

Physical Therapy and Quarantine; How to Manage Your Physical Health

The coronavirus has changed the way many of us go about daily personal, social and work routines. The CDC is recommending social distancing and depending on where you live you may have lost access to in person visits with your physical therapist. While our daily lives have changed, good physical health should remain a priority and your physical therapist can help you stay on track with the following guidelines.

1. To not lose progress, it is recommended you stay in touch with your physical therapist and continue with home exercise programs which you and your physical therapist have discussed. This way, you can pick up again where you left off when access to your physical therapist returns.
2. Many physical therapy offices have begun using telehealth services. This allows you to have access to your physical therapist from the comfort of your own home and with decreased risk of exposure to the coronavirus. Video conferencing or even checking in with your physical therapist via telephone on a weekly basis will make sure you stay on track and your home exercise program is adjusted based on your status.
3. Many people have been asked to work from home. You may have to adjust to a new workstation which is not set up the same as your desk at the office. Poor ergonomics can lead to decreased productivity, decreased motivation to work and increased neck pain, low back pain or shoulder pain. Making sure your computer and desk chair are set up at the right height are initial adjustments your physical therapist can help you with. Neck and upper back exercises such as chin tucks and rows can help you offset pain created by poor posture.

4. Due to social distancing and many health clubs temporarily closing their doors, you may feel lost with how to get daily exercises in. By contacting your physical therapist, you can get recommendations to keep up with your health goals or just to stay active.
 - Walking: Walking 30 minutes a day, 3 times a week has been shown to improve cardiovascular endurance, reduce blood pressure and weight
 - Physical activities you enjoy: Exercise causes the brain to release chemicals that can lead to a feeling of accomplishment and relaxation. Research shows exercise can be very effective in the treatment of depression and elevating your mood. In addition, exercise can boost your immune system.
 - Eight minutes of strength training per day can lead to many health benefits and can all be done without any equipment. Always check with your physical therapist if these exercises are right for you. A routine could consist of planks, pushups, the bridge, lunges, heel raises and squatting.

It is important to stay active during these uncertain times. Exercising will help improve your mood and stress from the coronavirus. Your physical therapist can help you enhance an exercise routine with creative exercises to keep you engaged and excited.