



CHRISTCHURCH

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Tips For Exercising When You Have Pain

PHYSIO DIRECT

One of the most challenging aspects of living with an injury or chronic pain is how it can quickly impact your exercise routine. If you have been working towards a fitness or weight goal, this can be extremely demoralizing. Here are a few tips that can help to keep you on track while you recover. Staying as active as possible during this time can mean you're in the best position to reach your goals again once your injury has healed.

1. Try a new activity.

When injury strikes, it can be tempting to stop exercising altogether and rest while you recover. An injury can be frustrating, but it can also be an opportunity to try out a different sport. If you're a runner with an ankle injury, you can keep up your fitness by swimming instead. Cycling can be an excellent option for people for dealing with knee pain, and if you're a swimmer with shoulder pain, maybe switch to running for a while. Check with your physiotherapist for some ideas to keep you moving.

2. Exercise within your limits.

If you're getting pain at 5km, this doesn't always mean you should give up running altogether. Your physiotherapist can help you monitor your symptoms carefully and plan an exercise routine that keeps your fitness up while reducing symptom flare-ups. Staying as active as possible throughout your recovery can also mean that you are better placed to get back to your best performance once symptoms subside.

3. Take the opportunity to improve your footwear and equipment.

Injury and pain can be a great prompt to look at your equipment and technique. For example, with hip and knee pain, the type of shoes you wear can have a significant difference. Often pain has more than one cause, with technique and equipment more often than not having a substantial impact on the stress placed on your body. Your physiotherapist is an excellent source of advice in this area, don't hesitate to ask for an assessment.

4. Take to the water

Hydrotherapy has long been used to help patients with joint pain or muscle weakness exercise. The water helps reduce joint stress and provide extra sensory input that can reduce pain. Exercising in water can be especially helpful for sufferers of chronic pain or those who have pain with weight-bearing. Speak to your physio for a hydrotherapy program if you're not sure how to approach exercise in water.

Our physiotherapists are happy to discuss your condition with you and share their tips to help you stay pain-free.



Brain Teasers

1. What are the collective nouns for a group of:

- a. Apes
- b. Bats
- c. Donkeys
- e. Elephants
- f. Ferrets
- g. Owls
- h. Hyenas

Did You Know?

The left side of your brain controls the right side of your body, but the left side of your face.

PhysioTip

Small hamstring tears can feel like 'tightness' or an ache at the back of the thigh, rather than sharp pain.

Spinal Stenosis

What is spinal stenosis?

The spinal cord, nerves and arteries are housed by the spine, which acts as a hard electrical casing to support and protect these vulnerable structures. The spine has a hollow column that allows the spinal cord to run from the brain to the rest of the body. At each spinal segment, nerves exit the spine and supply the tissues of the body. There is also an intricate network of small veins and arteries that provide blood to the spinal cord and vertebrae, providing them with the nutrients needed to operate.

Spinal stenosis is characterized by a narrowing of the spaces that house the spinal cord, nerves and blood supply. A variety of factors can cause spinal stenosis, however overwhelmingly it is caused by degenerative changes to the spine as we age. Many people over the age of 60 will have spinal stenosis; however, not all will have pain. Clinically, spinal stenosis is used to describe the painful symptoms of this condition rather than just the narrowing itself.

What are the symptoms?

Pain with walking or standing that radiates into the hips, thighs and even feet is the hallmark of spinal stenosis. Usually, this pain will be reduced with rest and forward movements of the spine. Spinal stenosis is a progressive condition and symptoms will gradually increase over time. The pain is often described as a deep radiating ache and can be associated with fatigue, heaviness, weakness and numbness. It can affect just one leg, however more often will be felt in both legs. There will often be associated back pain; however, leg pain is usually the most severe complaint.

How can physiotherapy help?

There are many conditions that need to be excluded before a diagnosis can be made. Your physiotherapist is able to conduct a thorough examination and accurately diagnose this condition. In some cases, imaging may be requested. As mentioned earlier, many people have stenotic spinal changes without symptoms. Surgery to decompress the restricted nerves and stabilize the spine are used in very severe cases.

For mild to moderate cases of spinal stenosis, physiotherapy can be extremely beneficial. Your physiotherapist can help you manage your pain through hands-on techniques and by providing a targeted exercise program based on biomechanical assessment. They are also able to help you to understand and manage your day in a way that helps to reduce flare-ups and maintain muscle strength.

If surgery is the right choice for you, your physiotherapist is able to guide you through this treatment pathway, helping you to prepare and recover from surgery to get the best outcome possible.

None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your condition.



Answers: shrewdness of apes, cauldron of bats, pace of donkeys, parade of elephants, business of ferrets, parliament of owls, cackle of hyenas

Pumpkin and Parmesan Risotto

Ingredients:

½ Small Pumpkin
2 cups Arborio Rice
½ Small Red Onion
2 Tbsp. Olive Oil
1 handful Fresh Basil
2 Clove of Garlic
2 cups Vegetable Stock
½ Cup White Wine
100g Fresh Parmesan
Salt and Pepper



1. Chop pumpkin into small cubes, roughly 1-2cm cubes and place in pot of salted boiling water. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until soft. Strain excess water and set aside. In a large frying pan, add salt and pepper, diced red onion, crushed garlic clove and olive oil. Heat to medium temperature and add Arborio rice, stir until completely coated in oil.
2. Add cooked pumpkin pieces to the frying pan and stir gently for 2-3 minutes. Gradually add vegetable stock, one tablespoon at a time, stirring slowly. Once all the vegetable stock has been added, stir through white wine.
3. Cover risotto and reduce to low heat. Stir occasionally and add extra water if necessary. Once risotto is soft, add grated Parmesan cheese and serve immediately.

Garnish with basil and balsamic glaze. Serves 4

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