

Staying Active As An Adult Athlete

Summary

1. Dynamic Warm-Ups
2. Proper Rest and Recovery Times
3. Graded Exposure
4. Staying Active Year Round

Dynamic Warm-Ups

- As we age we might not be as active throughout the day as we once were but we still like to enjoy recreational activities such as: hiking, running, skiing, and other sports
- Whether it be working 8 hours a day, sitting more often, or prolonged time driving; muscles and joints can stiffen up and require more time to warm up than during younger years
- A proper dynamic warm up will ensure that your muscles and joints are well prepared for any activity and reduce risk for injury
- A dynamic warm up entails 10-15 minutes of stretching through continual movement and exercise to increase heart rate
- A good dynamic warm up addresses each of the major joints used that will be used in your recreational activity of choice
- A quick example to warm up: lunges, air squats, side steps, arm circles, jumping jacks
- This should be done before any recreational activity

Proper Rest and Recovery Times

- It is no secret that as one ages it will take them longer to recover from recreational based activities
- It is important to understand your limits and allow yourself proper recovery times
- This may be as simple as giving yourself 2-3 days of rest between long runs compared to doing it daily during your younger years
- It also means you might have to give yourself long breaks during the exercise or recreational activities to allow your cardiorespiratory system to function properly
- Allowing for proper rest times and listening to your body will help reduce the risk of injury and allow you to enjoy your recreational activities with less aches and pains.

Graded Exposure

- The most common injuries we see in the clinic for older active adults comes from doing too much too soon
- It is important to ease into new activities or activities you have not done in awhile
- An example would be going out to ski for one hour as opposed to going all in for six hours your first time on the slopes for the year
- Another good example is with adult recreational runners; start low with 1 mile and gradually work your way up by 2-3 minutes each week
- It is very common to see injuries from someone going out and pushing past their limits instead of slowly working into activity and allowing the body to adapt

Staying Active Year Round

- The best advice for one to stay healthy and injury free is to stay active year round
- Many times we see problems in the clinic when someone had not performed any activity for months and months then decided to jump right back in as a “Weekend Warrior”
- Staying active can be as simple as going for brisk walk daily on your lunch break, stretching for 10 minutes before bed every day, or doing some light calisthenics every morning before work
- Keeping activity levels up year round will make you feel better, improve your health, and reduce the risk of recreational injuries