

How to Avoid Injuries While Exercising

The fastest way to kill your exercise regimen and to undo all your hard work is to get injured. From mild aches and pains to serious tears and strains, there's always the possibility of getting injured while exercising. Thankfully, there are several things you can do to reduce your chances of getting hurt.

Follow these tips to stay safe while exercising.

- **Always warm up before exercising**—When exercising, it's never a good idea to go straight from 0 to 60. You need to ease into it. Spend time stretching your muscles before you start exercising. To stretch properly, you need to slowly stretch the targeted muscles until there is tension (not pain). Stretch the muscles you'll be working out for several minutes so that they'll be flexible once you're ready to go full force.

In addition to stretching, you should also start your exercise session with some light exercise. For example, instead of immediately launching into a full sprint, start by walking, then jogging, and then working your way up to a sprint.

- **Listen to your body**—There's a very thin line between “no pain, no gain” and pain turning into a serious injury. Your body is constantly sending out indicators of its condition. You need to learn to pay attention to these signs and decipher what they mean. If you start to feel pain, notice swelling, or have extreme stiffness, you need to immediately take notice and stop pushing yourself so hard.

Whatever you do, don't try to exercise through an injury. This will slow your recovery time, and it can even cause your injury to worsen. For all injuries, seek medical attention immediately.

- **Don't try an exercise you can't handle**—As you start exercising more regularly, you'll be inclined to push yourself to try new and challenging things. This is an important part of exercising, as it helps you become stronger and more fit.

However, you have to make sure not to try to rush your progress. Trying an exercise that exceeds your capabilities can cause a serious injury. Experts recommend using a 10% rule. This means increasing your activity levels by just 10% each week. This is a healthy pace for your progress.

- **Seek professional guidance for new exercises**—Poor form is one of the leading causes of exercise-related injuries. Attempting a squat or even a pushup with the wrong form can cause you to get hurt, derailing all your progress.

That's why you should always let a professional guide you through new exercises to show you the proper form. While you might not be able to afford a personal trainer, the internet is full of useful tutorial videos that can help you achieve proper form.

- **Stay hydrated**—It's important to drink plenty of water when exercising. Ideally, you want to be drinking water all throughout the day, so that you're fully hydrated when it comes time to work out.

By keeping your fluid levels up, you'll avoid cramping and other painful side effects of dehydration.

- **Give yourself a break**—It's best to think of getting in shape as a marathon, not a sprint. So, don't sabotage your efforts by overtraining. Your body needs time to recover between workout sessions. If you're working out at full force every day, your body will break down, and you'll end up suffering a serious injury. Make sure to give your body a break a couple of times a week.