



When Starting an Exercise Program, it is Important to See Your Doctor First!

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Many people start an exercise program or physical therapy without getting a thorough check up beforehand. Often they wonder why such a thing is necessary. It is important for an individual to get a checkup and basic blood work done before embarking upon a fitness or rehab program. This ensures that he/ she is healthy enough to tolerate the more strenuous activity that a rehab program will put upon them. So many times an individual will come in to physical therapy and ask for a fitness program, but have health complications that slow recovery or physical endurance. Complications such as diabetes, emphysema, high blood pressure, or chronic heart conditions need to be regularly monitored by a physician to make sure they are managed as well as possible. Many people are not aware of how a new exercise program will lower blood pressure or lower blood sugar levels. These changes can make existing medication doses cause dizziness or fatigue, because they no longer are appropriate for that individual to take. Often times, this change can make the person feel poorly and stop their exercise program, leaving them frustrated and no further along in a fitness goal than when the exercise program first started. A good way to get started is to be prepared when you see your doctor for your check up. Make sure to bring a list of your medications/ supplements. It is also important to come in with a list of questions you may have. Ask your clinic if they do a comprehensive blood count (CBC). This is a very basic blood test that goes over things such as your present blood sugar level, and can also detect whether or not you are fighting an infection at the time. Your clinic will also check your blood pressure, weight, and go over your family medical history to help you determine what your health risks are and refer you to another medical professional if needed. It's often nerve wracking to go in and sometimes be told to lose weight or make lifestyle changes, but getting regular check ups will help prevent future illness and are usually fully covered by most insurances.