

PT NEWS AND LATEST RESEARCH

EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY

A recent US study suggests that foetal development may be boosted by exercise that the mother undertakes during her pregnancy.

Pregnant women between the ages of 20 and 35 were divided into two groups for the study by researchers at the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences and the University of Kansas Medical Centre. One group undertook moderate aerobic activity for at least half an hour, three times a week, while those in the control group did not partake in regular exercise.

The aims of the study were to discover whether the foetus received any cardiovascular benefits from the exercise activities of expectant mothers, and whether exercise increased foetal breathing movements, which indicates functional development

of the respiratory system and general wellbeing. Non-invasive tests were used to monitor foetal development, breathing and body movements, and foetal heart rate and autonomic nervous system control.

The study findings showed foetal heart rate to be significantly lower in the exercise group during both breathing and non-breathing movement periods. Foetal overall and short-term heart rate variability were higher in the exercise group during breathing movements. The exercise-exposed foetuses had higher measures of vagal (cardiovascular) control during breathing movements. No significant differences in measures of vagal control between the two groups were noted during periods of foetal non-breathing, and there were no group or breathing differences in sympathetic heart rate control.

The researchers commented, 'These findings suggest a potential benefit of maternal exercise on foetal development because of the link between foetal breathing movements and the developing autonomic nervous system'. ■

Source: American Physiological Society



TRAINING FOR DRY JULY

Last orders will soon be called (at least for a month!) with the return of Dry July, the alcohol-free charity fundraiser. Wines will be swapped for waters, spirits for softies and cocktails for mocktails as thousands take a break from the sauce to raise money for cancer charities across the country.

Dry July challenges individuals or groups to stop boozing during July and to get sponsored for doing so. The funds you raise go towards directly improving the conditions and treatment process for cancer sufferers at the charity in your region:

ACT – The Canberra Hospital

QLD – The Mater Adult Hospital

NSW – Prince of Wales Hospital, Dreams2Live4

SA – The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Research Foundation

VIC – The Royal Melbourne Hospital

WA – Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital



Personal trainer Damien Kelly, fitness guru for *body+soul* magazine and Ninemsn's fitness blog and owner of Damien Kelly Fitness Studio in Coogee, Sydney, shared some of his Dry July experiences from last year:

DRY JULY

Clear your head, make a difference™

www.dryjuly.com

WHAT WAS THE MAIN BENEFIT YOUR CLIENTS GOT FROM GOING DRY?

'Taking a month off really highlighted the number of opportunities there are to regularly go drinking, and the often unseen social pressures we face to have a drink. It

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taught them a lot about their own habits’.

WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUR CLIENTS TO TAKE PART AGAIN?

‘Absolutely. Laying off the booze can really make a huge difference to the way your body performs. It’s amazing how long a big night on the booze can slow you down for. Our studio focuses on and expects high quality and high intensity training. Clients that regularly drink too much simply can’t keep up and their ongoing results suffer. It’s like training with a lead anchor tied

to your ankle. While we don’t expect our clients, in general, to be tee-totalers we believe Dry July shows them they can live without alcohol and that a healthier lifestyle is possible. This year we’ll be expecting all our members to go dry in July and hopefully strength in numbers can be a success. It can really add to the community spirit in the studio and gives everyone a topic for a few extra laughs and jibes. And hey, if it can help the clients lose a couple of extra kilos for the month then all the better’.

So, why don’t you and your clients clear your heads and make a difference this July – your livers will love you for it! Simply head to www.dryjuly.com to register, find out more information and download corporate packs. To download poster packs to promote Dry July in your facility or studio, visit www.dryjuly.com/press/Dry-July-Poster-Pack-Hi-Res.zip ■

Source: Dry July

EXERCISE AS TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION

Exercise is being under-used as a treatment for depression resulting in a leading Australian authority on mood disorders to call on doctors and other health professionals to place a greater emphasis on physical activity for patients with the ‘black dog’ disorder (the term Winston Churchill coined for his own depression).

Described as a neglected strategy, the Black Dog Institute is joining forces with Australian sportspeople to lead a drive to raise awareness in the community and amongst health professionals about the benefits of exercise to treat some forms of depression. John Konrads (Olympian), Brendan Capell (long distance swimmer) and David Spindler (golfer and professional caddie to some of the world’s best-known golfers) recently helped to launch the Exercise the Mood initiative.

Speaking at the launch, Executive Director of the Black Dog Institute, Professor Gordon Parker, said exercise was particularly useful for reducing depression amongst people with mild/moderate depression who were previously inactive; ‘Two-thirds of Australians do not meet the minimum physical activity recommendations, and people experiencing depression have even lower levels of activity’ he said.

Parker explained that last year the Black Dog Institute conducted an innovative survey of 500 people at a major Sydney fun run (Blackmore Sydney Running Festival). The aim of the study was to examine the impact of exercise on mood and the relationship between exercise and the symptoms of depression.

This study found that while most people (95 per cent) reported that exercise

improved their mood, even mild symptoms of depression were associated with reduced fitness, less confidence in exercising and added obstacles to exercise. Over 90 per cent of those people surveyed with current symptoms of depression agreed that exercise ‘gives me more energy’ and ‘makes me feel better if I am feeling depressed’.

‘This Australian study, along with recent overseas research, has demonstrated the benefits of exercise for improving mood and energy levels in depression’ said Parker; ‘While regular moderate exercise can be an effective way to assist some forms of depression, it can be very difficult for people experiencing depression to find the motivation to get started’.

Parker said that health professionals had an important role to play in assisting depressed patients to become more active. He said the Black Dog Institute was developing free customised educational programs and workshops for health care professionals, including GPs, psychologists and allied health professionals to assist them in using exercise as a strategy for treatment of depression.

The two hour workshop will be piloted at the Black Dog Institute, starting in July this year, while rollout will occur in 2010-2011. Funded by the Roth Charitable Foundation,

the program is being developed in collaboration with the UNSW Lifestyle Clinic. This new initiative will include evidence-based strategies for promoting physical activity in people experiencing depression and train health professionals in:

- Current evidence for the role of exercise in the treatment of depression
- Physical activity assessment and tailored education on exercise
- Development of individualised exercise plans for depressed patients
- Identifying and overcoming barriers to exercise
- Specific strategies found to increase exercise participation, including ‘motivational interviewing’ counselling, written exercise prescriptions from doctors, goal setting and self-monitoring
- Referral options and relevant Medicare rebates available (e.g. referrals to exercise physiologists under Enhanced Primary Care Plans)

For more information on the work of the Black Dog Institute, visit www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/healthprofessionals ■

Source: Black Dog Institute & UNSW Lifestyle Clinic



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OBESITY BAD FOR BUSINESS AS WELL AS HEALTH

An American study has shown that, in addition to damaging their own physical health, overweight and obese workers are damaging the fiscal health of their employers.

For the study, researchers from the Centre for the Advancement of Health surveyed 7,338 working individuals, focusing on the areas of missed work time, reduced work effectiveness and impairment of daily activities. Obese people and type II diabetes sufferers lost between 11 and 15 per cent of work time (equating to about 5.9 hours per week) due to health problems. 'Normal-weight' people lost an average 9 per cent of work time (3.6 hours a week). Obese people with type II diabetes also reported impairment during 20 to 34 per cent of day to day activities, including shopping, exercising and taking care of children.

Study co-author and president of Strategic Healthcare Solutions, Kathleen Fox, said 'From an employer's perspective, this study provides evidence that workplace wellness programs that include weight loss and weight management would be beneficial for obese employees with or at risk for diabetes'.

Anne Wolf, an instructor at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and specialist in the field of the economic effects of obesity, said that the findings support previous research that drew a correlation between increasing weight and higher levels of lost productivity in the workplace. She noted, however, that the new study had found an independent effect of diabetes on worker productivity.

Advocating a greater degree of employer involvement in employee health and wellbeing, Wolf said, 'Employers who spend money in a lifestyle intervention will find



their investment returned to them in the form of increased productivity and reduced absenteeism'. ■

Source: American Journal of Health Promotion

NETWORK MEMBER WINS AUSTRALIAN PERSONAL TRAINING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Canberra-based Succeed Personal Development has taken a leaf from its own book, finding success at Fitness Australia's recent Industry Awards of Excellence and taking out the award for Personal Training Business of the Year for 2008.

After claiming personal training business of the year at the regional awards ceremony in Canberra, Succeed headed to Sydney's Darling Harbour for the coveted national Industry Awards of Excellence which recognises the dedication and contribution of the elite in Australia's fitness industry. Competing against the seven nominated businesses from each State and Territory in Australia, Succeed was announced the national winner.

Businesses in the running for the prestigious award had to demonstrate their involvement in developing and promoting the fitness industry, their outstanding level of customer service, and their role in providing a variety of services to engage the community in fitness activities.

Established in 2005, Succeed Personal Development provides more than personal training services for its clients, focusing on a holistic approach which addresses fitness,



nutritional and psychological needs for lasting health and fitness results. With a loyal client base, Succeed now operates out of three major centres in Canberra; Edge Health Club Weston, Club Lime Belconnen and Tuggeranong, while also offering boot camp sessions across 20 different locations in Canberra. Succeed also has a broader commitment to the community, raising \$45,000 for local children's cancer charity, Camp Quality, at their annual Charity Gala Ball in 2008.

Succeed managing director, Scott Williams, said he and his team at Succeed are thrilled to have received the award. 'It's always a great honour to be recognised for your work. It's a result of four years of hard work, and a hell of a lot of hours doing what we love'.

Williams went on to say that they are dedicated to providing the Canberra community with fun, effective and lasting health and fitness solutions; 'We find that

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what sets us apart is our holistic approach to improving client health and fitness. Succeed offers more than personal training, instead, we look at and address nutritional, physiological and psychological needs. Because of this, we are able to steer our clients towards lifestyle habits and techniques that complement each other so that they can achieve total and lasting body and mind transformations.

‘Many Australians are aware of the impact of unhealthy lifestyle habits, and at a time where Australia’s population is rapidly gaining ground and pounds in the rankings

of the world’s most obese, it’s our goal to do what we can to shift attitudes and encourage healthy lifestyle and fitness options to ensure we turn these worrying statistics around.

‘We work everyday with our clients to make sure they don’t become another statistic. We believe that part of the solution to this growing issue starts by improving attitudes and educating our younger generation on the benefits of health and fitness. That’s why we recently established the Mini Commandos program’ said Williams.

Mini Commando’s is a Succeed initiative launched through the Australian

Sports Commission’s Active After School Communities (AASC) program. It provides schools with funding to access a range of sport and exercise-based programs for children in a bid to improve their health and fitness.

Williams concluded, ‘Succeed is dedicated to improving the mind and body through holistic training experiences for all of our clients – no matter what age, from our Mini Commandos to our Boot Camp veterans. We hope we will be able to continue doing what we love for many years to come’. ■

Source: Succeed Personal Development

FILEX WILD WALK GETS DELEGATES FIRED UP ABOUT ADVENTURE FITNESS

On the morning of Saturday 18 April, as the sun rose in magnificent pinks and mauves over Sydney Harbour, a team of 30 FILEX delegates zoomed across the water to enjoy the world class views and experiences of the Wild Women on Top Adventure Fitness Programs.

Led by master coach and mountaineer, Di Westaway, the group was greeted with sweat inducing sets of steep, sandstone stairs, and was encouraged to take up the challenge of carrying 20kg backpacks up and down 2,000 stairs.

Once they had endured this, the team wandered, chatting, along bush tracks to the next challenge – clambering up a very steep, long, rocky bush footpad, often on all fours, to the top of a spectacular lookout, three times!

Participants were rewarded for all this mental toughness and physical effort with an exquisite rock walk along the sandstone cliffs and rocky outcrops of Sydney Harbour, before tucking in to choc chip cookies and hot tea on a rocky ledge overlooking the spectacular Sydney Heads, and out to the turquoise Pacific Ocean.

And this was training! According to Westaway, in fact, this was a typical Trek Training session, which is used by Wild Women on Top to train their Seven Summits teams. Wild Women on Top specialises in Adventure Fitness for women, training ordinary women to do extraordinary treks all over the world. Their Trek Training Programs incorporate interval training and undulating treks carrying backpacks to add intensity and efficiency to their three-hour sessions. To learn how to prepare yourself and your clients for world class treks, go to



www.WildWomenOnTop.com to find out more about the Top PT Trainers program. Wild Women on Top is also giving Network members who join by the end of May, a free eBook on trek training. ■

Source: Wild Women on Top



REFLECTIONS ON FILEX

A few weeks ago I worked at my twelfth (I think!) FILEX fitness industry convention, delivered by Australian Fitness Network. I was helping the Network team by assuming the role of room host this year, and after missing last year’s event due to overseas commitments it was nice to be involved in FILEX again. It really is a wonderful event with a great atmosphere and superbly run by the team – congrats to Amy, Puccetta, Judy and Cameron and the whole team who deliver such a well run three days. For those of you who have never attended, I urge you to consider it next year – it really can change your path as a trainer, it certainly did so for me!



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I like to mix my session choices up, taking in some presentations from established names, and some from exciting newer kids on the block. There were, of course, some trusted favourites who always deliver, including Lisa Westlake, Andrew Simmons and Justin Tamsett. Len Kravitz always appeals to the science nerd in me with his research updates, and I also enjoyed seasoned presenters Robbie Parker, Seamus Dalton, Susie Burrell, Heidi Denning and Tony Boutagy.

However, this year I really noticed the influx of great new talent, a new generation of presenters coming through. Who did I most enjoy? Three new standouts for me were Suzi Nevell presenting on adaptations to stress and the importance of recovery; Chad Timmerman's presenting his research into why clients terminate training (I found this so interesting I will go into it in more depth in my next eNews column); and Scott Krywulcz presenting on the business of owning a personal training studio.

For me, the business aspects of personal training are the must-attend sessions, and to my mind you can never have too many of this type of session on offer. Many of these sessions are aimed at medium to large clubs, and others directed towards smaller PT business (the ones of greatest interest to me). This is a vital area of education for those in our field of work, as I often work with trainers who are technically excellent at exercise programming, but very poor in the area of running a successful business. Let me just say – it's no coincidence that the PT business owners who build long term prosperity in our industry are the ones who invest time in their continuing education at events like FILEX.

Putting the business aspects to one side, though, I thought I'd just wrap up with a few of the key 'technical' messages that I took away from this year's FILEX:

- The importance of sleep on weight loss, ongoing health and stress management

- Including low level recovery activities into exercise programs
- More is better – for extra health benefits go above the recommended minimums from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- The recommendation from ACSM to have an activity plan for clients
- The advice to get clients active, then fit, then fitter; i.e. there is no finish line
- The 'cardio protective concept' of the benefits of cardio exercise in preventing and combating lifestyle related diseases. ■

Andrew Verdon, Dip. Ex Sci
 Andrew owns a successful personal training studio in Sydney. He combines a business background with over a decade of hands-on experience in the fitness industry. He also held the position of strength and conditioning coordinator for the 2004 and 2008 Australian Olympic sailing teams. For more information, call 02 9908 2499 or visit www.beyondstudio.com.au

NUTRITION NEWS

BE STRATEGIC WHEN CHOOSING BREKKIE CARBS

The type of carbohydrates eaten prior to working out may affect how much fat is burnt during an exercise session, according to a recent UK study.

Researchers from the University of Nottingham found that women who consumed a breakfast of muesli, yoghurt and skimmed milk – carbohydrates that don't cause blood sugar spikes (low glycaemic index (GI) carbs) – burnt 50 per cent more fat during an ensuing workout than women who ate foods such as cornflakes and white bread, which cause blood sugar to rise sharply (high glycaemic index carbs).

Lead study author Emma Stevenson, now a senior lecturer at Northumbria University, Newcastle Upon Tyne, noted that previous studies have found a positive relationship between a low-glycaemic menu and fat-burning, she said that the new study had unique aspects; 'Most of the research in the effects of the glycaemic load of pre-exercise feeding has been carried out in male subjects' she said, noting that the majority of research had also focused on endurance athletes rather than 'everyday' exercisers.

In contrast, eight 'typical weight' women with an average age of 24 participated in



VS



Stevenson's study. On two occasions, the participants consumed either a high or low glycaemic index meal (both meals totalling 265 calories, but the low GI one including more fibre), and then three hours later walked on a treadmill for an hour. Blood samples were taken prior to the meal, during the exercise and after the workout to gauge parameters including free fatty acids, a marker for fat burning.

After the low GI meal, the average amount of fat oxidised during the exercise component of the study was 7.4 grams, compared with 3.7 grams after the high GI meal. The researchers theorised that this might be because high GI carbs spur a big spike in blood sugar, and that a meal rich in low GI carbs, which cause a lower blood sugar response, could increase the body's use of body fat for burning rather than for blood sugar.

Stevenson emphasised the need to focus on low GI foods when it comes to fat burning; 'LGI foods tend to be whole grains, porridge, some whole grain cereals, soy and linseed bread'.

Barry Braun, director of the Energy Metabolism Laboratory at the University of Massachusetts, and a researcher in the field of post-workout nutrition, said that although the study was based on 'normal-weight' women, the findings would probably apply to overweight individuals wishing to lose weight; 'Eating large amounts of high-glycaemic carbs right before exercise is probably as detrimental for overweight people as it is for normal-weight'. He did concede, however, that there might be a place for high GI carbohydrates for athletes in immediate need of high energy intake prior to an endurance event. ■

Source: The Journal of Nutrition

NUTRITION NEWS

FOOD FOR THOUGHT DURING PREGNAN-SEA

It has long been agreed that pregnant women should include certain seafood in their diet, but the debate still continues with regards the optimal amount they should consume.

The area of concern in relation to fish is the high level of mercury they contain. In the US the Food and Drug Administration advises women to eat no more than 340 grams of fish per week, whereas a group of nutritional and medicinal scientists advocates pregnant women to consume at least this amount.

Judy Meehan, executive director of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, which concerns itself with maternal and child health, said, 'Recent data shows us that women are still not eating enough fish, and that's really alarming. There's simply no other way to get the omega-3s for brain development that you can from fish'.

A 2007 study by US and British scientists, published in *The Lancet*, claimed that expectant mothers who stuck to government recommendations could

actually negatively affect the mental development of their children.

In another study, Dr Emily Oken, from the Department of Ambulatory Care and Prevention at Harvard Medical School, weighed up the nutritional benefits against the contaminant risk posed by the consumption of fish by pregnant women. The fish consumption of 341 women during their second trimester of pregnancy was surveyed, and the mercury levels of their blood measured. Three years later, the motor skills and intelligence of their children were assessed.

'Test scores were highest in children of mothers who ate more than two weekly fish servings but had lower mercury levels, suggesting that the greatest benefit occurred when women ate fish low in mercury. Even mothers who ate canned tuna more than twice weekly had children who scored better on tests, compared with those who did not eat canned tuna during pregnancy' Oken said.

A separate Danish study which looked at 25,446 children, found that those whose mothers consumed higher levels of fish while



pregnant scored higher in cognition and motor skills tests than those whose mothers ate small amounts; 'Compared with women who ate the least fish during pregnancy, women who ate the most fish – about 14 ounces per week (400 grams), on average – had about a 30 per cent likelihood of better development, about the same advantage a child would get from being one month older or from breast-feeding for more than one year' Oken said.

Source: HealthDay News

GROUP EXERCISE & MIND BODY NEWS

ACUPUNCTURE DOESN'T HAVE TO ACTUALLY PUNCTURE

A recent US trial has shown acupuncture to be effective at treating chronic lower back pain, even when the 'needles' did not penetrate the skin.

For the trial, funded by the National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, over 600 people with chronic lower back pain were randomly prescribed either individualised acupuncture, standardised acupuncture, simulated acupuncture (non-penetrating) or 'usual care'.

Commenting on the varying types of acupuncture, Daniel Cherkin, lead author of the report and a senior investigator with the Group Health Center for Health Studies in Seattle, said, 'All were superior to usual care. Acupuncture is an effective treatment for chronic back pain. People receiving acupuncture are more likely to get better'.

To simulate the acupuncture, the needle was replaced with a toothpick in a needle guide tube, pushing against pressure points without actually breaking the skin. The

participants in each group received ten treatments during a seven week period. At the conclusion of the trial, dysfunction and symptom scores improved equally within each of the groups.

The level of medication use was also found to decline drastically among all the acupuncture groups, both initially and over the following year. Prior to the trial approximately two thirds of the individuals with back pain were taking medication; after the trial this went down to less than half in the acupuncture groups, and to 59 percent in the 'usual care' group.

Cherkin discussed the surprising element of the study results, namely that acupuncture was effective even when administered in a non-penetrative way; 'It's not necessary to penetrate the skin. There's no advantage to tailoring and no advantage to using a needle. Why? It throws open the question of how does this work?' The researchers speculated that the 'fake' acupuncture may still trigger the physiological processes necessary to achieve relief, or that the benefits may come

from 'nonspecific effects such as therapist conviction or patient enthusiasm'.

Janet Konefal, a licensed acupuncturist and assistant dean for complementary and integrative medicine at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, commented on the findings, saying, 'You can stimulate a point with pressure, needle, electricity, even now with laser light and different frequencies of laser light. 'Pecking' on a point is a Japanese technique for stimulation. You might use that with someone who is older or weak in their constitution. That could explain why two different methods of stimulation work equally well'. She went on to say that a whole variety of acupuncture techniques were entering the mainstream; 'When we understand that different stimulations may be effective rather than doing deep-needle stimulation which, for some people when in pain can be painful, we can now use laser or light needling or even just electric stimulation on the points; I think that part is great'.

Source: Archives of Internal Medicine

GROUP EXERCISE & MIND BODY NEWS

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The Indoor Cycling Experience (I.C.E) is a cutting-edge indoor cycling instructor workshop which trains fitness professionals to become innovative, effective and motivating indoor cycling instructors.

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CLUB CORNER

GOVERNMENTS SHOULD TURN TO HEALTH CLUBS FOR WELLNESS CARE – NOT CHEMISTS FOR SICKNESS CARE

The New Zealand government is considering letting pharmacies play a greater role in the health system. While there could be some wisdom in the case of swine flu and the like, there is also an opportunity for this government to really make a difference to the health of New Zealanders by instead looking at the big picture and asking 'what causes people to stay well?'

Most of the talk about health care is in reality 'sickness care'. The focus is on the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. MP Tony Ryall speaks of chemists being an important part of the 'family health care team'. Indeed, he speaks of chemists having an 'active' part in health care. In reality, the only active part chemists play is actively getting more drugs

into people. Ryall should instead consider adopting health clubs into its family health care team. This would be BIG PICTURE thinking.

A pharmacist is a businessman who deals in chemicals. Look at the motivation they receive from government: a dispensing fee for filling prescriptions! How would a pharmacist be therefore motivated to prescribe 'an exercise program' or a healthy breakfast? They don't make any money for doing this. Even if they did, what would qualify them to do so? The Pharmacy Guild has proposed that they also be funded to provide four additional services;

- Nicotine replacement therapy programs
- Emergency contraceptive pill
- Help patients with diabetes, heart disease and asthma
- Health counselling and guidance on medicine use



While the first two are highly debatable entries into our taxpayer funded system, the balance of these proposals are dangerous for people's wellness because they don't treat the cause. Neither do they encourage right thinking. People with high blood pressure become educated to believe that they are just 'unlucky', and simply go to the chemist for a series of pills – side effects included.

Since pharmacies sell drugs, how likely is it that they would be motivated to help find the root cause of a disease? For instance, we know that high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes are often the result of a lifestyle devoid of regular exercise and good nutrition. Health counselling should be placed firmly in the hands of accredited health clubs (accredited with FitnessNZ or Fitness Australia). These are the people whose career foundation has been built on the principal that if you take responsibility for your health, nutrition and exercise,

you will stay well. Surely they are the best qualified to counsel others? At the very least, people should be given the option of taking the holistic and proactive solution rather than the quick fix approach likely to occur with chemists.

Guild Chief Annabel Young says 'There's an opportunity for pharmacists and District Health Boards to work together to improve the health care delivery system and reduce rising health-care costs'. Our governments will indeed have massive and rising costs to

care for the sick in future. This is the result of our computer age fostering people and children who don't move! On top of this, our society has allowed sugar and chemicals to dominate 90 per cent of the foods in our supermarkets. Without BIG PICTURE thinking addressing the real reasons for peoples' ill health, our futures will be placed in the profitable hands of the drug companies and their outlets, the chemist shops. ■

Source: Paul Richards, CEO, Club Physical, NZ

US FITNESS INDUSTRY LEADERS CAMPAIGN FOR A HEALTHIER AMERICA

The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) and fitness professionals across the US recently gathered in Washington, DC to meet with their Congressional members, asking for their support of health promotion legislation to remove federal barriers from exercise, and to reward Americans for choosing to lead healthy lifestyles. The occasion of the 7th Annual IHRSA Summit for a Healthier America was used to encourage the passage of the Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act (H.R.2105) and The Workforce Health Improvement Program (WHIP) Act (H.R. 2106), both recently re-introduced in Congress.

'We are gathered in our nation's capital to urge our Congressional leaders to integrate exercise as preventive medicine into the health care reform legislation our country so desperately needs' said Joe Moore, IHRSA President and CEO; 'Passage of the WHIP and PHIT Acts will play a critical role in reversing our current system of 'sick care' into 'health care' and will empower Americans to take

control of their health. The time is now for every fitness professional to share their story with their Congressional members and ask for their backing of this legislation'.

The Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act (H.R.2105), re-introduced in the House of Representatives on April 27, 2009, creates a financial incentive for Americans to engage in physical activity and exercise. The PHIT Act would allow Americans to utilise up to \$1,000 annually, or \$2,000 for a joint filing, from pre-tax health spending accounts (such as FSAs) to make expenditures related to organised, individual, and team sports; fitness and exercise; recreation, and other physical activities. The PHIT Act would provide Americans with a tax incentive to invest in preventative health care before costly treatment is necessary, with the potential to save 20 to 30 per cent annually on fitness-related costs.

The Workforce Health Improvement Program (WHIP) Act (H.R. 2106), re-introduced in the House of Representatives on April 27, 2009, promotes wellness in the workforce by balancing current law and allowing for off-site fitness centre memberships as a tax-free

benefit for employees. Current law allows employees to use on-site fitness facilities free of any tax implications, but when a business needs to outsource this health benefit, employees who receive off-site fitness centre subsidies are required to pay income tax on the benefits, with their employers bearing the associated administrative costs of complying with IRS rules. The WHIP Act eliminates this tax on off-site fitness centre subsidies, making it easier for all employers to offer important exercise incentives for their workers.

'Until America embraces prevention, no health care reform efforts can be meaningfully effective' said Moore; 'By enacting legislation that removes the financial barriers to exercise and healthy living, Congress can help mobilise America to embrace prevention. We need legislation that supports physical activity and other preventive lifestyle choices now, as Congress tackles health care reform. The PHIT and WHIP bills are just the kind of legislation we need to affect societal changes toward a healthier America and to put the 'health' back in health care'.

Source: IHRSA



ANNOUNCEMENTS

FITNESS EXPO SALES DEFY ECONOMIC WOES

The 2009 Australian Fitness Expo has out-run the negativity surrounding the economic downturn with post show reports revealing record sales and positive feedback from exhibitors surrounding the networking hub provided by the three day event.

Despite a decrease in visitor numbers from the 2008 event, the expo has been reported as a success, with particularly good results achieved by trade exhibitors and a positive and vibrant vibe prevailing for the expo's duration at Darling Harbour.

'The feedback we received onsite and also in the wake of the exhibition has laid testament to the ongoing success of the Australian Fitness Expo and the continuing industry demand for the event. In an economic downturn, you would expect to hear stories of decreases in sales and orders – fortunately we are pleased to report the opposite' said Ashley Robertson, Exhibition Manager, Diversified Exhibitions.

Multi-million dollar fitness clothing brand, Lorna Jane, which has 55 stores across Australia, has hailed the Australian Fitness Expo a huge success for them in 2009; 'I was absolutely overwhelmed at the traffic that visited our stand across the three days of the exhibition. I had expected the weekend to be quieter but we ended up with an unbelievable weekend of sales' said Bill Clarkson, Managing Director, Lorna Jane.

'We are thrilled to report that our sales were up 40 per cent on last year and to capitalise on this growth, we will be taking a larger stand at the expo in 2010. Our only issue is that we need to speed up our



internal sales process to accommodate all the people wanting to make purchases on our stand' Clarkson said.

Leading global athletic products company, New Balance, were also pumped with the sales and networking opportunities that the expo provided.

'The Fitness Expo again lived up to its reputation as a valuable tool for our brand to engage with the fitness community, offering a unique opportunity to showcase our apparel and footwear range to the fitness leaders of Australia. Despite the current financial climate, we were genuinely pleased with the sales opportunities that were presented to us at the Australian Fitness Expo this year' said Kellie Pidgeon, Regional Technical Manager Asia Pacific, New Balance Australia.

First-time exhibitor, Indue, a payment solutions provider, found the expo to be an excellent networking opportunity; 'The camaraderie between exhibitors at

the Australian Fitness Expo was fantastic and provided the platform for an exciting trade environment. The expo presented the perfect opportunity for us to be seen as a credible alternative to other payment providers and to network with prospects and potential partners' said Brett Ferguson, Head of Recurring Payments, Indue; 'I found the expo provided exceptional exposure for our brand and we were given the chance to meet such a variety of people. From the biggest gyms through to individual personal trainers, the face-to-face interaction generated ideas and feedback which will assist us with product development'.

The 2010 Australian Fitness Expo will be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, between 30 April and 2 May. The expo runs in conjunction with FILEX, Australian Fitness Network's annual fitness industry convention. ■

Source: PINQUE PR

THE NUN'S RUN – A CHARITABLE HABIT

St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, in collaboration with the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, is working towards the joint establishment of a \$100million Cancer Centre within the St Vincent's Research Precinct. The Garvan St Vincent's Campus Cancer Centre (GSVCCC) will integrate internationally acclaimed cancer research with best practice cancer services, enabling research findings to move quickly into patient care.

Funding for the \$100million project will be raised through philanthropic gifts, donations, corporate, State and Government

support and two running nuns...

As part of the fundraising effort two Sisters of Charity, Sister Leone Wittmack and Sister Helen Clarke, are leading The Nuns' Run. Sister Leone is a member of Fitness First and we would like reach as many people as possible to enable sponsoring of Sisters Leone and Helen for their efforts.

The Nuns Run will cover the 400 km distance from Dubbo to Darlinghurst in an effort to raise cancer awareness and crucial funds for the establishment of a new \$100 million Cancer Centre within the St Vincents Research Precinct, Sydney. Embarking on their journey on 24 May, Sisters Helen Clarke

and Leone Wittmack are hoping to arrive in Sydney on 5 June.

'The Nuns Run stems from our desire to support those living with cancer while helping to create a new facility which will make a real difference for those affected by cancer and future generations' said Sisters Helen and Leone.

Over 13 days and visiting seven towns, the Sisters invite participation in community activities along the route to Sydney. Activities include a fun run/walk in Dubbo (24 May) and Sydney (5 June). To register, or to sponsor a participant or one of the Sisters visit www.nunsrun.org.au

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'Reaching out to regional communities is a vital part of the Sisters mission, and this has been an integral part of the Cancer Centre's vision. The Nuns Run will give us an opportunity to engage with these communities, and build awareness of the Centre and the access it will offer regional and rural centres to innovations in cancer research and care through dedicated tele-health facilities' said Sister Helen.

One in two men and one in three women will be diagnosed with cancer. These statistics are particularly close to Sister Helens heart, who has lost both parents to cancer as well as many friends and fellow Sisters of Charity. For Sister Leone, having worked as a nurse since 1965 and as a past Director of Nursing at the Sacred Heart Hospice, she has been touched by the illness not only personally, but through her ministry.

The Nuns Run will kick off at the Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo, Sunday 24 May. The Sisters will then travel through Molong, Orange, Bathurst, Lithgow and Katoomba, finishing in Sydney on Friday 5 June with a fun run/walk in Centennial Park. ■

Source: St Vincent's Hospital

RED NOSE DAY

Friday 26 June is Red Nose Day. Now in its 22nd year, Red Nose Day is credited with significantly reducing the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and is more important than ever. With almost no government funding, Red Nose Day provides critical funding for a 24-hour bereavement support line, community education to reduce incidents of stillbirth and fatal sleeping accidents, and research on the causes of infant death and the risk factors for unexplained stillbirth.

The Wiggles are onboard again as Red Nose Day Ambassadors. Their involvement with SIDS and

Kids is particularly close to their hearts as SIDS and stillbirth have both affected their family; 'The work that SIDS and Kids does is so important for our community. Red Nose Day provides desperately needed funds

for services that many could not otherwise afford. This year, we encourage everyone to 'pick their red nose' in June and be silly for a serious cause. Show your support during June by donning the red nose or buying one of the new 2009 products. Our Big Red Car will wear the car nose magnet, even Dorothy is going to wear a red nose, so join in the fun on Friday 26 June' said Blue Wiggle, Anthony.

Red Nose Day is also a great opportunity to celebrate the work of a favourite Australian charity day. Through 22 years of Red Nose Day fundraising, SIDS and Kids has been instrumental in achieving an 85 per cent reduction in cases of SIDS in Australia – however, the cause of SIDS is still unknown.

Funds raised from Red Nose Day each year enable continued research and education programs. To date, SIDS and Kids has saved the lives of an estimated 5,900 babies across Australia. 'SIDS and Kids

receives thousands of calls annually to our free 24 hour bereavement support line. Our bereavement services can only continue with the generous ongoing support of the Australian community. Red Nose Day is critical to us as it provides the majority of our funding and allows us to continue these important services' said SIDS and Kids National Chief Executive Officer, Leanne Raven.

Red Nose Day merchandise will be available throughout June from Target, Big W, Best & Less, Priceline & Priceline Pharmacy, Quix Mobil, Dick Smith, Spotlight, Supercheap Auto, Blockbuster Videos and many other retail outlets throughout Australia. Product can also be purchased and donations made online at www.rednoseday.com.au or by calling 1300 1 RED NOSE (1300 1 733 6673). ■

Source: Style Counsel



BOOK REVIEW

Book title: Yoga Anatomy

Author: Leslie Kaminoff

Reviewed by: Peter Lawler

RRP: \$33.95 (Network members: \$30.50 if purchased online at www.fitnessnetworkcentre.com/products/showproduct.cfm?isbn=0736062785)

Leslie Kaminoff's *Yoga Anatomy* is the fourth title reviewed in Human Kinetics 'Anatomy' series, the previous titles being *Bodybuilding Anatomy* by Nick Evans, *Strength Training Anatomy 2nd Edition* by Frederic Delavier, and *Stretching Anatomy* by Nelson and Kokkonen. There are blatant editorial strictures apparent in this series to make them so consistent, so benign and so Labrador-friendly! This text is alluring – gloss paper, soft hued pastel drawings, austere dialogue, all formatted as one exercise per double page, making it easily digestible. Very clever marketing if you ask me.

Acceptance of yoga has come a long way since the Dark Ages. Coupled to Pilates, both have gained respect and trust in the sporting world. Once upon a time, a yoga devotee had to possess the flexibility of a wilting liquorice strap in high summer, capable of meditating through a cyclone muttering Sanskrit whilst drifting in the astral domain. But no more!

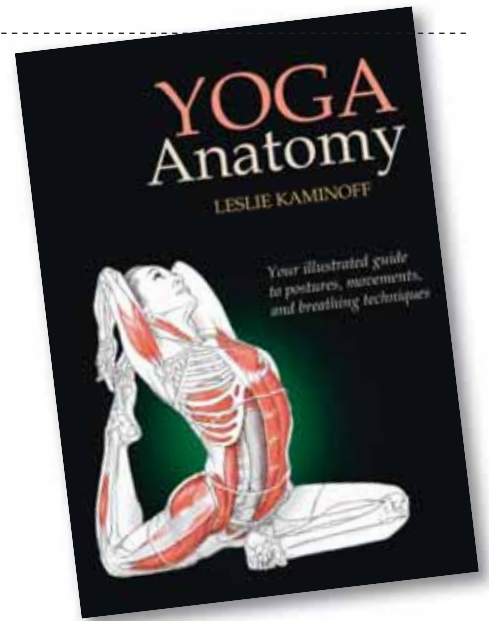
The introduction portrays the essentials of yoga. The first is breathing, which is discussed at great length. Wow is it complicated, best not to think about it, otherwise you won't sleep at night. This is followed by a great chapter about the spine described as 'The full glory of nature's ingenuity..... from an engineering

perspective, it's clear that humans have the smallest base of support, the highest centre of gravity and the heaviest brain (proportional to body weight) of all the mammals..... the spine exhibits an extraordinary resolution between the contradictory requirements of rigidity and plasticity..... if you were to remove all the muscles attached to the spine it would not collapse, why?... intrinsic equilibrium.' (pages 18 and 19).

Kaminoff proceeds to identify the types of spinal movement; flexion, extension, axial rotation and lateral bending. Where yoga is different is the integration of movement and conscious breathing. The relationship between the spine and breathing is known as 'mahamudra'. Thank you.

The exercises, or asanas, appear in Chapter Three. The author decided to view some of them via a fresh perspective – namely from beneath. The models performed on a large sheet of plexiglass with the photographer, obviously a dedicated voyeur, on the floor below them. The photos were then sketched and coloured, and these sketches are truly unique. Another convenience in this book is the instructions it provides for pronouncing the Sanskrit names of each exercise. This helps to overcome the embarrassment of ignorance – we've all chosen a dish we didn't want from a restaurant menu simply because we couldn't pronounce the name of the dish that we did want!

To assist the reader's passage through the exercises, the author has a rigid format: classification and level of exercise, key structures, joint actions, working,



lengthening, obstacles, balance issues, advisory notes and breathing. Exercises are classified by their starting position. There are five: standing, sitting, kneeling, supine and prone. This book is genuinely helpful to normal athletes and inquisitive coaches looking for some great stretches from the mysterious East. Most of the exercises are possible to perform. Admittedly, there are some here that will kill you quietly. You are familiar with the 'don't try this at home' cautions on television – well, I advise you strongly to stay well clear of the lethal 'Kurmasana' family – the turtle poses. They're enough to make you wonder how turtles live so long...

Thankfully there are zillions of exercises, sorry asanas, which coaches and athletes will find effective, challenging and therapeutic. ■

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED – A GOOD BOOK.

