



# SNSC Wellness Bulletin

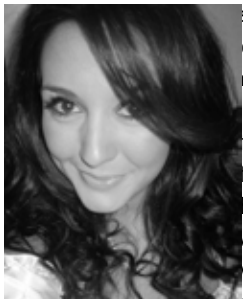
September 2009

The Steve Nash Sports Club Wellness Newsletter

## Personal Training

### Top 9 Reasons Why You Need a Personal Trainer

By Micaela Withworth  
Personal Trainer at Mansfield Athletic Club in downtown Montreal



So you've taken the first step towards your personal goal of a healthier lifestyle – you joined a fitness club. Congratulations! Now, the tough part is “going” to the club and getting the most out of your exercise. You find yourself lost on the gym floor and you're unsure of what to do, after weeks of uncertainty and no results you decide to give up – what's the point, right? You tried and you feel no different than when you started. Stop right there. There is no reason you should have to give up on your goals, you just need someone with the proper knowledge and expertise to help you. Luckily, that's exactly what a good personal trainer is ready to do for you! Here are the top 9 reasons why Personal Training is necessary for everyone:

**1 You stopped seeing results** – Despite your vigorous 5x a week workout regimen you stopped seeing results a long time ago. Just because you exercise regularly it doesn't guarantee you'll have the results you want. Despite your effort and research online for the best exercises you seem to be missing something from the equation. By consulting with an expert, they will give you proper training advice to help you reach your specific goals. You may be on a program for hypertrophy when what you need is a program specific to endurance. A trainer will be able to assess why your program hasn't been working and will provide you with the best solution.

**2 Safety** – Personal Trainers study and train for years to understand the human body's biomechanical abilities. They watch your form, check your vital signs, and get to know your strengths, weaknesses and limitations. Without a trainer, people tend to ignore what their bodies are saying by either pushing too hard or not hard enough, a sure-fire path to either injury or a lack of results! A trainer can watch what you're doing and how you're doing it, then give you objective feedback based on their expertise. Trainers ensure the exercises you are doing are the most safe, effective and specific to your individual needs.

**3 Effective, Personal Programming** – Hiring a personal trainer for a couple sessions in hopes of getting a program that will change your life and enable you to reach your goals is simply wishful thinking. It is impossible for a trainer to understand your body, motivations, goals and habits in just a few sessions as well as train you properly enough to learn proper technique and form and have you remember it all. If you are going to invest in a trainer, do it

properly. Invest in a minimum of 6-10 sessions. This will allow your trainer to get to know you, understand your strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, injuries and goals. They will be able to make you an individualized program, teach you proper technique and gauge your progress to maximize your results.

**4 Accountability, Motivation and Consistency** – A personal trainer will provide you with structure, accountability and encouragement for completing your workouts and the appropriate encouragement to help you reach your goals. When you start seeing results your trainer becomes a part of your motivation. Also, by committing yourself to weekly appointments with your trainer you are less likely to skip out on your workouts and will work much harder in their presence. Paying in advance for your sessions is also extra motivation to come as you will have made a financial commitment that you won't want to lose.





**5 You're bored** – You hate running on the treadmill and are bored of the resistance machines. A trainer can introduce new forms of exercise, different types of training and even give you an entirely different workout every session you have together. This can help keep your workouts fresh, help you learn what interests you and even help you to like exercise. If your workouts are stale you'll lose interest and possibly give up. Let your trainer be creative and you'll fall in love with exercise.

**6 Injuries, Medical Conditions and Pregnancy** – Every injury, medical condition and even pregnancy has very specific protocols when it comes to exercise. Without the proper knowledge and direction, you may be worsening your situation without knowing it. Choosing a trainer that specializes in post rehabilitation, pregnancy or obesity is important to ensure you won't be causing damage to your body or your baby, but instead you'll be continuously making progress to rehabilitating your injury or preparing your body for delivery.

**7 Sport Specific Training** – Training to improve your golf game is very different from training to improve your cardiovascular endurance. A trainer will ensure that your program is suitable to your sport, that you're training the specific muscles needed for your sport and that you are training them in the correct way. You may already be conditioning the correct muscles but if your sport requires power and your program is for endurance you won't see results. If you are an athlete it might be best to consult with a trainer who has experience or a specific certification in your sport.

**8 Personal Trainers are Experts** – Trainers are experts at what they do – look at them! They look younger than they are, happier than the average person and they look healthy. They don't just study exercise, they practice what they preach and often have much personal experience on top of their education to offer as well. A common mistake is to think that trainers are genetically gifted or that exercise is easy for them, or maybe they've always been in shape – that's just not the case. Trainers work just as hard if not harder than the next person towards their personal fitness goals. Try and find a trainer who you feel understands your needs – maybe they've been in your shoes and can not only offer their education but their own personal experience. Remember, you might not always like what they say, since it might require you to do some work, but they ARE the experts.

personal trainer is affordable when you can see the value. By making a small investment you get a big return for your health and for your life! Think of all the other things you invest in monthly! Shouldn't your health be a top priority? In these tough times, invest in yourself by investing in a personal trainer!

*If you are unsure of how to find a trainer that's right for you, or what to look for in a trainer please contact me at [micaelafitness@gmail.com](mailto:micaelafitness@gmail.com) and I can help point you in the right direction, or talk to a fitness consultant – a part of their job is to help you find the best person to help you reach your goals.*



## Backpacks-Don't let them be a pain in the back!

Backpacks are one of the best ways to carry books, binders, lunch, running shoes and other items, whether for school or recreation. However, carrying an overloaded backpack or wearing one improperly can lead to poor posture, stress on the soft tissue in your neck and back, and unnecessary strain on muscles and joints.

Over time, the physical strain of carrying heavy loads can result in: Fatigue and strain in the muscles and soft tissues of the neck, back and shoulders from overuse.

Spinal compression and/or improper alignment, leaving the back vulnerable to injury.

Stress or compression of the shoulders and arms causing tingling, numbness and/or weakness in the arms or hands.

### Backpack Features

Reduce strain by using and fitting a backpack that works for you rather than against you. CPA recommends the selection and use of backpacks with the following features:

**Padded back** – to reduce pressure and prevent the pack's contents from digging into your back.

**Padded, contoured, shoulder and chest straps** – to help reduce pressure and balance the weight. Look for a backpack with thickly padded adjustable shoulder straps (2 inches wide) and an extra hip strap. Adjust the shoulder straps so the bottom of the pack sits two inches above your waist

**Waist belt or hip strap** – to distribute some of the load to the pelvis. The waist belt sends the weight of your pack down through your legs which are equipped to carry increased weight, preventing you from getting tired as quickly.

**Compression straps** – on the sides or bottom of the backpack to compress the contents of the backpack and stabilize the articles inside. Pack by weight, not size and always place the heaviest items closest to your back.

**Reflective material** – to increase your visibility to others at night.

Backpacks are designed to distribute the load evenly. Worn correctly and not overloaded, a backpack is supported by some of the strongest muscles in the body: the back and abdominal muscles. These muscle groups work together to stabilize the trunk and hold the body in proper balance and postural alignment.

**Backpack too heavy?** When choosing a backpack, look for one made of lightweight materials to reduce the weight you will be carrying. A full backpack should never weigh more than 15 per cent of your body weight. For example, if you weigh 52 kg (115 lbs.), the backpack should not weigh more than 7.8 kg (17 lbs.). If you can't carry your backpack and talk without getting out of breath, you're carrying too much.

When wearing a backpack, stand tall with your head and neck in line with your shoulders and use both shoulder straps to help evenly distribute the weight of the pack. Using only one strap loads the entire weight of the body over one shoulder, causing you to lean to one side. Over time, this abnormal posture can create lower and

upper back pain as well as neck and shoulder strain.

### Fit the Backpack to the Person

When buying a backpack, make sure it is not oversized 'to carry more'. The shoulder straps should fit comfortably and not dig in to the shoulder or arm, allowing the arms to move freely. The bottom of the pack should rest in the contour of the lower back. The pack should "sit" evenly in the middle of the back, not "sag" toward the buttocks. Backpacks for hiking and camping provide additional support through frames and special straps. Be sure to buy the right backpack for your body.

CPA recommends parents ensure their children do not carry their 'whole world' around with them everyday. Teach them how to wear a backpack properly (and why) and look for the following signs:

- Pain when wearing the backpack
- Tingling or numbness in the arms
- Red marks on the shoulders

Above all, parents should encourage children to say if they have any pain or discomfort before it becomes a serious problem.

If you have any questions regarding the above article or any questions regarding injury, please feel free to contact the Mansfield Health Clinic at 514-390-1230.

This excerpt is provided by the Canadian Physiotherapy Association, [www.physiotherapy.ca](http://www.physiotherapy.ca) August 2007.



## Help!

**Q.** I started running again after a two-year hiatus on account of a nasty injury and I must say that it's been tough getting back into my activity. It's discouraging when the distances I used to cover and pace at which I used to run are so fresh in my memory. I can't expect to recreate such accomplishments - at least not the first couple of times my shoes hit the pavement. I found that my biggest problem getting back into running is with lactic acid. I heard so many contradictory theories: you are drinking too much or not enough; you don't stretch before; you don't stretch after; it has nothing to do with that; you're just built that way; it's what you're eating; it's what you're NOT eating; you're running too fast; you're not running long enough; etc.

All I know is that on the 3rd kilometre of the run or on the 47th kilometre of the bikeride, my quads suddenly turn to blocks of cement.

I'd really like to know why this is happening and what I should do to avoid it from happening again.

Catherine

**A.** These are excellent questions, each of which could be addressed individually in articles that examine the reality and fiction of each of these matters. Let's look at the main idea behind your question, that is, the nature of this lactic acid that we've been hearing about for so long.

You need to understand what lactic acid is. Lactic acid is actually a "product" of anaerobic glycolysis. If it accumulates in the tissue, it contributes to muscular fatigue. What in fact occurs is that the blood pH decreases, interfering with the production of energy, altering the permeability of cell membranes, and interfering with the calcium ion on the actomyosin binding sites required for muscular contraction.

Is Physiology 101 not so fresh in your mind anymore? What you need to remember is that lactic acid is a completely natural response from the body. The simple act of breathing or staying seated in a chair causes us to produce lactic acid because our muscles are being used. The good news is that, at this low intensity level, our body is very effective at eliminating this lactic acid. However, the more intense our activity becomes, the more sharply we respond physiologically, by accumulating lactic acid. The heart rate also increases. The breathing changes, becoming deeper and faster. The body requires oxygen to be able to eliminate lactic acid. And the more the intensity increases, the greater the accumulation of lactic acid will be.

### Anaerobic threshold

The anaerobic threshold is reached when there is an imbalance between



the elimination and the accumulation of lactic acid. Our body is no longer able to eliminate it quickly enough and it becomes very difficult to sustain this high intensity because the level of discomfort quickly intensifies. Your time is "calculated" at this intensity level. How long can you sustain this intensity? Everything depends on other factors such as your mental tenacity, your tolerance to pain, and your motivation... but an approximation of between 30 and 75 minutes is pretty close to what the majority of the population experiences.

How do we delay this phenomenon? We need to understand that even the greatest athletes have these same physiological responses; they are simply able to delay these same responses, or delay them at a higher intensity.

### Planning

What can seem a little counter-intuitive is the fact that people train too often at very high intensities without having a sound base, a solid foundation. Without a solid foundation, it's impossible to be in top physical condition. A good analogy would be that of a house. If you want a larger house (analogy: your physical condition), you have to make sure you have a larger foundation, otherwise nothing is properly supported.

With a well structured and personalized training plan, you will be able to work the tools required to run or pedal harder - and for longer periods. Of course, this training plan must be prepared in advance. That is why there's no time like the present to start preparing for your race that's scheduled to take place in a few months. If you are just starting out, you should start your training regimen even sooner.

Good luck!

