

Here's how you can avoid workout related injuries

By Dr Ashish Jain on August 20, 2017

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Dr Ashish Jain working out at the gym

Concepts about fitness are constantly evolving over time. I still remember my first gym workout which was way back in 1990. It was a modest set up where I used to do a 2-3 hour whole body workout as many days a week as possible.

This was followed by drinking 'nimbu paani' before going to bed. There was no preaching on the topic of protein intake or split workouts. Fats were bad and calorie restrictions were enforced.

Nowadays, a plethora of information on the World Wide Web along with the outcropping of numerous fitness centres all over the city is a common phenomenon. Fitness is a science and one must follow the principles to achieve results.

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In my clinical practice I see two groups of individuals.

1. Fitness enthusiasts with workout related injuries.
2. Patients recovering from surgery (fracture or spinal surgery) wanting to get back on an exercise program.

Being a fitness freak myself I am able to guide my patients as to which kind of an exercise program will suit their needs including guidelines to avoid harm. I believe there is fine line between intensity and injury in any form of exercise.



Dr Ashish Jain doing what he enjoys best, in his leisure

Proper guidance and a little common sense go a long way in avoiding injuries.

Common workout injuries I encounter are:

- Back strains (Lower back & neck)
- Shoulder pains (Rotator cuff strains)
- Knee cartilage issues (Meniscus tears and patella pain)
- Heel pain (Plantar fasciitis)
- Elbow strain (Tennis & Golfers elbow)

Any form of exercise, especially change in its intensity, causes muscle soreness and pain. One must distinguish this 'good' pain from that of injury. No pain, No gain right?

My recommendations to gym buffs are as follows:

- Adequate warm up prior to hitting the weight zone of the gym.
- Active (dynamic) stretches especially to the body part to be worked out.
- Keeping to a graduated progressive resistance exercise program. Patience pays. Stimulate the muscle don't kill it.
- Correct technique. Whether it is setting up your bike height for a cardio session or adjusting the machines for resistance training.
- For new comers, initial guidance by a qualified trainer will go a long way in getting familiar with your equipment.
- Never over train (45 min to an hour max)
- Post workout cool down and stretches are essential.
- Keep well hydrated during and after your workout.
- Post-exercise nutrition to replete your body stores. Remember; athletes don't exercise and diet, they train and eat.
- Good rest and adequate sleep is also essential for muscle health.
- Prophylactic icing of sore joints and muscles when necessary.
- Protective supports (lumbar belts, elbow and knee wraps) are useful for heavy lifting.

Fitness is a journey, not an end point or destination. You can start doing what 'fit' people do and you have arrived. No one has time for exercise; one has to 'make' time for fitness. Be smart in your workouts and prevent gym injuries.

The author is a Consultant, General Orthopaedics & Trauma at P.D. Hinduja Hospital & MRC