



HOMER HEALTH TIMES

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HCS D HAC - Your First Defense Against Disease is Awareness

Breathe Easy this Spring Sports Season

“Movement is a medicine for creating change in a person’s physical, emotional, and mental states.”

Carol Welch

Hold your breath for ten seconds. Walk around. Hold your breath for another ten seconds. Walk faster. Hold your breath for twenty seconds. Now breathe. At this point, you have begun to experience what it is like to deal with asthma while participating in physical activity. And if you have ever felt this way while partaking in sports or other physical activities, you yourself might have asthma. Asthma is a chronic (long-term) lung disease that inflames and narrows the airways leading to and from your lungs. It causes recurring periods of wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, and coughing. If you have asthma, you are not alone. Affecting people of all ages, more than 22 million people are known to be afflicted; 6 million of these people are children. Athletes and even celebrities are affected by asthma – case in point, over 20% of the U.S. athletes at the 1998 Nagano Olympics had asthma.

Asthma usually develops at a young age, and as a person grows and matures, it is possible for them to outgrow their asthma. There is adult-onset asthma, which occurs usually after the age of 20. People with allergies, who are obese, who are recovering from illness, and who are exposed to environmental irritants (think tobacco smoke)

are all prone to be afflicted by asthma. Adult-onset asthma is usually more continuous in presenting symptoms, where as asthma symptoms in kids are more likely to come and go.

There are many ways to diagnose asthma, but the difficulty with diagnosing is that at the time of a doctor’s visit, most patients are not presenting with the common symptoms. At the initial examination, your doctor will obtain a detailed medical history, including any information on asthma symptoms, how you feel, known asthma and allergy triggers, your activity level and diet, your home and work environment, and family history. From there, the topic can be addressed with certain medications, including inhalers and nebulizers (relax the muscle bands that tighten the airways). These are short term relief medications; long term relief, for heavily afflicted patients, is taken daily and is usually anti-inflammatory pills.

The medical aspect of asthma aside, simple knowledge of sports and exercise can help to avoid asthma problems. Sports that tend to be harder on the lungs because they require continuous exertion include soccer, hockey, basketball,

lacrosse, and running. Sports that are not as hard on the lungs include football, baseball, tennis (especially doubles), and volleyball. Any sport with built-in breaks that give a chance for lungs to recover from strenuous activity will help to keep asthma symptoms at bay. Cold-air sports can trigger asthma, as well as contact with allergies (such as pollen). Indoor sports prevent the contact with such allergies.

Keeping your asthma under control is not only good for your body, but will help you to perform on the playing field much better. An asthmatic athlete must remember to keep an inhaler at all times, just in case symptoms arise while partaking in an activity. Because you have asthma does not mean you should not play sports; most people with asthma are as capable or even more to partake in activities as those who do not have asthma. With these tips in mind, go hit the field hard, have fun, and don’t let anything stop you. Not even asthma.

Eric Rosato, Senior



There are varying asthma symptom relievers, including nebulizers (top) and inhalers (bottom)

NINE EXERCISE MYTHS: DON'T BE FOOLED

Cody VanOrden

Many times in a typical American life, we are plagued by exercise fads, silver bullet ads, and “buy this trust me your going to be thin, trust me” infomercials. While many people are able to tune this out, many are still misled when they’re trying to do honest exercise by the use of myths. While I can’t clear the air of ads, I can clear up some myths by showing some every day common ones to help you the next time you exercise or consider exercising.

There’s no point in exercising if I don’t lose weight:

“Many people don't see immediate weight loss and say it's all for naught and stop,” says exercise expert William Haskell of Stanford University Medical School. Many people often are motivated only to lose the weight they currently have. After about two weeks of working out, most people will quit when they don’t see immediate improvement when the truth is that you won’t see improvement for at least a month as your body gains benefits such as improvement on your cells ability to absorb insulin.



If I just keep doing the same routine, I will get better:

Yes and no. If you’re trying to improve your strength then yes, you’re going to do better. If you’re trying to improve your body image like the other 90% of people doing exercise, no. The problem with constant, rigid routines is that the body often produces what sports trainers call a plateau effect which is the conditioning of the body to a routine, no matter how rigorous the routine may become. The person’s visual results therefore start to plateau and lessen. To ensure constant change, experts suggest that a routine must be changed by introducing different styles and forms of exercise.

Strength training makes women too muscular:

In the national nutrition and health census, it is found that many women think strength training will make them too muscular as seen with many women body builders. The truth is that this simply doesn’t happen on a natural level. In order to get masculine muscles, one needs testosterone or an extreme amount of strength training with an extreme amount of protein, something women aren’t going to find in many programs, and the truth is that women need strength training due to their heightened risk of osteoporosis in the first place.



No pain, no gain:

Many people still believe that if you’re hurting when you’re doing your exercise, you’re going to get better results. While it’s important to push yourself all your doing when you’re really hurting yourself is hurting yourself. When a person is getting hurt, they’re either ripping the muscle too much or they’re building up too much lactic acid in the muscle. This leads to poor, prolonged results and sometimes no result at all. By finding your own comfort zone and pushing beyond without too much strain you are building muscle in a healthy manner, leading to sooner, cleaner, better results.

Yoga is a gentle exercise and it's only for women:

Yoga has often been misleading as too feminine and too gentle with the all too familiar phrase of being “light as a feather.” The truth is that most yoga is very rigorous and is often not gentle at all. It is very good at fat burning while also improving endurance and flexibility. Many guys that first try it are often embarrassed and really shouldn't be. Yoga actually gives men a better benefit by forming men's bodies as well as improving the cardiovascular system and endurance when trying to do strength training. In fact, most large muscle ripping programs incorporate yoga without the participants noticing. Yoga is also used by players in almost every major sport, including football.

I'll definitely get fit if I exercise and I can eat anything I want:

As seen by the participant in celebrity Fit club Dustin Diamond, many people think that if they exercise they will lose weight and will eat anything they want. Period. This is NEVER true. When a person exercises the only way they'll get good results is by eating in a healthy manner. Almost all exercise programs ask for or supply a nutrition program. Your body is very similar to a car. If you give the car bad fuel, it will give bad results. If you give the car good fuel, you'll get good results. While many see this as the hardest part in getting healthier or leaner, it can be less hard if you're determined. Try looking up tasty foods that are nutritious for you (you could even find some recipes on youtube.com or simply look it up on Google, it's that easy).

Going to the gym is the best way to get fit:

Exercise is similar to a math problem; there are multiple ways to get the same result. While going to a gym is very useful, having a home exercise program is just as good if not better. By staying at home, people aren't embarrassed by the social interaction of exercise as if it were a competition and don't have to pay as much (depends on what you're doing). They are able to have a more relaxed workout and often gain better and bigger results, even without the high tech equipment. So next time you think about grabbing a home exercise DVD or making your own routine, give it a shot.

The perfect six pack:

The most common myth about exercise is that doing some extreme crunching every day will give you the perfect abs. The truth with this is that when you want perfect abs, you're definitely going to do more than that and it won't be as hard as you think. When doing crunches, your abs are strengthened and become more muscular, but to the untrained eye, this just makes your stomach look bigger because you don't burn fat on the stomach with crunches. In order to do that you will need to combine cardiovascular training, great nutrition, and strength training. Once you work the fat off the stomach, then you can start doing a lot of crunches to make your six pack more defined.

Muscle will turn into fat without exercise:

When someone starts to notice that their muscles are getting flabby, their muscles aren't turning into fat, they're just losing muscle density. After about two days without exercise, a person's muscle starts to lose density and after a week to 2 weeks, they start to lose muscle size. When a person starts to “get fat”, it isn't that the muscle is converting into fat but that the person is gaining fat due to a slower metabolism from not exercising.

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