

Fall 1983

Human Performance Lab Newsletter, Vol 4, No. 1

St. Cloud State University

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Human Performance Laboratory Center for Lifestyle Enhancement

Volume IV, Number 1

Fall, 1983

Newsletter

As a new school year begins, we would like to invite each adult fitness member to participate in our program and activities.

We know that many of you have kept in good condition over the summer and are looking forward to another good year. On the other hand, some may have drifted away from their exercise pattern and are ready to begin again. Whatever your level of fitness is, we hope that our laboratory can be of service to you.

Advisory Board

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Family Practice

Morning Exercise Program

Sue Strand is serving as the director of our morning program which meets from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Sue invites each member of our program to participate in this group. We hope to have a nice large group within the next few weeks. Should you have questions about your exercise program, discuss them with Sue.

Aerobic Dance

We are pleased to announce that Karen Stangohr is our noon aerobic dance leader again this year. Karen's peppy and fun approach to fitness is very refreshing. The aerobic dance group meets from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Mary Hagman will also lead an aerobic dance group during winter and spring quarter. Her classes will meet on Monday and Wednesday from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Mary is one of our graduate students and has been preparing some exciting routines, so get ready for "The Body Shop"!

Should you be interested in participating in either of these activities call Barb for details and registration.

Laboratory Evaluations

We encourage each of you to have at least one evaluation per year. This allows you to check on the effectiveness of your personal fitness program from year to year. In addition, this experience serves as a good motivation, something that most of us need now and then. You may schedule your next evaluation by calling Barb in our office.

Congratulations

Four of our 1982-83 graduate students completed their exercise physiology programs this past year. We are proud of their accomplishments and wanted to let you know of their current status.

Michael Hewitt has joined the Medical Graphics Corporation in St. Paul as a Marketing Technical Specialist.

Bruce Johnson will be moving to El Paso, Texas and serve as a Research Assistant at the William Beaumont Medical Center.

Deb Krippner lives in Cold Spring and is seeking a position in our area in the field of Exercise Physiology. She is also teaching Community Education Classes at Rocori High School.

Bev Oehrlein has accepted a position at Mount Sinai Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is a Research Assistant for Dr. Pollock, a noted Exercise Physiologist.

Randy Braith, our lab coordinator for the past two years, is busy writing his thesis at this time.

We wish them all the best in the future and extend our appreciation for their assistance while they were with us at the lab.

From the secretary's desk:

I would like to extend a thank you to the lab personnel and all of you for your assistance, understanding and patience as I have been learning the "business" of the lab.

Just a reminder: Please notify us in advance if you must cancel an appointment. This allows us time to reschedule appointments and helps us in scheduling workers for the lab.

At present, we are calling members who haven't been in for a retest during the past year. I am not always able to contact you, so I would like to encourage you to call us and schedule an appointment. I am in the office Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 P.m. Student workers are here until 5:00 p.m. to take messages. You may call us at 255-3105 or 255-3637.

T-shirts, T-shirts!!

If your Adult Fitness Program T-shirt is getting a little ragged, you may purchase a new one. Please call the lab office if you are interested in ordering one or more of these T-shirts. They are available in small, medium, large and extra-large sizes and will cost \$5.00 each to program members.



Fund Raising

Since January 1983, we have received \$2,090.00 in contributions through the SCSU Foundation. We thank you for your generous support.

Your donations help pay for student assistants, laboratory equipment and medical supplies. Without your support, it would have been difficult to provide all of the services of our program.

We ask for your continued support. Our program is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, and your contribution may be used as a tax deduction. You may send your contribution to SCSU Foundation. Please specify that the donation is for the Adult Fitness Program.

The Glory of Mediocrity

Dr. George Sheehan, the noted physician who writes about running, recently wrote a Physician and Sports Medicine editorial, titled "The Glory in Mediocrity." It was so interesting that a discussion of its message is appropriate in our newsletter.

Dr. Sheehan, whose medical specialty is cardiology, is a marathon runner and articulate spokesman for running in general. In this editorial, however, he raises the question: "What is the true meaning of physical fitness?" To many of us, it is the activity or sport that interests us most. For example; the skier would claim skiing, the runner - running, the racquetball player - racquetball etc. Sheehan has taken a moment to step back and examine these views in a very interesting way. His observation, that a well-rounded fitness program is superior to specializing in one activity, is something to contemplate. His column follows:

The Glory in Mediocrity



At birth we are all generalists. As children we are curious about everything. We insist on exploring and exploiting all our abilities. We run and play. We sing and dance, we write and draw -- all without thought as to whether or not we are good at them. Our games change with the seasons. Our lives are lived in a classroom -- the world that allows for an infinite variety of physical expression.

As time passes we become specialists. We constrict our interests and narrow our participation. We limit the expression of the self. We find one occupation, one avocation, and one sport. Everything else becomes foreign to us.

This is the major indictment of distance runners. Not that we are narcissistic, but that we are so obsessed with running we devote no time to the rest of the body's varied strengths and skills. But we are not alone. Most present-day athletes are specialists. They concentrate on their sport as we do on running, congregating, speaking in their own tongue, and demanding allegiance. Each sport has its passionate advocates who have found the grail and see no reason why they should try anything else.

Were we the children we were meant to be we would enjoy all sports. Were we the generalists that we once were, we would delight in all the things the body loves to do and play the games that have withstood the test of time and progress.

Running has made me a specialist. I am lean and hungry and have marvelous legs. I can run long and far. But I cannot do anything else. In attaining my level of running performance I have sacrificed other skills and development. I am a creature who is all legs. I have virtually no upper body. My arms are no more than sticks, with my biceps and triceps barely visible. I use my body from the waist up for only two purposes: breathing and balance.

I am now incapable of participating in sports in which I was once proficient. And up until now I did not care - running was enough. But now I am not so sure. In putting on the New Man must I not also develop all the things the body can do? And should I not rejoin all those friends I dismissed on my way to becoming a distance runner? Is not the glory of God man fully functioning - not merely running?

The prominence given to the decathlon is one answer to those questions. The winner of the decathlon is the hero of each Olympiad. Yet the decathlete is a person who is fairly good at everything but rarely exceptional at anything. The decathlete is mediocrity lived at its highest standard. The generalist raised to the highest level.

We common people will find no better inspiration. We are better at some sports than others, but we are not really hotshots at anything. Instead of concentrating on one area of

mediocrity we should vary our sports

and enlarge our physical experience. We will come to know our bodies in new and satisfying mediocre ways.

The number of young and old athletes participating in multiple sports is growing. That is as it should be. I miss making an overhead smash in tennis and catching a pass for a touchdown in football. I know that swimming 2 miles in open water and sculling down a peaceful river provide blessings that are unique to those activities. I want once more to hit a five iron that holds the green and then run down a 30-ft putt. I would like to cycle, sail, ski, lift -weights, bowl, and do aerobic dance.

Athletes, not poets, are the antennae of the human race. The body teaches more clearly than any other agent. In childhood that meant total sports activity. But adults, unfortunately, take longer to learn. We have to go through being specialists before we become the generalists and decathletes we once were.

Columnist Sheehan is a practicing cardiologist in Red Bank, New Jersey.

Health Update

Proper and Improper Weight Loss

It is estimated that 60-70 million American adults and at least 10 million American teens are overfat. Because millions have initiated unsupervised weight loss programs, the American College of Sports Medicine has developed guidelines for weight loss. Some of their recommendations follow:

1. Prolonged fasting and diet programs that severely restrict caloric intake are scientifically undesirable and can be medically dangerous.
2. Fasting and diet programs that severely restrict caloric intake result in the loss of large amounts of water, electrolytes, minerals, glycogen stores, and other fatfree tissue (including proteins within fat-free tissues), with minimal amounts of fat loss.
3. Mild calorie restriction (500-1000 kcal less than the usual daily intake) results in a smaller loss of water, electrolytes, minerals, and other fat-free tissue, and is less likely to cause malnutrition.
4. Dynamic exercise of large muscles helps to maintain fat-free tissue, including muscle mass and bone density, and results in losses of body weight. Weight loss resulting from an increase in energy expenditure is primarily in the form of fat weight.
5. A nutritionally sound diet resulting in mild calorie restriction coupled with an endurance exercise program along with behavioral modification of existing eating habits is recommended for weight reduction. The rate of sustained weight loss should not exceed 1 kg (2lb) per week.
6. To maintain proper weight control and optimal body fat levels, a lifetime commitment to proper eating habits and regular physical activity is required.

In summary, the guidelines encourage sensible weight loss plans and discourage extreme regimens.

More on Smoking

We've made great progress in kicking the cigarette habit in the recent past. In fact, over 30,000,000 Americans have decided to give-up this deadly practice. While we already know how dangerous smoking is, many believe that we'll learn much more about how dangerous cigarette smoke really is in the next decade.

Even though we made such good progress in reducing cigarette consumption, we still have a long way to go. Some of the following facts may be of interest to you. Of particular concern is the increasing use of cigarettes by young women. Additionally, it becomes easier to understand why the tobacco industry and even our government have done little to discourage use when we consider the resources this 15 billion dollar industry has available to perpetuate itself.

Some Smoking Facts

- Today 600 billion cigarettes are consumed annually in the United States. This compares to only 18 billion in the nation as early as 1915.
- In 1930, less than 3,000 Americans were dying from lung cancer; in 1980, there were an estimated 100,000 deaths from lung cancer.
- Each smoker in the United States smokes an average of 3,924 cigarettes annually.
- In the 12-18 year old bracket, an average of 12.7% young women smoke cigarettes, compared with 10.7% of young men. In the 17-18 year old age group, 26.2% of young women smoke cigarettes, compared to 19.3% of the young men.
- Tobacco is the sixth most valuable crop harvested in the United States, and is a mainstay in the agricultural economies of at least seven States. The total value of the 1978 tobacco crop was \$2.7 billion, of which half will be used in the United States.
- The tobacco industry employs 39,000 people in the manufacture of cigarettes, with an annual payroll of \$567.7 million.
- Of the \$15.8 billion that cigarette consumers spend every year, \$4.3 billion goes to distributors, \$6.1 billion to manufacturers and \$6.0 billion to taxes.

(Note: For a copy of the fact book Smoking, Tobacco & Health, DHHS Publication No. (OHS) 80-50150 write to: Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.)

On Drinking

Many people were relieved to learn from several recent studies that moderate alcohol consumption appears to offer some health benefits. That is moderate drinkers (one-two drinks per day) seem to live longer than teetotalers or people with a higher alcohol consumption. While there are hypotheses for these findings, no clear evidence to support them is available. For this reason, there is no justification for encouraging nondrinkers to begin drinking. On the other hand, the findings appear to indicate moderate alcohol consumption is not a health risk.

The big question for most is this: "What's moderate consumption?" The majority of studies define moderate as one or two drinks per day. Anything beyond this would then be considered excessive and a health hazard.

The following information will help you to evaluate your own consumption. Remember, 1-2 drinks are the criteria for moderate use.

Distilled liquor

A drink can be defined as one ounce (one-eighth of a measuring cup) of 85 proof alcohol. At 100 proof, the two drinks shrink to only 1.7 ounces, the amount in just one of those little bottles sold on airplanes.

Sherry and Port wines

These wines run anywhere from 16 to 35 Per cent alcohol. Accordingly, the two-drink equivalent is one-third, at most two-thirds of a cup.

Wine

Wines are typically around 12 per cent alcohol, and the equivalent of two drinks - is slightly less than a cup, about 7 ounces, total.

Beer

Beer usually contains about 5 percent alcohol, and two (eight ounces) cans supply the day's quota.

The Danger of Sedentary Lifestyles

Authorities from nearly every scientific discipline are recognizing the important role physical activity plays in keeping us healthy. For example, we have learned that even a few days of bed confinement causes significant deterioration in many body processes. For these reasons, medical personnel like to have their patients exercise as soon as possible after an illness or surgery. It's not uncommon for surgical patients to be walking the same day the surgery occurred or for heart attack patients to be exercising shortly following a serious attack.

It is for these reasons that we encourage our Adult Fitness participants to train at least three times per week for 20-30 minutes. Studies have indicated that we need this minimum amount of activity to keep our bodies from degenerating. As you know, this amounts to about 1,000 kilocalories of aerobic exercise per week.

An interesting account concerning the hazard of orbital flight appeared in Time Magazine (Feb. 28, 1983) providing additional evidence of why inactivity should be avoided. In the USSR's record 211 day endurance flight last December, Astronauts Berezovoz and Lebedv experienced severe physiological degeneration. "Soviet TV clips showed the cosmonauts being helped into a hot whirlpool bath. Even though they had exercised daily, the prolonged weightlessness (inactivity) left their muscles so flabby that for a week they were barely able to walk." It is estimated that their hearts lost 10% of their volume and that it may have taken almost a year for their bodies to return to normal. So, Keep on Moving!