

Training sensibly: put it all together



By Jodi Stemach

Everybody seems to think that they know the "best" way

to work out, to get in shape, and to lose those extra pounds. I headed straight to the source for my answers about how to train sensibly. Coach Jimmy Radcliffe let me in on the secrets of training sensibly, and I would like to pass them on to you.

First, you need to set realistic goals. According to Radcliffe, there are three different levels on the fitness scale. We all start at the beginner stage, and some of us are still there. In this stage you do not want to overwork. Stretching is the main task in the workout for the beginner. It helps the body to resist injury and increases blood flow to the muscles, heart and brain. For the beginner, the length of time you maintain your personal heart rate target zone, should be no longer than 15-20 minutes. The beginner should work out for this duration two times per week on alternating days. The beginner must work on building strength, which is muscle ability to bear weight, and endurance, which is the ability to withstand stress. Strength and endurance are two key factors which will help the individual reach a higher level of fitness. Once your body adapts to this schedule (give it time), you are ready to proceed to the intermediate level.

The intermediate stage is where a lot of us high-school-athletes-who-came-to-college-and-now-have-no-time-to-workout are situated. We know the basics, like stretching, and our bodies still hold the capacity,

somewhere, to do the exercises. But face it, we are older and it has been a little while since we've hit the ol' weight room. Intermediate folk should still incorporate stretching into the workout, but it should not occupy the majority of the time. The duration of the workout also

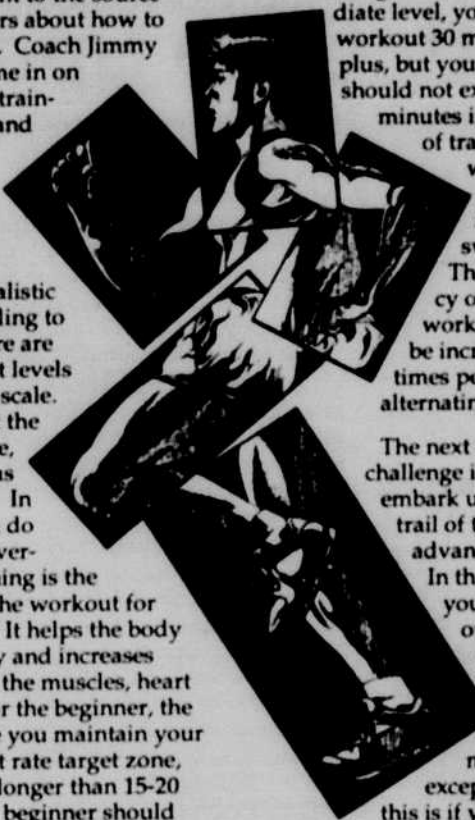
changes. At the intermediate level, you should workout 30 minutes plus, but your workout should not exceed 50 minutes in one area of training. (i.e. weight lifting, running, swimming). The frequency of the workouts can be increased to 3 times per week on alternating days.

The next degree of challenge is to embark upon the trail of the advanced stage. In this stage, you can work out up to 4 or 5 times per week, but no more. The exception to this is if you have a

specific goal that your are working towards, like a competition. After the competition, though, you should revert back to taking a day or two of rest per week. The break allows for the body to regenerate and rejuvenate itself. Too much stress on the body can result in detrimental effects. In the higher levels the subject of focus becomes an issue. The intermediate and advanced groups should be focused on duration. A specific type of training, like biking, might hold your interest. Remember to balance your routine between strength and endurance. No matter what, the overall workout time should not exceed 1.5 to 2.0 hours.

I have an example of a training program for you. Since this is Eugene, the running capital of the world, our goal will be a 5K run. We will approach this goal in 3 steps: buildup, maximum and maintenance. The run takes place in three months, so there is not much time. We need to buckle down and start training. The buildup period will last for 3-4 weeks, as long as there has been prior training like aerobics three times per week, and running twice per week. During this first step, we will concentrate mostly on running drills and distance. In the next phase, the maximum stage, endurance will be our main focus, so we target muscular and cardiovascular systems by weights, cycling, swimming, or running every day for about 1 hour to 1.5 hours. You will be doing maximum long runs, because we will be building your ability to run fast over 5K. This stage lasts 4-5 weeks. In the last 3-4 weeks, the maintenance stage, all of the extraneous training will be eliminated as we concentrate on running. Technique is the primary emphasis, and "over durations," that is running over 5K, are the main program. Using "over durations," we will run at a set pace over and over in order to maintain strength and endurance and to find the perfect pace. And now you are ready to compete!

We all seek to find our niche in life; it is the same in the training field. Some of you will prefer the challenge of the weight room, while others will devote themselves to the Stairmaster, jogging, running, biking, swimming, skating, walking or aerobicing. There are a million things to do, and there is something for everyone. The keys to attaining personal fitness are to decide on a goal, and to plan, perform, and train. To have a good workout you again must be consistent, and train above and beyond your normal, everyday activity. Remember, to avoid frustration and subsequent quitting, set realistic goals for yourself, and your goals will become reality.



Shin splint solutions

By Grady O'Connor

Have you ever experienced pain in the lower leg area after exercising? If so, you're not alone. Shin splints are one of the most common injuries in the exercising population; they run a close second to ankle

sprains. Shin splints can become burdensome to an individual who enjoys vigorous exercise. If severe enough, shin splints may ultimately force the individual to give up an active lifestyle.

What are shin splints?

"Shin splints" is a lay term used to refer to pain and discomfort of the lower leg, especially the tibia. This discomfort occurs mostly in runners and in those involved in high intensity running or jumping activities.

What can I do to avoid getting shin splints?

Shin splints can best be prevented by avoiding sudden intense physical activities that shock the system and stress the lower leg. Scott Barthlama, a University of Oregon athletic trainer, says that a gradual progression into an activity is the key component of preventing shin splints. He explains, "If you're playing basketball and you haven't played in a while, you'll want to limit the amount you play. You don't want to go out and play 4 or 5 games in row, that is a lot of stress on the lower extremity, especially the tibia (shins)".

Barthlama's comments apply to a wide range of activities. For example, if you haven't jogged for a while and you start jogging again, you should start back slowly. Choose a distance which won't put too much stress on your body and then gradually increase your mileage, day by day week by week, allowing the lower legs time to adapt to the added stress.

Another preventative measure for shin splints is proper shoe selection. When selecting a shoe, buy it for the support and cushioning, rather than the style of the shoe.

What should I do if I have shin splints?

There are different degrees of soreness. If your shin pain can be described as a diffuse, dull and aching pain, then ice is the best treatment with either ice bags, cold whirlpool, or ice cups which are easily made at home. To get the total benefits of ice therapy you should repeat ice treatment 4-6 times, 15 minutes a day. While ice treatment may seem troublesome, to successfully treat shin splints, it is a must. Barthlama explains, "Next to surgery, ice is one of the best therapeutic modalities there is because of its ability to reduce inflammation." Ice applied after the activity is the most valuable form of therapy.

If the pain you are experiencing is not dull and diffuse but rather sharp and localized on the shin bone, you may have a stress fracture. At this point medical attention is necessary. Expect an X-ray or bone scan and a prescription for anti-inflammatories. If a true stress fracture does exist, it is likely that you'll have to immobilize your lower leg. If you are experiencing this, the Student Health Center can help. Call 346-4441 to make an appointment.

Don't panic just because you have shin pain following exercise. If managed properly, shin pain rarely progresses into a stress fracture. It's a matter of knowing your body and knowing when shin pain is simply soreness caused by the activity and when it goes beyond soreness to injury. Shin splints should not keep us from enjoying vigorous exercise as long as we find the happy medium between underuse and overuse.

A little exercise can make the difference

By Erika George



Cardiovascular diseases claim more American lives, nearly one million per year, than all other causes combined according to *Heart and Stroke Facts*, a booklet published by the American Heart Association. Aerobic exercise is an effective way to lower your risk of suffering from these diseases.

The number one job of the heart is to pump oxygen to the body and pump out carbon dioxide. As you become more fit with regular participation in aerobic activity, many things occur that reduce the amount of strain put upon the heart.

- Your heart gets stronger and more efficient. It pumps more blood each beat and is able to empty the blood from the heart more completely. More blood each beat means more oxygen gets to the body from the blood.

- The lungs' exchange center of oxygen and carbon dioxide become more efficient. The bronchioles in the lungs also increase dilation allowing more air in and out.

- The body creates extra blood cells to carry oxygen to the working muscles. The concentration of the blood fluid becomes thinner with the addition of extra plasma in the blood making it easier on the heart to pump the blood. This also helps reduce blood pressure with enlarged arteries and relaxed arterioles (tiny arteries) that act like nozzles in controlling blood pressure.

To sum up, the heart, lungs, and arteries become more efficient at delivering oxygen to the cells in

the body. Becoming fit lowers blood pressure which allows the heart to beat at a slower rate while still delivering sufficient oxygen to the body.

Along with reduced risk of heart disease, being physically fit can add years to your life. With a heart and body that more efficiently pumps and utilizes oxygen, the heart rate decreases. The heart does not have to pump as often to get enough oxygen to the body. According to *Life and Health: Targeting Wellness*, exercising 30 minutes, three times a week reduces a person's heart rate by one third. This reduction can save about 36,000 heart beats per day. The lower demand on the heart gives it more rest and reduces wear and tear on the heart valves and vessels.

An example of increasing longevity comes from the very encouraging study of fitness levels by the Institute for Aerobic Research in Dallas. This study included both men and women separated into four groups by their physical fitness level. Level one was the sedentary group, level four was the most fit, and levels two and three were the moderately fit groups. The lowest fitness group had the highest mortality rates, but surprisingly, the sharpest decline in mortality was not between the fittest groups but between the lowest level fitness group and the second group who engaged in only moderate physical activity. These results suggest that just adding even some physical activity to your daily routine is beneficial in the long run.

Our bodies respond positively to any level of physical activity, so you don't have to spend hours each day exercising or run marathons to reap some of the physical benefits and add years to your life.

LOOK INTO BOOKS

For more information on fitness, nutrition and stress management, come by the Health Education room across from the Pharmacy in the Student Health Center.

Health Education Library Samples:

- Beginning Weight Training by V. Patterson Lombardi, 1989
- Eat Well, Get Well, Stay Well by Carlton Fredericks, PhD.
- Stretch & Strengthen by Judy Alter, 1986
- The Relaxation Response by Herbert Benson, M.D., 1975
- Zen of Running by Fred Rohe, 1983