

Prevent injury when you exercise

How do you prevent injuries from sports and other activities? The answer is not clear cut. This is an area of ongoing research, and there is difference of opinion among experts. Despite many still-to-be-answered questions, there are some common -sense things you can do to lessen your risk.

Gradually increase the intensity and length of your workouts or playing sessions. Take it slow when starting an exercise program or a sport. Begin with a moderate level of exertion for about 20 minutes, 3 times a week and gradually build on this. Use a similar gradual approach if you start a new activity that is very different from other things you do. If you are a bike rider and take up kayaking, don't paddle for hours on your first day.

Wear appropriate protective gear and equipment.

Protective pads, mouth guards, helmets, goggles, gloves, braces, insoles and other equipment are essential. Never be without your safety gear.

Rest. Injuries are more common in athletes with high numbers of consecutive days of training without rest days. Some athletes think the more they train, the better they'll play, but this is a myth. Rest is essential to proper training; it can make you stronger. Some injuries are the result of overuse, fatigue and poor judgment; adequate

rest can help you avoid these.

Avoid playing if you are sick, very tired, or in pain, and stop if you have sharp pain, weakness or light-headedness during exercise. This is your body's signal that something is wrong. Pushing through acute pain can result in a severe or lasting injury. If you don't feel well, take some time off until your body heals. Seek medical advice if a problem persists.

Aim to be fit in general, in addition to specific skills and conditioning for your sports or activities. This may include cross-training, exercise that works other muscle groups from those in your primary activity. Also include balance training, which has been shown to help prevent injury. If you are overweight, losing even a few pounds may help reduce your risk of injury.

Give your body fuel. Eat about 2 hours before being active, and drink before, during and after activity.

Information from www.mayoclinic.org, [www.webmd.com, Sportsmedicine.about.com](http://www.webmd.com/Sportsmedicine.about.com), American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Public Information Web: <http://www.aaos.org/wordhtml/home2.htm>, and Aaltonen et al, Prevention of Sports Injuries, Archives of Internal Medicine, 2007.

Recipe of the Week : Pineapple-poached carrots

Serves 3 – from Jane Brody's Good Food Book

2 cups carrots, cut julienne style (very small sticks)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup pineapple juice

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon nutmeg, if desired

Fresh ground pepper to taste

1. In a medium saucepan, combine all ingredients.

2. Bring to a boil

3. Reduce heat, cover the pan.

4. Simmer carrots for about 10 minutes till they are tender-crisp.

Nutrition Information:

Calories:75.8

Total Fat: 0.3 g

Saturated Fat: 0.1 g

Sodium: 61.4 mg

Dietary Fiber: 4.2 g

Protein: 1.1 g

Tip of the Week

Poach fish, poultry or meat in broth, wine, beer or water. Poaching (cooking by immersion in hot liquid) is healthier than frying, allows for maximum temperature control, and gives a moist and tender result. Cook thin pieces quickly in very hot liquid; use a moderately hot liquid for thicker pieces.

from www.eatright.org (American Dietetic Association)

and [On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen](#), by Harold McGee.