



May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Get Fit - May is Fitness Month

### Good posture rocks!

Sit up straight! Shoulders back! Hold in your tummy! It's all about posture – and good posture not only looks better but also improves your balance and reduces the likelihood of injuries and pain. Keep your weight centred over both feet, shoulders even, back & down, back “straight” (no swayback or hunching forward), abdominals tight, hips level, knees pointing straight ahead and chin parallel to the floor. There – that’s much better!

Posture is one of the considerations when strength training, contributing to good form. Other points? Tempo – make sure you aren't swinging or using momentum to move the weight; use controlled movements. And breathe. Don't hold your breath... exhale on the exertion and inhale on the relaxation. Challenge your muscles with more weight as your strength improves and aim for 2-3 workouts per week, with at least 1 day of rest between.

### Rest is best for sports injuries

The most common sports-related injuries? Tennis elbow, a dull pain outside of the elbow that worsens with gripping. Rotator cuff tendonitis of the shoulder causes pain when reaching up or lifting something heavy. Runner's/jumper's knee where there is pain around the kneecap with flexion or stairs. Sprained ankles and Achilles tendonitis (back of the heel and lower calf). Your best bet is rest and seeing a physiotherapist to treat the injury and help prevent future ones.

### Get moving at any age!

What are the best exercises for general fitness – at any age? Swimming and aquasize (in-water aerobics) are number one as they are easy on the joints. Tai chi is good for balance and helps connect movement to the mind – double the value! Strength training offers many benefits; it preserves muscle mass and may even help the brain function better. And, finally, there's walking – universally available and universally beneficial. No excuses – get moving!

May is Fitness Month. It has been said that the best prescription is exercise – and it certainly seems to promote good overall health and longevity. Your pharmacist can help you decide how to get started.