Exercise Selection Q & A

Q: “When choosing an exercise, how can I find one that’s right for me?”

A: As noted by Dr. Stuart McGill, and numerous other professionals, the decision to include any exercise in any program should be based on the answers to the following questions:

- Does the exercise fit the primary goal of the individual?
- What is the injury/pain history of the exercise?
- Is the individual physically able to perform the exercise with sound technique?

**Primary Goal**

When it comes to exercise selection, it is essential to always consider the primary goal. This could consist of weight loss, being pain free, or increasing movement and performance in sport or everyday life. The exercise should have a degree of transfer towards the primary goal. It should answer the prime question, “Is this going to help me reach my goal?”

**Injury Concern**

Injury relates to the next section, as well. We should have an understanding of our weaknesses, problem areas, and previous history of injuries, as well as our fitness level. Too often, individuals tend to be ‘Weekend Warriors’ who do little or no exercising for most of their week, then go, figuratively, from zero to 100 miles per hour with little or no preparation for their body. Knowing the proper exercises and being consistent for the long game rather than the short one will lead to a safer environment that can help to overcome weaknesses. The purpose of exercise is to improve performance without injury, whether in sports or life.

**Physically Capable**

Exercise is not a one-size-fits–all activity. Each individual is, indeed, an individual and will respond to each exercise differently. There will be certain exercises that one is unable to safely perform and if this is the case, the exercise is not a positive choice. This could be due to several factors, such as relative weakness, anatomy (levers), mobility, or flexibility. If these issues are interfering with accomplishing the primary goal, then most likely a different exercise or variation will be needed to build upon before advancing the exercise selection.
Five Important Questions to Ask Your Pharmacist

Your local pharmacist can be a key member of your healthcare team and can answer many questions you might have in a timely fashion and from an easily accessible location. Whether you’ve been taking a medication for a while or starting a new one, here are a few important questions to ask, to help take ownership of your health:

1. **What is the name of my medicine and what is it for?**
   It is helpful for everyone involved in your health (especially you!) to know the names of the medications you are taking and why you are taking them. This information can be very important if you consult other doctors or have to be in the hospital for any reason. Many medications are known by more than one name, so to keep your records up to date, be sure to ask your pharmacist if your medicine might have more than one name.

2. **What are the side effects of this medicine?**
   All medications come with their own set of side effects. Your pharmacist can give you tips on what to expect and how to manage them. Many side effects, such as headaches and stomach aches, are not very serious, but be sure to also ask about the rare ones that need urgent action, either by notifying your doctor or going to the emergency room.

3. **How and when should I take my medicine?**
   Some medications come with specific directions on how to take them. Depending on certain side effects or how a medication will be absorbed into the body, taking this medication at certain times will maximize its effects for you. Your pharmacist is an excellent source of information on how to take such medications and can even help build a schedule to best fit your routine. Sometimes life can get busy and you may forget to take a dose of your medication. Instead of doubling up on the missed dose or skipping it entirely, your pharmacist can let you know how best to get back on schedule.

4. **Where should I keep my medicine?**
   While it is safe to store most medications at room temperature, some need to be kept in the refrigerator or protected from extreme heat and the sun. Ask your pharmacist if you need to take special precautions with storing your medications. Furthermore, remember to keep your medications out of the reach of children and pets that may get a hold of them by accident!

5. **What should I do if I have leftover medicine?**
   Check with your local pharmacy to see if they will be hosting a Take-Back Day where they will take your discarded medications and safely dispose of them for you. Otherwise, follow these simple steps:
   
   a. Keep your medications in the original vial.
   b. Cross out any personal information with permanent markers or pens.
   c. Add water, soda, or inedible material (kitty litter, coffee grounds, dirt) to disguise the medications.
   d. Close and secure the vial with tape.
   e. Dispose of the medications in your trash can.