, or an unexpected trip in a park based boot camp session. Make sure the environment you are working in is safe. Does the instructor keep a hazard management register? Do they have access to a first aid kit? Does your outdoor trainer arrive before you to ensure the area is safe? Being injury free is not just about what you do, but where you do it.

Staying injury free during exercise is a group effort. Engage the skills of a registered exercise professional, be confident in sharing how you feel during your exercise workout, and make sure the environment you exercise in is hazard free.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

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NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "warrant of fitness check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

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Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its *mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.*

