

## Recreational Activities

People participate in a variety of recreational activities. Some people are regular participants, four or five times a week, while others participate once a week or once a month. Both groups need to be aware of their bodily demands in order to preserve their ability to continue these activities. If people play softball almost every night they need to be aware of the risks associated with regular participation. It is well known that runners who run too much have an increased risk of wearing out the body parts they use most. Too many end up in a clinic with preventable injuries that have cut their recreational careers short.

People need to realize that it is normal for muscle tissue to wear down with exercise. This means that there is a necessary recovery phase following the exercise. This is why baseball teams have pitchers rest for a few days before they pitch in another game. It allows the pitcher to come back fresh. For the recreational athlete who participates frequently, taking a day off occasionally may seem a bit frustrating, but far less frustrating than to never play again.

*Many recreational athletes ignore the need to prepare themselves for an activity. This includes warming up, stretching out periodically during the activity, cooling down, and stretching after the activity. Taking a few minutes to prepare, and compensate for the demands of activity, can lead to a longer playing career.*

The weekend warrior or once-a-month athlete has an increased risk of injury. Their risk is related to their body's difficulty adjusting to a sudden increase in activity. This risk can be reduced by preparing for the new demands a few days before the activity. They should go through the same types of movements that the activity requires but at a lower intensity. They should also begin stretching the muscles that will be used.



# RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

## *Talking Notes*

### POINTS TO REVIEW

#### **1. Our bodies need to be prepared for exercise and recreational activities.**

While exercise and recreational activities are beneficial, we must recognize that just like work activities, they increase the demands on our bodies. For that reason, people need to adequately prepare for and compensate for these demands by performing simple warm-up and stretching activities—both during and after the activity.

#### **2. Too much of a good thing or inadequate preparation can increase the chances of injury.**

People want to remain active for as long as they possibly can, yet they go out on a regular basis with little regard to the long-term effects. Your body does not know if you are at work, at home, or on the field, it responds to the physical demands in the same way. Exercise and being active is great, but even too much of a good thing, particularly without proper preparation, can have a negative effect on the body. Your body needs to be prepared to exercise and needs time to recover from the demands.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

#### **1. What are some typical weekend warrior activities? What are the body parts most affected by these activities?**

#### **2. How can a person prepare for and compensate for the demands of these activities?**

#### **3. Why do professional athletes exercise and stretch so much to prepare for their season and each game?**

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