Aerobics - preventing injury

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Summary

Aerobics and fitness classes involve the movement of large muscle groups in continuous rhythmic activity to music. Aerobics is associated with a significant number of sports injuries. Injuries are generally traumatic injuries and overuse injuries. Using the right techniques and equipment can help prevent injury.

Aerobics and fitness classes involve the movement of large muscle groups in continuous rhythmic activity to music. There are more than a dozen aerobic dance hybrids, many of which are extensions or combinations of high and low impact.

Common aerobics injuries

Aerobics is associated with a significant number of sports injuries. Injuries generally fall into two groups:

- **Traumatic injuries** – these occur as a result of a fall, twist or similar accident and most often involve the ankle or knee.
- **Overuse injuries** – these usually develop gradually, often as a result of a change in the amount or intensity of aerobics, or due to a training error. Shin pain is the most common overuse injury, while foot and knee overuse injuries are also common.

Back injuries may also be caused, or aggravated by, aerobic exercise.

Preventing aerobics injuries

To prevent injury you should:

- be prepared
- use good technique and practices
- wear the right gear
- check the environment
- know yourself and the sport.

Prepare for aerobics

Remember to:

- Warm up, stretch and cool down.
- Consult your doctor for a heart and lung assessment before starting an aerobics program if you are aged over 40.
- Have a musculoskeletal assessment performed by a sports medicine professional before commencing aerobics if you have suffered an injury in the past.
- Start your class at a moderate pace, to allow you to warm up adequately.

Use good technique and practices during aerobics

Good technique and practices can help prevent injuries. Suggestions include:

- Use the good technique emphasised by your instructors.
- Start all aerobics sessions with a gentle warm-up and stretching.
- All beginners’ classes should have a second instructor available to move among the group and correct any faults. This is also important when learning new techniques.
- Seek advice from your instructor about how to improve or correct your technique if you have injuries that may be related to poor technique.

Wear the right gear

Make sure you:

- Wear footwear specifically designed for aerobics. Good fit, stability, secure lacing and good forefoot cushioning are important features of an aerobics shoe.
- Choose clothing that fits well and has good moisture transfer properties.
- Consider a sports bra to improve comfort. Individual fit is very important.
Check the environment

Choosing an appropriate venue is important. It’s a good idea to:

- Choose a class run by instructors who are registered with Kinect Australia or Fitness Australia.
- Make sure aerobics areas are well lit.
- Check that the temperature in the aerobics area is maintained at a moderate level, with good ventilation.
- Use facilities with a floor suited to aerobics. Sprung wooden floors or padded carpet over concrete are best.
- Check that all implements and equipment used in classes are maintained in good condition.
- Make sure cool, fresh water is readily available.
- Check that the music is clear and at a comfortable volume.

Know yourself and aerobics techniques

Suggestions include:

- Choose activities that are suited to your fitness level.
- Know and use the right techniques.
- Know how to use the equipment properly and safely.

Respond promptly to aerobics injuries

If you or someone else is injured:

- Seek prompt attention from qualified first aid personnel. First aid facilities should be available at all fitness centres.
- Get prompt attention for all traumatic injuries.
- Have injuries that do not respond quickly to first aid measures assessed by a sports medicine professional, preferably a doctor, to ensure an accurate diagnosis and treatment.
- Don’t wait until pain is severe. Overuse injuries, especially to the shin, are common in aerobics. They often cause only mild discomfort at first, but frequently get worse. They can be caused by many factors and an early full assessment is important for recovery.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Always call triple zero for an ambulance in an emergency Tel. 000
- Sports physician
- Physiotherapist
- Australian Physiotherapy Association Tel. (03) 9092 0888
- Smartplay Tel. (03) 9674 8777
- Exercise physiologist

Things to remember

- Aerobics and fitness classes involve the movement of large muscle groups in continuous rhythmic activity to music.
- Aerobics is associated with a significant number of sports injuries. Injuries are generally traumatic injuries and overuse injuries.
- Using the right techniques and equipment can help prevent injury.

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Keeping active

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- **Keeping active basics**
- **Getting started**
- **Staying fit and motivated**
- **Exercise safety and injury prevention**
- **Healthy eating and exercise**
- **Keeping active throughout life**
- **Health conditions and exercise**

Keeping active basics

- **Balancing energy in and energy out**
  
  A kilojoule is a unit of measure of energy, in the same way that kilometres measure distance...
- Body mass index (BMI)
  Body mass index or BMI is an approximate measure of your total body fat.

- Energy in food (kilojoules and calories)
  A kilojoule is a unit of measure of energy, in the same way that kilometres measure distance.

- Exercise intensity
  If you can talk but not sing, you're exercising at the right intensity.

- Exercise in your local surroundings (video)
  Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it's running up...

- Exercise - the low-down on hydration
  You need to drink enough and regularly to keep hydrated during exercise.

- Exercise with a friend
  Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you're more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan.

- Fitness centres – how to choose one
  Do some research before signing up at a fitness centre.

- How to make exercise fun (slide show)
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don't know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

- Kids and energy needs
  It's important for kids to eat a wide variety of foods for a healthy, well-balanced diet and to be physically active. Creating healthy habits during childhood helps to ensure lifelong healthy...

- Personal trainers – how to choose one
  Make sure your personal trainer is properly qualified before entering into any agreement.

- Physical activity for men
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare.

- Physical activity for seniors
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease.

- Physical activity for women
  If you can't make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family.

- Physical activity - how to get active when you are busy
  Even if you're busy, you still need to find a way to be physically active.

- Physical activity - it's important
  Just 30 minutes of moderate activity each day can improve your health and reduce the risk of developing certain conditions or diseases.

- Physical activity – setting yourself goals
  When you're trying to become more physically active, set realistic health and fitness goals.

- Physical activity - what's your excuse?
  There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day.

- Resistance training – health benefits
  If you do resistance training repeatedly and consistently, your muscles become stronger.

- Secrets to healthy ageing (slide show)
  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!

Getting started

- Exercise programs

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If you are unfamiliar with what is involved, starting an exercise program can be challenging...

- **Exercise - the low-down on hydration**
  You need to drink enough and regularly to keep hydrated during exercise...

- **Exercise with a friend**
  Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you’re more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan...

- **Gardening for children**
  Children can learn new skills, have fun and develop self-confidence when they grow their own plants...

- **Gardening for health - starting out**
  Gardening is a healthy activity that can be enjoyed by everyone...

- **Gardening for older people**
  Garden spaces and equipment can be modified or adapted to help older people enjoy gardening...

- **Gardening safety**
  Gardening is an enjoyable form of exercise, but you need to take care...

- **Getting active - tucker talk tips**
  The main thing is to choose physical activities that you enjoy and that you can stick to in the long term...

- **How to make exercise fun (slideshow)**
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

- **Physical activity - choosing a provider**
  Choosing the right fitness centre or service provider requires some research...

- **Physical activity – choosing the one for you**
  You are more likely to keep up a healthy lifestyle change if your chosen activity suits you...

- **Physical activity for men**
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...

- **Physical activity for seniors**
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease...

- **Physical activity for women**
  If you can't make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family...

- **Physical activity - how to get active when you are busy**
  Even if you’re busy, you still need to find a way to be physically active...

- **Physical activity – how to get started**
  If you’ve been inactive and want to begin physical activity, see a doctor first...

- **Physical activity - learn how to swim (video)**
  Swimming is a great low-impact exercise for all ages and abilities. Australian marathon swimmer, Tammy Van Wisse shows ex-AFL (Australian Football League) player and coach, Tony Shaw some swimming...

- **Physical activity - overcoming barriers (video)**
  Former world aerobics champion, Sue Stanley shows us how to overcome common exercise excuses...

- **Physical activity – overcoming the barriers**
  If you think physical activity is boring, try exercising with a friend...

- **Physical activity – setting yourself goals**
  When you’re trying to become more physically active, set realistic health and fitness goals...

**Staying fit and motivated**
10 tips to plan your exercise

Physical activity won't just happen. Most activities require planning – starting and maintaining a physical activity program does too. Here are some tips for getting ready to exercise:

10 tips to stay active year round

Pick an activity you enjoy...

Exercise and mood

Exercise can have an enormous impact on your mood. Not only can exercise help in treating depression, it can also prevent people from becoming depressed again. So it’s important to keep up an exercise...

Exercise - everyday activities

There are lots of everyday activities that provide an opportunity to be active and provide health benefits...

Exercise in your local surroundings (video)

Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it's running up...

Exercise programs

If you are unfamiliar with what is involved, starting an exercise program can be challenging...

Exercise with a friend

Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you’re more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan...

How to make exercise fun (slide show)

Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

Pets can make you healthy (video)

Australians have one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world...

Physical activity – choosing the one for you

You are more likely to keep up a healthy lifestyle change if your chosen activity suits you...

Physical activity for men

Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...

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Physical activity - overcoming barriers (video)

Former world aerobics champion, Sue Stanley shows us how to overcome common exercise excuses...

Physical activity – overcoming the barriers

If you think physical activity is boring, try exercising with a friend...

Physical activity - staying active during summer (video)

Physical Activity and Fitness Trainer Sherri Bourne gives us some great tips for staying active over the summer months...

Physical activity - staying motivated

Pick an exercise or fitness activity that appeals to you and suits your lifestyle...

Physical activity - what's your excuse?

There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day...

Stretching exercise in winter (video)
When starting out an exercise program, it's really important to do a warm up and cool down before and after exercise.

Exercise safety and injury prevention

- 10 tips for safe stretching

Make stretching part of your life... 10 tips for safe stretching...

- 10 tips to exercise safely

Exercising regularly has wide-ranging physical, emotional and social health benefits. You need to exercise safely to remain healthy and injury-free. If it's safe and painless, you're more...

- Aerobics - preventing injury

Aerobics injuries are usually caused by trauma and overuse, but can be prevented by using the right techniques and equipment...

- Australian rules football - preventing injury

Australian rules football is a physical contact sport that often results in injuries from tackling, kicking, running and constant competition for the ball...

- Basketball - health benefits

Basketball is a sport enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities...

- Basketball - preventing injury

Basketball is a fast game with frequent and aggressive body contacts - injuries can and do occur...

- Canoeing and kayaking - health benefits

Canoeing and kayaking can be done as a hobby, a competitive sport or as a fun activity on holidays...

- Canoeing and kayaking - preventing injury

Careful preparation and the right equipment can help prevent canoeing and kayaking injuries...

- Cricket - health benefits

To play cricket you need to be fit and strong and have good hand-eye coordination and ball-handling skills...

- Cricket - preventing injury

Cricket is a very popular sport. Injuries are often caused by overuse, being struck by a cricket ball and falls...

- Cycling - health benefits

Cycling can help to protect you from serious diseases...

- Cycling - preventing injury

You are much more likely to hurt yourself by falling off your bike or hitting a stationary object than colliding with another vehicle...

- Dancing - preventing injury

Dancing is fun and a great form of exercise, but make sure you avoid injuries...

- Dog walking - the health benefits

If you are planning to buy a dog, make sure you choose a breed that's appropriate to your lifestyle...

- Exercise safety

Training too hard or fast is a common cause of sports-related injuries...

- Fishing - preventing injury

Never go fishing alone ? always fish with someone else and, ideally, with two other people...

- Golf - health benefits

Golf provides a stimulating challenge, combined with a healthy walk in pleasant surroundings...

- Golf - preventing injury

The average golfer playing an 18-hole game walks about seven kilometres...

- Heat stress and exercise

Heat stress occurs when sweat can't evaporate fast enough to keep the body sufficiently cool during physical activity...

- How to survive a rip current (video)
Learn what to do if you find yourself in a rip current...

Healthy eating and exercise

- Food for sport - tucker talk tips
  Carbohydrate is the most important nutrient for athletes...
- Secrets to healthy ageing (slideshow)
  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!
- Sporting performance and food
  Good nutrition and a healthy diet are essential to improving your sports performance...
- The amount of physical activity you need
  It’s important for your health that you get enough physical activity every day, and that you limit your sedentary behaviour. But getting the amount of physical activity you need doesn’t have to be...

Keeping active throughout life

- 10 tips for active seniors
  Stay independent for longer with regular exercise...
- Children – keeping them active
  A young child is naturally active, so build upon their inclinations to use their body...
- Exercise and stretching in the office (video)
  Sitting behind a desk all day doesn't mean you can't exercise...
- Gardens for all – a health activity
  Gardening has many health and therapeutic benefits, and is an activity that most people can enjoy...
- Getting active - tucker talk tips
  The main thing is to choose physical activities that you enjoy and that you can stick to in the long term...
- Healthy active Koori kids - tucker talk tips
  Good nutrition and physical exercise help to keep Koori kids healthy and avoid diseases when they get older...
- Healthy ageing - stay involved
  Reach out to the world around you for fun, a sense of achievement, social contact and mental stimulation...
- Healthy and active ageing
  Being physically active, eating well, socialising and improving your health can help you live a healthy, happy and active life as you get older...
- How to make exercise fun (slideshow)
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...
- How to volunteer and boost your health (slideshow)
  Volunteering is great for our health – it makes us feel good, while helping others in the process...
- Older people in hospital – Get well soon
  Learn about improving and maintaining your health during a hospital stay...
- Parent's guide for active girls
  Physical activity is an important part of health and wellbeing, and girls should remain active as they grow up...
- Physical activity for men
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...
- Physical activity for seniors
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease...
- Physical activity for seniors – staying active during summer (video)
Physical Activity and Fitness Trainer - Sherri Bourne shares a few easy and low-impact ways for seniors to stay healthy over the summer months.

- Physical activity for women
  If you can't make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family.

- Physical activity - what's your excuse?
  There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day.

- Postnatal exercise
  Always consult with your doctor or midwife before starting any postnatal exercise program.

- Pregnancy and exercise
  Unless you have complications, you should be able to exercise throughout your pregnancy.

- Secrets to healthy ageing (slideshow)
  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!

- Sport and children
  Make sure that some family outings offer opportunities for physical activity, such as playing sport together.

- The amount of physical activity you need
  It’s important for your health that you get enough physical activity every day, and that you limit your sedentary behaviour. But getting the amount of physical activity you need doesn’t have to be.

- Vision loss and sport
  Many sports can be adapted to suit people who are blind or have low vision.

- Walking for good health
  Walking will improve your fitness and reduce your risk of heart disease.

- Walking - the benefits for older people
  Walking is great exercise for older people. It has a range of health and social benefits, and most people can do it.

Health conditions and exercise

- Arthritis and exercise
  Exercise can reduce some of the symptoms of arthritis, and improve joint mobility and strength.

- Asthma and exercise
  Exercise-induced asthma can be prevented with medication and by preparing for exercise and physical activity.

- Breathing problems and exercise
  A little physical activity and some breathing exercises can help people with lung disease.

- Cancer - exercise to help you cope
  People with cancer should be as physically active as their abilities and condition allow.

- Dementia - reducing your risk
  Adopting a 'brain healthy' lifestyle may reduce your risk of dementia in later life.

- Diabetes - issues for children and teenagers
  Many parents worry when their child with diabetes starts or returns to school.

- Epilepsy and employment
  Many people living with epilepsy are successfully employed across a range of professional fields.

- Epilepsy and exercise
  It is rare for a person with epilepsy to have a seizure during physical activity, but you should always take safety precautions when exercising.

- Exercise and mood
  Exercise can have an enormous impact on your mood. Not only can exercise help in treating depression, it can also prevent people from becoming depressed again. So it’s important to keep up an exercise.
Exercise in your local surroundings (video)

Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it's running up...

HIV, hepatitis and sport

People with HIV or hepatitis B or C participate in a wide range of sports without restrictions, and the risk of transmission to another player is extremely small...

Menstruation - athletic amenorrhoea

Women who are athletes or who exercise a lot on a regular basis are at risk of developing athletic amenorrhoea, which is the absence of periods...

Osteoporosis and exercise

Exercise can reduce the risk of fractures resulting from osteoporosis by both slowing the rate of bone loss, and reducing the person's risk of falling by building muscle strength and improving balance...

Sports injuries

A sports injury may be more severe than you think...

Type 2 diabetes - healthy eating and exercise (video)

People with type 2 diabetes talk about positive lifestyle changes that improve their quality of life...

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  Eye protection is recommended to prevent eye injuries...
- Basketball - preventing injury
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