

January 2010

Welcome to the first edition of the monthly Damini Physiotherapy Client information brochure. As we look forward to a new year, we are encouraged to create resolutions to better our health and fitness levels. When contemplating a healthy lifestyle the first thing to explore is what our goals are. Common goals discussed are; weight loss, get into better shape generally or for sports related fitness, feel better, have more energy and/or recover from an injury.

When thinking about your GOALS, it is important to ask yourself questions such as; "Is this achievable?"; "How can I meet this goal?"; "What are the smaller steps I can make towards the larger goal?"; "Do I want to be able to climb a flight of stairs without knee pain or climb Mount Everest?" The overall message here is to break down larger goals into smaller goals that can be achievable and easily measured as successes.

MOTIVATION is the key to starting a successful fitness program. What is your motivation? Do you want a generally healthy lifestyle so you feel better in our daily life? Did your doctor recommend a fitness program? Are you worried about weight gain (post Christmas dinner blues!)? Do you have diabetes or a family history of heart condition? What will motivate you to do your fitness program regularly? Do you need a fun program or do you want to break a sweat and feel like you have worked hard? Can you do this on your own or do you need some help to get started?

And then we look at the "C" word – COMMITMENT! How much time are you willing to put aside for your fitness program? How many days per week or hours per session? Are you looking for a long-term lifestyle change or short term "quick fix"? Are you familiar with exercise programs and a healthy diet or are you a beginner? Your level of commitment and fitness history will reflect your goals and affect your success in achieving these goals.

So now we have the GMC of starting a fitness program (no worries if you have a Ford!). By thinking about and exploring these three concepts you will develop a solid base to build upon. Write your ideas down and discuss them with friends and family. Involve others as a support system to help you achieve success.

So why is your physiotherapist sending you an article about starting a fitness program you ask? Whether you are trying to rehabilitate various injuries or just getting into shape, your physiotherapist can help you with instruction and information. We have all dealt with chronic injuries (injuries over 3 months in length) at some point in our lives and this frequently increases as we all age. Your physiotherapist can assess these injuries and make recommendations to both help these areas and make sure you do not hurt them more.

There are specific exercises that can be given, that if done correctly over a period of time, can help improve one's symptoms. Equally important as stretching and strengthening the injured areas, is avoiding aggravation of the chronic injury. When someone sets out on a new exercise program the consistently include specific exercises that may aggravate their condition. This can be minimized with either modifying their technique or removing these exercises until they can be done safely. This information is vital to ensure a successful and enjoyable exercise program.

If you have any questions regarding this or other related issues, please contact the staff at Damini Physiotherapy and Sports Injury.

Wishing you a safe and happy New Year!