

# Overuse Injuries Are a Common Part of Training



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rest. In some instances, rest is appropriate, but our ultimate goal is to keep our bodies moving as they heal. If your pain persists or alters your movements, then an evaluation with your physical therapist is warranted before these altered mechanics become another source of pain altogether.

Many are familiar with the term tendonitis or tendinosis. The mechanism of injury for these inflammatory-type conditions often results from a small discomfort at the start. We try to work through that discomfort to some extent. With this pain comes changes in how we move and often an asymmetry in muscle partnerships around the irritated area develops or worsens. This puts increased stress or burden on one region, which can lead to inflamed tissue. When this inflammation is acute, we use the term tendonitis. When it is more chronic, we prefer tendinosis.

Our job as physical therapists is to assess this area of pain and try to reduce the discomfort first and foremost. At the same time, we are also looking at the muscles and joints surrounding the area in order to identify what factors may have predisposed this issue to develop in the first place.

An example of this might be a runner who complains of low back pain. We want to give the individual strategies to decrease their pain both while at therapy and at home when the pain is present. During that evaluation, we may also determine that

this individual recently increased their mileage or changed their training surface. In addition, we may also identify that this pain is stemming from increased load at the spine during impact due to weak hip extensors and tight hip flexors or tight hamstrings and a weak core.

Once the problem is identified, we come up with a plan for that person. Our goal is to teach the individual exercises and strategies to mitigate the pain. We also try to reduce the recurrence of pain through specific strengthening and stretching exercises as the person increases activity levels. This plan may also include education about the individual's technique for certain tasks such as squatting, stair-climbing, running, etc.

It is also important that we set very realistic expectations with our clients. We want to help them to be better connected to their body's signals. If they are new to exercise or athletics, it may take them time to realize that some degree of discomfort is normal as you push your exercise routine further and work toward your goals.

We also want them to learn what their specific red flags for exercise are and how to back off and modify what they are doing. It is our goal to keep them active in some way without feeling like they are taking two steps backward.

One major motivator for movement this time of the year is all of the great charity races and fund-raising runs that come up. These events push many of us out of our comfort

zones and onto the pavement. Every year, our practice looks forward to participating in the Travis Manion Foundation's 9/11 Heroes Run.

Hearing the stories of the veterans and the family members of those honored at that event is enough to make us all want to push a little harder. Witnessing the tremendous amounts of perseverance and determination by all on that day is truly inspiring and part of why we keep coming back.

We hope to see all of you out there on October 3rd for this wonderful cause, whether walking, running, or cheering on friends and family. If you have been training for the race and your body is talking to you, please stop by and see us at our WWSPT clinic for an evaluation!

The fall is a wonderful time for outdoor sports. The air is cooling off, the mornings are crisp, and the leaves are changing. The improved conditions often lead to a lot of increased outdoor activities such as running, hiking, biking, and long walks for many who spent the dog days of summer in the comfort of their air-conditioned homes.

Increased movement is a great way to improve overall health. Unfortunately for some, the good intentions of going the extra mile can at times lead to pain. Pain is a very normal part of life and is not always something to be afraid of, but, when pain interferes with your daily function and ability to participate in your preferred form of exercise, it is time to see your physical therapist.

Most of the time, pain with exercise develops when we begin training either too much, too fast, or a combination of both. We have a timeline to prepare for an event, and we want to get to that finish line, literally.

Often the first response when pain is present is to



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