

# Fit Tips

## A GUIDE FOR RECREATIONAL ATHLETES

Physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Being active can help you maintain a healthy weight, reduce blood pressure, build strong bones, relieve stress, and maintain flexibility and good posture. Recreational sport is a great way to enjoy the many benefits of physical activity whether you pick-up a hockey stick, golf club, racquet, or paddle, get on a bike, or put on your running shoes! The important thing is to get moving.

Canada's Olympic athletes know that everyone who gets physically active is a winner. Here are some tips and inspiration from our top performers and Canada's chiropractors to help you avoid injury and get the most from your favorite sport.

### TIP 1: WARM UP

Before jumping in the pool, hitting the field or picking up a golf club, take a full 20 minutes – no less – to warm-up. Your warm-up should include deep breathing exercises, gentle stretching and range of movement exercises, as well as a brisk walk or easy jog to loosen and warm the muscles and joints.



### TIP 2: LEARN THE PROPER TECHNIQUE

Learn the right technique for your sport from the beginning. Using the wrong sport-specific technique can create incorrect muscle memory and can make it difficult to break bad habits. Poor technique can also cause injury to your joints and muscles.



### TIP 3: USE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

Make sure your equipment is the right fit, height and capacity for you to avoid a sport-related injury. Recreational athletes should have their equipment professionally fitted and checked before starting out.

### TIP 4: AVOID OVER-TRAINING

Too much. Too fast. Too soon. Over-training is one of the most common causes of recreational athletic injuries. Take your time and work up to it slowly before pushing yourself too hard. Remember – rest is as important as training. Take a training break and give your body a chance to recover.



#### Daniel Igali

*World Champion & Olympic Gold Medallist, wrestling*

*"Chiropractic care has reduced my recovery time from injuries and lessened my susceptibility to injury. I would recommend a physical assessment and chiropractic maintenance to anyone who is serious about their sport."*





**Marnie McBean**

*World Champion & Olympic Gold Medallist, rowing*

**“Chiropractic was an important part of my athletic training. It helped keep my body in line and that allowed me to drive with my legs and pry with my lower back. It also helped facilitate recovery and prevent injury.”**

**TIP 5: COOL DOWN**

Cooling down after a work-out is just as important as warming-up. Take 20 minutes for a brisk walk or slow jog, and stretch-out your muscles and joints before heading for the change room or the car.

**TIP 6: DRINK FLUIDS**

Drink plenty of fluids before, during and after physical activity – even in cold weather. Remember that once you are thirsty, you are already starting to dehydrate. Dehydration affects your energy level and your physical functioning.

**TIP 7: STRENGTH TRAINING IS TOPS**

Strength training will help you keep your spine and other body joints functioning optimally. It will also build muscle that is an important shock absorber and helps to prevent strains and sprains.

**TIP 8: CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE**

Not every elite athlete brings home a medal, but they are all winners. The right attitude is good for your performance and your overall health. Have fun!

**TIP 9: MAXIMIZE MUSCLE AND JOINT FUNCTION**

Maintaining good muscle and joint range of motion and mobility will contribute to your athletic performance and help prevent injury. Restrictions in muscle and joint functioning can hamper your technique and may lead to painful strains and sprains.

**TIP 10: TREAT INJURIES PROMPTLY**

If you suffer an injury or experience pain that lasts longer than your usual post-workout soreness, ice the area to reduce swelling and inflammation, and consult a chiropractor.



**Perdita Felicien**

*World Champion & Olympian, sprint hurdles*

**“As a full-time athlete, I rely on my body to make a living, so it always has to be at its best. Chiropractic care is an important part of keeping me in the best condition so I can perform at an optimal level.”**

**Dr. Derek Porter**  
*World Champion & Olympic Gold Medallist, rowing*  
**“Taking care of injuries is important, but what is just as important is ‘tuning up’ your body to ensure a great performance every time you go out. I was so impressed with my chiropractic care throughout my rowing career, that I became a chiropractor myself.”**



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