



Injury Prevention

To maintain a physically active lifestyle it is important to adhere to basic safety principles such as warming-up, using correct technique, wearing the correct clothing and being nourished and hydrated in order to prevent injury.

Warming Up: any workout should be preceded by an appropriate warm-up to prepare you mentally and physically for the session. Start with general warm-up activities to raise the body temperature and then progress onto movements specific to your activity – this provides skill rehearsal and mental preparation. Don't forget to mobilise by taking the joints through their full range of motion, eg shoulder rolls, pelvic tilts, knee flexing.

Cooling Down: your workout should also be ended appropriately, bringing heart rate down gradually, keeping muscles warm, moving into flexibility exercises if in a warm room.

If time is short, do not skimp on the warm-up or cool-down – these are essential parts of your workout.

Clothing

- it should be loose-fitting and/or stretchy (don't be scared to wear lycra!) so that movement is not restricted
- layers of clothing are a good idea so that body temperature can be easily adjusted depending on the room and part of the class/workout you are in
- women should wear an appropriate bra (*more info/advice can be found in the "Support your Boobs" flier - www.susport.org.uk*)
- adequate footwear for the activity you are doing is also important - casual trainers do not have proper cushioning for high impact activities and this can lead to injuries in the lower leg (*more information/advice on footwear can be found in the "Step into the right shoes" flier - www.susport.org.uk*)

Technique: Exercises are only safe and effective if they are done properly!

- Execute correct technique or you might place excessive strain on those muscles, tendons and ligaments which are not designed to take the load. If unsure ask to speak to an instructor or coach.
- For those attending exercise classes, listen to key words and phrases from the instructor. For example, in a hi-impact aerobics class you may hear phrases such as 'heels down', because it is important not to bounce on your toes for the whole session. Your poor shins and Achilles tendon will not be very happy!

Nutrition & Hydration

- what you eat and drink can seriously impact the quality of your workout session
- have an organised eating plan before and after your exercise sessions
- for further advice on healthy nutrition and hydration refer to the "Nutrition Guide" and the "Hydration advice sheet" found at www.susport.org.uk.

So what if I do get injured?

There are times where an injury may occur and if it does then it does not mean you have to stop exercising completely. For example, if you have a lower leg injury it is still feasible to train the upper body. This may mean that some exercises you normally do will have to be adapted. Again, speak to you an instructor for advice if you're not sure how to adapt exercises. Furthermore it is advisable to make an appointment with a physiotherapist, particularly one working in Sport and Exercise because they will be able to treat the injury and give advice on specific exercises to rehabilitate the injured area.