

## Injury Prevention: YHD’s 3 Steps on how to plan and perform your winter training without breaking down

Whether you’re ramping up for the first games of your winter sport, or winding down from your summer season, this period of seasonal change is a really important time for injury prevention. If you’ve finished up competition season, now is a great time to try something new. Perhaps dust off your bike that has been sitting in the shed since Christmas – a few years ago! Or maybe you’ve attended your first pre-season training session and are wondering why the field suddenly looks so much larger...

**How do you start a new type of exercise, or return to do more of something you haven’t done for a while without breaking down with an injury?**

### STEP 1: Set S.M.A.R.T. goals

Ever wondered why even though you really want to do something, you never seem to make it happen? Chances are your goal setting skills could use an update!

Setting specific, relevant and timely goals significantly increases your likelihood of achieving them. Setting good goals with help you stay motivated and give you something to measure your progress against. “S.M.A.R.T” goals are a great way of identifying exactly what it is you want to achieve, and how you’re going to do it! You can use the table below to set out your goal:

<p><b>Specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Identify with detail what your goal is.</b></li> </ul>	<p>For example: “I want to be able to run 5km in 20 mins by the end of the summer” Rather than “I want to increase my fitness” – which is not specific</p>
<p><b>Measurable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>How are you going to measure your progress?</b></li> </ul>	<p>For example: “I will time my 5km run with my stopwatch”</p>
<p><b>Attainable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Your goals should be attainable, otherwise they may end up discouraging and demotivating you further.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Ask yourself: Am I being realistic with the goal? If you haven’t run for 5 years maybe planning to run 5km in 20 mins within 2 weeks is unattainable, and puts you at risk of increased injury. Consider what else is going on in your life.</p>

<p><b>Realistic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>You goals also need to be realistic.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Do you enjoy the activity? Are you going to be able to achieve your goal within that time frame? Do you want to make time for it?</p>
<p><b>Timely</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Set a 'due date' for your goal or dates to achieve certain milestones towards that goal.</b></li> <li>- <b>This will help you stay motivated and feel like you're working towards your goal.</b></li> </ul>	<p>For example: I want to run 5km in 20 minutes by the end of the summer" "I want to lose 5kg within 6 months" "I want to begin walking for 20 minutes 3 times a week before the month is over"</p>

## STEP 2: TIMING AND PACING

Work out when you will do your exercise and give yourself adequate rest days. Do not try and exercise everyday unless you are already used to doing so. Your body needs rest days! Rest allows the joints, muscles, tendons and energy systems to recover. The key is to progressively overload i.e. gradually increase your training frequency, intensity and duration over time. Do not try and reverse ten years in 10 days!

Adequate rest is also really important for the immune system. As winter can often be a time of cold and flu, this is particularly important. If the body is not allowed to recover, the functioning of the immune system becomes poorer and poorer, which can result in recurrent infections and feelings of burn out.

## STEP 3: TECHNIQUE

If you're thinking about starting a weights program and don't know what you're doing, ask! The team at Your Health Domain are here to assist you. Some key aspects to safe weights training are

- Stabilise – activate your core
- Isolate – be specific with the exercise and muscles you are trying to work
- Symmetry – keep everything even and balanced
- Weight selection – start low and progress up slowly

**Listen to your body** – there is a really good reason your body has such an amazing system to alert you to danger. Make sure to listen to any warning signs of overuse or injury. There is a difference to the heavy lagging / general feeling of soreness you get after a workout (called

Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness, which can occur for 24-72 hours after exercise) and the feeling of acute injury – which may present as a sharp, local pain at a certain site, swelling, bruising or redness (among other things). DOMS is to be expected when starting up exercise after a break or increasing the intensity / type of exercise you do. The more you exercise the less this occurs generally.

**Not feeling right – get it checked out.** The Physios at *Your Health Domain* are skilled at assessing a wide range of musculoskeletal injuries and can help you get something sorted out quickly to make sure you can achieve your exercise and fitness goals in 2020. If you would like any more information or would like to book yourself in for an assessment, please call 9251 5111 or email us at [enquiries@yourhealthdomain.com.au](mailto:enquiries@yourhealthdomain.com.au)

Happy training!

The Your Health Domain Team.