

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TROUBLESOME KNEES

1) Supplements:

Are you taking glucosamine/chondroitin/msm yet? If not, you may want to research. I don't push supplements; however, I certainly feel a difference when I DON'T take it because I run out of it. The purpose of the supplement is to help you build more cartilage in the knee that has been worn down over the years. It'll take some time, but most people feel a difference that's worthwhile. Unfortunately, capsule form (vs. liquid) does take longer to assimilate into the system. I suggest a liquid version such as U-Triton Joint Repair found at Vitamin Shoppe.

At the below website you can find explanations of the benefits of Glucosamine, Chondroitin & MSM. Based on research, there is good evidence to support the use of Glucosamine and Chondroitin in the treatment of mild-to-moderate knee osteoarthritis and other locations such as spine, hips, and finger joints. However, it's important to know what you're taking if you decide to supplement. These supplements have helped many people with joint pain, including myself. I used to have tremendous pain in the knees to the point of having to ice them and no longer suffer from worn down cartilage. As noted, it helps all the joints -- vertebrae, hips, ankles, etc. not just the knees. For more detailed information, visit:

www.wholehealthmd.com - search under *reference library* and then *supplements* in the middle of page:

Glucosamine, Chondroitin, MSM

2) Body Alignment:

Avoid any "quick" or "fast" pivoting or twisting on the knee. Either do the move much slower than shown or in comparison to another class member. It's absolutely 'smart' to modify the moves for 'your' body. Also keep in mind whether you have a 'bad' knee or not, please be especially mindful of 'picking up your heels' when you do turn. If the heel of the supporting (non-leading leg) is flat and you try to turn, you will lock out that back knee. Rather, it is super important to pick up the heels of both feet so you can pivot naturally without any direct impact to the knee. This is one of the biggest problems I observe in classes. Please remember to pick up your heels and work on the ball of your foot for most moves.

One other note when doing Zumba, the knees always need to be bent at least 10 degrees; and at no time should a move cause 1/2 the body's weight to go one way while the opposite knee is facing the other direction or even straight ahead. In other words, if my right knee is facing left, so should my left knee. If my right knee is facing right, so should my left knee. All knees should face in the same direction to avoid injury. When performing jumps within a move, the number of repetitions on one knee matters. Eight reps per knee is highly advised to prevent injury. Switch to the other knee after 8 repetitions to balance the load on the knees.

Re: squats and lunges, take the body down 1/4 of the way versus the common 1/2 way down. Knees must not go over the ankle in a lunge and knees must not go over the toes in a squat. Many times squat & lunge *form* contribute to knee pain. This is another very common observation as well. Use the mirrors at your side to view your knee placement. The fix on a lunge is to extend your back leg further to avoid allowing the front knee from going over the ankle. The fix on a squat is to be sure your glutes go way back behind you to avoid allowing knees from going over the toes. I'll be more than happy to evaluate your form if you ask me before or after class.

3) Pain Management:

Lastly, listed below are the customary pain mgmt/injury mgmt procedures in particular when you have a "knee" flare-up:

R.I.C.E. Injury Mgmt Procedures:

- R - rest (avoid any direct usage of the knee i.e., bending excessively or exercising until inflammation goes down)
- I - ice (to bring down the inflammation) -- especially after any unavoidable use (**remember ICE immediately; heat later**)
- C - compression (ace bandage it) -- to prevent any further microscopic tears
- E - elevation (elevate the leg above heart level to drain the fluids from the knee - prop on some large pillows)

Also when not icing it, you also can soak the knee (body) in a warm to hot EPSOM salt bath. The magnesium in the Epsom salt will draw out the toxins, improve oxygen use and alleviate pain at the injured site and the warm water will accelerate blood flow to repair the damage. Epsom salt is a miracle healer people don't realize is available.

You can also apply a topical ointment like Biofreeze, Tiger Balm, Flex Power, Arnica Gel, Muscle Rub, Icy Hot, etc. to accelerate blood flow to the knee and speed up repair of ligaments in the knee. However, use topicals with moderation; don't overdue any topical for too long. It's advisable to apply a 'warming' topical cream such as Tiger Balm prior to exercising and then after exercising and icing the knee, it's advisable to apply a 'cooling' topical such as Biofreeze. Warming cream encourages blood flow prior to exercising and cooling cream reduces inflammation after exercising.

Most importantly, "***an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!***"

Stay Safe – Stay Healthy! Bessie :)