



Welcome to 2009. With a new year comes new services. But first let's have a quick look back at 2008. After reviewing all the written feedback from those who participated in our 2008 corporate wellness programs, we found that 99% were satisfied with what they received and would recommend the program to others. While this shows that 2008 was a success, we are still improving and expanding our services.

In 2009 we will launch the FitSense Australia's Online Wellness Centre. We already provide a series of online health and fitness seminars, but we will be adding substantially to our online services and including a comprehensive online health screening tool, an exercise coaching service, and a health/wellness library. This range of services will suit those who don't have easy access to onsite health and wellness services (such as those who live and work in remote locations) and also people who have limited time or who prefer to learn and access information via the Internet.

Finally (for now!) we are also holding our annual Corporate Wellness showcase in Canberra on Tuesday 5 May 2009. To see how **Your Accredited Corporate Wellness Provider** approaches workplace health and wellness, keep this day free and come along.

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How to Overcome Set Backs

Set backs are not permanent relapses and they don't mean that you have failed. Most people who successfully achieve long term change have some set backs along the way. If you have a set back use the experience to strengthen your efforts and push on with your New Year health and fitness resolutions. Definitely don't give up!

Few changers succeed the first time

Remember that it is rare to overcome a problem or make a big, sustainable change on your first attempt. This means that most people who successfully make changes relapse at some point. The thing that makes the difference is that success comes from not being deterred by a relapse.



Trial and error is inefficient

It can be frustrating to relapse but it is important to learn from your own and other people's experiences and use a relapse as a lesson for staying on track long term.

Change costs more than you budgeted

Few self-changers realise how much time, energy and/or money it takes to achieve real change. Failing to factor this in contributes to the likelihood of being disappointed and experiencing set backs. For example, unhealthy lifestyles often develop over a long period of time and so it is unrealistic to think such lifestyles can be reversed in a few weeks. If you start with a realistic 6-12 month health and fitness plan you are more likely to succeed.

Be prepared for complications

Making lifestyle changes can be more complicated than you initially think. Achieving change rarely involves being able to just concentrate on the thing(s) you want to change without any interruptions, distractions or temptations. It will help if you think in advance about how you might deal with social pressures or the temptation to stop trying to change when you find yourself under pressure or stressed. Relaxation techniques, self talk, time out and assertiveness may all be useful in these situations.



Mini-decisions lead to maxi-decisions

Not many relapses are conscious. Instead, most relapses come from a series of "mini-decisions" that have negative consequences. For example, if you start missing exercise sessions or let frequent unhealthy snacks creep back into your diet, you can relapse back into an unhealthy lifestyle without realising it is happening at the time. Try to keep a regular check on your daily lifestyle choices and actions to prevent this happening. Keeping an exercise and/or diet diary may help.

Reference: Changing for Good by J. Prochaska, J. Norcross, & C. Diclemente (2002)

The core muscles lie deep within the torso and are generally attached to the spine and pelvis. The contraction of these muscles stabilise the spine and pelvis to create a firm support for all other movement.

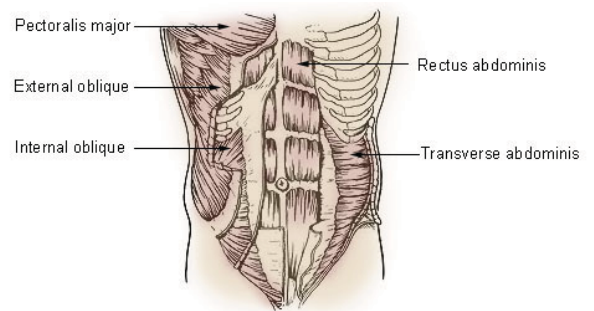
Having good core strength and stability is important for carrying out functional daily living and work related tasks, as well as for performing powerful sporting activities. Without well developed core strength and stability, movement and functionality may be less than optimum, and there can be an increased risk of lower back pain and injury.

Functional Units of the Core

The inner core consists of several deep stability muscles which surround the spine. The three main muscles in this part of the core are: the multifidus (MF), transverse abdominus (TA) and pelvic floor.

The action of the diaphragm in breathing is closely related to the functioning of the inner core and this is why there is such a large emphasis on breathing when training the core.

The outer core muscles cross multiple joints and are easily seen on the surface of the body. This part of the core is generally responsible for the larger movements of the torso. Related muscles include: the gluteals, oblique abdominals, adductor and larger back muscles.



INNER CORE - STABILITY MUSCLES

- Located deep in core
- Short and only span a few joints
- Work constantly, low level activity
- Fatigue resistant
- Turn on before moving muscles
- Take some training

OUTER CORE - MOVING MUSCLES

- Superficially located
- Span multiple joints
- Work intermittently
- Provide strength, power and speed
- Fatigue easier – feel sore when we work them hard

Core Activation

Core stability training begins with learning to co-contract the transverse abdominus (TA) and multifidus (MF) muscles effectively as this has been shown to be key to the lumbar support mechanism. To perform the TA and MF co-contraction, you need to perform the “abdominal bracing” technique with the spine in the neutral position. Use the following guidelines to put this technique into practice:

- Lie on your back with your knees bent. The lower part of your back should be in a “neutral” position - i.e., not arched or flattened, and there should be a small gap between your back and the floor. This position minimises stress on the vertebrae, muscles and tissues of your body.
- Breathe in deeply and relax all your stomach muscles.
- Breathe out, and as you do so, draw your lower abdomen inwards as if your belly button is going back towards your spine.
- Hold this contraction for 10 secs, breathing in and out whilst holding a small amount of tension in the lower abdominal area. Repeat 5-10 times.

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Fitness Facts - Core Stability

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Key Points for Inner Core Activation

- Do not let your whole stomach tense up or your upper abdominals bulge outwards.
- Do not brace too strongly, just contract a little. It's about endurance, not maximum strength.
- Maintain a neutral position – do not arch or flatten your back.
- Keep breathing – do not hold your breath.
- Use your fingers to check that you are doing it properly - place them on either side of your lower abdomen to feel the tension in the TA muscle.
- Practice lying on your front and then try it kneeling, sitting and/or standing.



The Next Step – Challenging the Core

Having learnt to recruit the inner core muscles correctly in various positions, you can then progress to simple core stability exercises. These exercises may also involve the oblique muscles, other lumbar muscles and the gluteals to assist the inner core in maintaining the lumbar spine in a stable neutral position.

The ultimate aim of core stability training is to ensure that the deep trunk muscles are working correctly to control the lumbar spine during dynamic movements, e.g. lifting a heavy box or running. For this reason once you have mastered simple core exercises it is important to move on to exercises that require you to maintain stability while doing functional movements. For some good core stability exercises check out our online exercise programs under the resources folder on the FitSense website: www.fitsense.com.au

Product Review FT40

Polar, the world's leading heart rate monitor manufacturer, released a new range of heart rate monitors late in 2008. The FT 40 is part of this new range.

It is a rather snazzy looking unit with a low cut design making it ideal for both males and females. It comes in two colours and has some terrific features.

As well as the usual heart rate and stopwatch features, the FT 40 also has a fitness test facility which enables the user to measure their level of aerobic fitness and an "energy pointer" which can be used to guide the user to the correct level of exercise intensity.

If you like tracking your workouts, you can also purchase the optional Flowlink which allows you to upload your workout data from your monitor to the Polar Personal Trainer website.

For more information on the Polar FT40 visit: www.fitshop.com.au



POLAR[®]
heart rate monitors

Food safety is important at any time of the year but when the weather is hot and we do more entertaining outdoors, we need to be even more careful. Follow these guidelines to keep your healthy summer foods fresh, safe and delicious.

- Try and be organised. Do some menu planning so that perishable food can be stored and used properly and promptly.
- Keep hot foods steaming hot (over 60°C) and cold foods refrigerated at or below 5°C.
- Ensure good cold airflow in the fridge by not over filling it. If there's not enough room in the fridge, take out those things that don't require refrigeration to remain safe – e.g., soft drinks, condiments.
- Before preparing foods and in between handling raw meat or raw chicken wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water and dry thoroughly.
- Prepare foods as close as possible to when they are going to be eaten.
- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meats and poultry and ready to eat foods.
- Cook foods properly.
- If you cook large amounts of food in advance, divide it into smaller portions or shallow containers, cover and place in the fridge or freezer.



Follow this guide with leftovers:

- If food has been unrefrigerated for 2 hours or less it will generally be okay, as long as it hasn't been in a very hot room or in the sun.
- If food has been unrefrigerated for 2-4 hours it can be risky, particularly if it contains high risk ingredients such as dairy products or raw eggs. Where this is the case play it safe and throw it out.
- Any food that has been unrefrigerated for 4 hours or more should be thrown out.
- If you are keeping leftovers then refrigerate them immediately and use them within 2-3 days.
- Defrost ready to eat food in the fridge or microwave only and not on the bench (unless recommended by food manufacturer).
- When reheating food ensure that it is steaming hot all the way through (at least 75°C).

Remember, there are 5.4 million cases of food poisoning in Australia each year. You and your family don't want to be among them. Follow these tips to keep your summer food fresh and safe.

Source: *The Food Safety Information Council*
www.foodsafety.asn.au

Bircher muesli

2 cups rolled oats
1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
1 cup orange juice
1 1/2 cups skim milk
1 cup NESTLÉ All Natural 99% Fat Free Vanilla Yogurt (plus extra to serve)
1/3 cup chopped nuts (such as hazelnuts and sliced almonds)
1 apple, grated honey, to taste
chopped banana or strawberries, to serve

Combine oats, apricots, orange juice, milk, yogurt, nuts and apple, cover and refrigerate overnight. Before serving, add honey, to taste. Serve with banana or strawberries and extra yogurt.



*Recipe courtesy of Australian Institute of Sport **Survival Around the World***

UPCOMING EVENTS

25 - 31 January 2009

Australia's Healthy Weight Week
<http://www.healthyweightweek.com.au/>

5 February 2009

Triathlon ACT Aquathon (swim, ride)
www.triathlonactevents.com.au

14 February 2009

Paddy Pallin Adventure Race Series (kayak, bike, run)
www.arocsport.com.au/adventure

15 February 2009

Triathlon ACT Short/Long Course Triathlon (swim, ride, bike)
www.triathlonactevents.com.au

27 February - 1 March 2009

Stromlo Running Festival (8 running events for runners of all levels)
www.stromlorunningfestival.com.au

FitSense Corporate Wellness Showcase

10am - 12pm @ Crowne Plaza, Canberra

Tuesday 5 May 2009

More information - Phone: 1300 88 58 40, Email: info@fitsense.com.au

www.fitsense.com.au

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