

# AVOID BACK PAIN WHILE EXERCISING



High performance athletes treat exercising like a ritual, following a specific routine each time they hit the gym helping them avoid injuries. Putting more stress on your body can lead to aches and pains, but if you follow a few simple steps you can make sure you're not following up your gym routine with an ice pack!

## **Warm Up and Cool Down**

It's important to start and end your gym sessions with a warm up and cool down to increase (and respectively decrease) your heart rate, easing your body in and out of the physical activity<sup>1</sup>. Your warm up should consist of low intensity activity to increase your heart rate and blood circulation, such as a set of jumping-jacks. While cooling down, it's important to remember that this is when your muscles are the warmest, and the most optimal time to deepen your stretches<sup>1</sup>. Stretching before and after a workout will increase the flexibility of your muscles and ligaments, reducing the possibility of injury.

## **Pick up Weights Correctly**

Before you attempt to perfect your bicep curls, it's important to learn how to pick up weights correctly. Picking up any heavy object incorrectly can lead to a back injury; avoid possible back pain by keeping your back flat and bending at the knees when picking up any kind of weight.

## **Wear the Right Shoes**

This tip is for those who love cardio, as you could be running towards back pain if you're not wearing the right shoes! Make sure you pick a shoe with good shock absorption to reduce the impact running can have on your spine.

## **Don't Overdo It**

Most importantly, it's imperative to make sure you don't overdo your work out to ensure you avoid back pain or injury. If you're recovering from an injury or new to the gym it's important to remember to go at your own pace, and not try to keep up with others around you.

Working out has many benefits for your overall health. With these tips in mind, you'll be better prepared to accomplish a successful and healthy workout session without injury.