

# Preventing injuries while working out at home

Working out at home may be an adjustment when you're used to all the amenities at the gym or going to your favorite class, but with some creativity and planning you can keep your fitness goals on track. Regular exercise can also help break up your day, improve your mood, and get your circulatory system going when you're spending a lot of time sitting at the computer or watching television. Here are 6 simple tips to help you stay safe, fit, and injury free while exercising on your own:



**1.** If you're following a workout from a magazine, video, app or general online programming; **recognize** that those workouts are made for the general population. You may need to follow the modification model or even regress the exercises further depending on your fitness level or take more breaks than mentioned or a longer rest period.



**2. Change up** your workouts! Do not do the exact same routine or exercises every single day. Mix up your week with routines such as upper body blast, lower body HIIT, cardio workouts, 6 pack abs .... Different routines that do not target the same muscles and same exercises back to back days. By changing up the routine you are continually targeting different muscles and not over utilizing the same movement patterns that can lead to overuse injuries.



**3.** No strength movement should be painful, **AT ALL!** That old motto "No Pain, No Gain" does not work – it is not healthy and can lead to multiple musculoskeletal problems either now or down the road. If any movements cause you pain, stop and discontinue that exercise and seek professional advice. At HSS, we offer consults with our licensed physical therapists, athletic trainers and/ or our exercise physiologists who are certified strength and conditioning specialists.



**4.** Don't be afraid to ask for **help**. It is easy to get overwhelmed when you're starting a workout routine on your own. You have a host of questions on many things such as the proper form / technique, effective exercises, what equipment to use, how to get results, create a schedule, recovery information or even stretching. If you want to work out at home but don't know where to start; our HSS exercise physiologists offer fitness testing and home exercise programs that give you a comprehensive, total body fitness program with exactly what you need to get going and how to progress once you get the hang of it. We can work together, help you learn how to do this on your own, offer good encouragement and accountability. If you need multiple sessions until you're confident and ready, we offer those as well; doesn't hurt to ask! Email [sportperformance@hss.edu](mailto:sportperformance@hss.edu) to learn more.



**5. Hydrate**, hydrate, hydrate and sleep! Many injuries occur when we are dehydrated and / or exhausted. Dehydration can show up as muscle spasms, cramps, dizziness or light-headedness; all of which can lead to injuries if unchecked or happen on multiple occasions. Always seek professional help if symptoms such as the ones listed above or symptoms of pain persist after stopping the exercise routine.



**6.** Renew, regenerate and recover. Taking days off is not a suggestion, it is a requirement for strength improvements and injury prevention. The same muscles that create a stronger, more powerful individual are also the muscles that help prevent injuries. If they are not able to recover and repair from the strains of the exercises, they are not getting stronger and may not be able to help prevent injuries either. Recovery happens with proper hydration, nutrition, stretching, rest and **SLEEP!** Show your muscles some love and practice self-myofascial release via foam rolling, trigger point therapy or just stretching! Try and always get the suggested 8 hours of sleep a night and take rest days. Work on your mobility, flexibility and enjoy your day off. Remember you are making positive changes in your musculoskeletal system on those rest days. Even if you are just starting a routine and do not feel sore, this is a NEW routine, something different, new muscles are working and preventing injuries is key – no one likes starting something new and getting derailed and have to start over. Work it through right and see your goals start to happen with proper rest and recovery.

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