

Alternative ‘Podiatric’ Exercises

In podiatry, we routinely see patients who need to exercise more, but have foot pain. Many of them feel they can’t do anything! We feel it is extremely important to have a regular exercise routine whether your feet hurt or not. In particular ‘aerobic exercise’ is important to help with cardiovascular health, to keep your weight down, and to keep the circulation up to the extremities to heal up your hurt foot!

A nice goal would be to get a target heart rate going for 30 minutes 3-5 times a week.

Here are our favorite aerobic forms of exercise for patients with foot conditions:

The Good: cycling (stationary, road bike, mountain bike), swimming, deep water aerobics or deep water jogging, sitting aerobics, rowing machine, healthrider, weight lifting.

Warning: These ‘good’ exercises may not all be perfectly suited to your foot problem. Many times, you will have to adjust or tweak the exercise to prevent further foot injury. Let your symptom, both during and after exercise, guide you.

The Bad: Jogging, walking, running, basketball, soccer, tennis, squash, hiking, jump roping, hopscotch, kickboxing,

The Maybe’s: elliptical trainer, nordic track, stairstepper, shallow water aerobics, skiing, rollerblading, yoga, pilates

The ‘Zone’

Keep in mind that you may not feel pain while you are doing an exercise that is damaging your foot. This is because, when you are in your ‘zone’, endorphins and adrenaline circulate to help fend off the pain. If you feel pain after your exercise or even the day after your exercise, then you shouldn’t have done it!

Overuse: Remember the 10% rule: When increasing your exercise routine, never increase the overall amount of exercise by more than 10% over last week’s amount. If you do, you are much more vulnerable to tendinitis, stress fracture and other ‘overuse’ injuries.

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