

physio4 you

Move well, stay well,
with physiotherapy.



Chinatown Physiotherapy Centre

Achieve fitness with our help!

Made a promise to yourself to get fit in 2006? If you did, you're not alone. Many of our patients make this same promise to themselves however find it hard to get motivated once the summer months are over. The physios in this practice can help.

We can recommend exercises that are designed specifically for you to achieve your desired level of fitness. The more you repeat and become aware of an activity, the easier it becomes. Our practice looks at types of exercises/activities, specific workloads, durations of activities/sessions and intensity guidelines and can devise a plan to help you achieve your target fitness level.

To help we have seven tips to help you become motivated and fit in 2006.

Tip 1 - Start slow

If you've been inactive for some time it's important to start slowly and gradually build up. Begin with low impact activities such as walking, swimming or using an exercise bike. We can help suggest an appropriate level to start at based on your current fitness.

Tip 2 - Know yourself

Talk to us about your medical history or any problematic areas which may affect your choice of activity. We can help make exercise safer.

Tip 3 - Warm up

Remember to warm up, warm down and stretch before and after gentle activity to minimise muscle soreness. If you're not sure - we can show you some warm up techniques.

Tip 4 - Come prepared

Make sure you have appropriate footwear for your activity and a bottle of water to keep you hydrated.

Tip 5 - Venues

Gyms are great places to get active but you must ensure that you are well supervised. Not a gym person - then try something else - go bushwalking or go for a bike ride! Even simply - take the stairs, walk to the train station or local shops! Better still - see us for regular assessment and instruction.

Tip 6 - Record your progress

Keep a diary or log of your progress - it will serve as a reminder of how far you've come and give you encouragement if you're feeling disheartened. Reward yourself with something healthy when you achieve mini goals.

Tip 7 - Workout with someone

Find a workout mate or buddy. You're more likely to keep a workout date if you're doing the activity with a friend, or you're a member of a club.

See one of our physiotherapists about developing an exercise program for you today and **GET MOTIVATED!**

If you have any injury concerns, stop your activity and consult one of our physiotherapists. The sooner you address these injuries the quicker you can resume your favourite activity.



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Watch your back when watering!

Summer may be over, and the hot weather on the decline, but that doesn't mean you won't spend time watering your plants. Lugging litres of water to and around the garden can increase your risk of injury, particularly for older people.

Our practice wishes to advise our patients, especially our older ones how to avoid these injuries whilst watering.

We often treat patients with wrist, shoulder and back pain attributed to carrying heavy buckets and watering cans, and lifting awkward loads. To avoid this, we recommend that you warm up before and after watering by stretching. We can recommend the types of stretches that would be most appropriate.

For our older patients who are at greater injury risk, we recommend watering early in the morning when the weather is cool and bright. This will minimise the risk of evening falls caused by reduced vision.

To help we have some handy tips for you to use when watering. For more comprehensive information on avoiding injury whilst watering or undertaking other activities see one of our physiotherapists.

Tip 1 - Bend your knees

When lifting buckets or watering cans, remember to bend your knees, not your back. Never twist your body when your back is bent. When lifting, keep your feet apart and one slightly in front of the other. If you are unsure, we can demonstrate these techniques for you.

Tip 2 - Don't overfill

Never overfill your bucket. Only carry as much weight as you know you can lift comfortably. If you are unsure, we can help suggest an appropriate weight for you. Hint: half-fill buckets to lighten the load and help avoid wrist and shoulder pain.

Tip 3 - Equalise the load

Distribute the load equally on each side of the body by using two lighter containers rather than one heavy bucket. Hint: rinse out and use 2-litre milk bottles for watering.

Tip 4 - Closeness is the key

Always carry buckets as close to your body as possible. Holding any weight away from your body increases the stress on your upper body and back.

Tip 5 - Use your surroundings

Place the bucket on a stool or chair when filling it, so you don't have to lift it up as far when it's filled.

Did you know?

The average person will walk around 128,000kms in a lifetime - that's more than three times around the earth!

Lighten the educational load!

On a daily basis, your child may lug more the five kilograms to and from school in their backpack. This concerns our practice as there is a connection between loads carried and reports of unhealthy spinal symptoms including low back, shoulder and neck pain.

By getting your child to see one of our physiotherapists for a check up, we can determine whether your child's spine is healthy and suggest actions such as flexibility and muscle control to help maximise their spine's healthiness.

To keep your child's spine in good health use the following tips in addition to speaking to one of our physiotherapists.

Tip 1 - Choose the right backpack that....

- Fits the body comfortably
- Doesn't extend above the shoulders when seated
- Has shoulder straps that are broad, well padded and adjustable
- Has straps attached to the top of the pack at separate points
- Has a waist strap to keep the load in place when moving
- Has separate compartments to allow heavy items to be packed close to the body
- Is padded where it touches your back, and made of firm material to prevent the load from sagging backwards

Tip 2 - Pack smart

- Lighten loads - don't carry too many heavy books on the same day
- Plan ahead - don't carry lots of equipment at the same time, like sports gear, musical instruments or art materials
- Pack the heaviest items - such as a lap top - closest to the body and the lighter, softer items further out

Tip 3 - Carry smart

- When packed, make sure the backpack doesn't sag or pull backwards
- Use both shoulder straps when wearing the backpack
- Use the backpack's waist strap to keep the load in place when walking or cycling
- Don't carry the backpack for too long - take breaks and put it down

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