

Physio In Practice

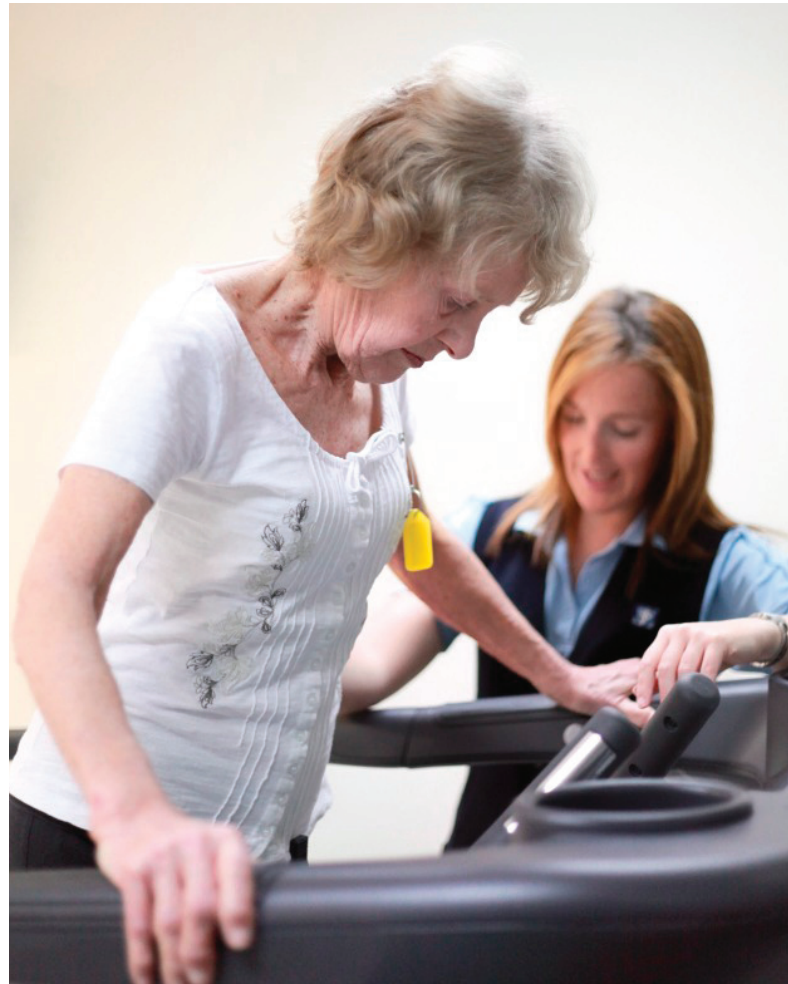
So, your patient needs to exercise!

The benefits of exercise are well documented for the management of numerous conditions. Whether it is for lower back pain, neck pain, sports injuries, diabetes, osteoarthritis, obesity, neurological conditions, pulmonary disease or postural control, exercise is known anecdotally and through the scientific literature as an appropriate and at times necessary treatment option.

The vast array of exercises and programs available to you can be quite confusing. Personal trainers, strength and conditioning experts, exercise physiologists, physiotherapists, doctors and at times friendly advice are all legitimate options in this field. Finding the right option for the right patient can at times be challenging. Getting it wrong can be costly.

As physiotherapists, we are trained to assess, treat and develop exercise programs for all of the above conditions. Physiotherapists work with all of the exercise professionals listed above in order to manage patients with both acute and chronic diagnoses. Pre-existing and underlying medical and biomechanical factors can make exercise a minefield for the uninitiated patient. Your assessment of the patient's risk factors is an essential component of making the right choice. Often people with predisposing issues commence an exercise program with the best of intentions, but suffer an acute or overuse injury due to poor technique or incorrect management of load. Physiotherapists are often the best starting point for many patients, particularly those with the presence of pain, a history of significant injury or pain, poor posture and biomechanical imbalances or a combination of the above.

Physiotherapists often work with exercise physiologists and strength and conditioning coaches associated with sporting teams. They also work with personal trainers in homes and gyms in order to transition a person from the early stages of exercise programming into a more sustainable, less supervised and independent exercise and lifestyle program. We respect and rely on the



professionalism all of these exercise disciplines and acknowledge their expertise in motivating, high-level programming, general health and disease specific expertise, as well as their sports and activity specific skills. Communication is the key and as physiotherapists we very much see our role as assessing risk, initiating exercise programs, optimising biomechanics and liaising as needed to achieve good health and fitness outcomes.



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Exercise selection, technique, loading, education and motivation are the keys to good outcomes, regardless of who is designing the programs. Physiotherapists are able to provide advice in all these areas.

Selection: understanding pathology or the potential for pathology allows the exercise programmer the opportunity to correctly select which exercises are appropriate. The correct progression of exercise is also essential. This involves both structure and monitoring in order to select the most appropriate exercises at any point in the program.

Technique: many patients display biomechanics which predispose them to injury under load. The teaching of correct technique is essential. Physiotherapists understand and can implement correct exercise techniques from the most specific local exercises and global strengthening, to more complex techniques associated with walking, running, bike riding and swimming.

Loading: correctly measuring and programming load is how a patient grows stronger, loses weight, develops endurance and enjoys the benefit of exercise. Modern practice gives credit to exercise physiologists generally and strength and conditioning coaches in the sporting settings.

Education: failure to educate the patient compromises the ability of the patient to improve and maintain their improvements. Education should focus on the importance of the exercise program, general dietary advice and expectations.

Motivation: physiotherapists understand the importance of motivation and are able to provide that extra support that patient's often need to keep exercising and manage their condition. Communication and motivation are essential components of the interventions of all of the disciplines mentioned above. Indeed the personal training industry has largely developed as a result of the need to maintain motivation to meet fitness goals

Modern physiotherapists work well with other professionals in the health and exercise industry through good communication, teamwork and respect. We share your goal of improving and maintaining the health of your patients on their journey to good health and fitness.



Contact details