

ABOVE 35 YEARS?

STOP RUNNING ON A TREADMILL

* HEALTH

Bipasha Basu battled knee pain while shooting for an item number for Aa Dekhen Zara. iTALK tells you how to protect your knees if you plan to hit the staircase for a recession-proof workout

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Dr Ameet Pispati

Knee replacement surgery is one of the most common procedures performed on middle-aged and senior Indians, and the reason, experts believe is that we are not paying attention to our knees when young.

Knees happen to be the largest and most complicated joint in the body, and support your entire body weight. No wonder then that they are most vulnerable to acute injury and Osteoarthritis. With most urban professionals working at desk jobs, sedentary lifestyle and weight gain are major culprits. Being a fitness freak and over-exercising can prove counter-productive too.

PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE

Dr Ameet Pispati, Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon at Jaslok and Bhatia Hospitals, says if the young take care of their knees, they are able to avoid wear and tear, that could demand procedures as serious as a knee replacement.

"It is imperative that you keep your weight under control. Even a 5-7 kg overload can damage your knees and lead to Knee Arthritis." Individuals above 35 should avoid running on treadmills since the impact on the knee is higher, than if you were to run on soft ground. The treadmill is more suited for brisk walking than running," says Dr Pispati. It would help if women avoided wearing high heels on a daily basis, since it makes the weight of the body shift to the front of the foot, which can wear out the joint behind the knee cap.

HOW YOU CAN PROTECT YOURSELF

Simple stretches and warm-ups before you start exercising, can help prevent knee muscle damage. Dr Harshada Rajadhyaksha, Orthopaedic Physiotherapist, says wearing shoes with good insoles is a must. If you are flat-footed, ensure that the arch of your foot is cushioned well. Practice yoga and stretching since they exercise all the muscles, keeping them flexible. "A sedentary lifestyle (desk jobs) allows the hamstrings to stretch since your legs are constantly bent; this can lead to back and knee pain," she states. Those with weak knees should stick to swimming and cycling rather than jogging or climbing stairs.

DOES CLIMBING STAIRS HELP?

Climbing stairs is being sold as an anytime and cheap fitness regimen, but experts say it's a good idea only for those under 35. It's great for the heart, but puts undue pressure on your knees.

Walking up an incline is a bad idea. When you walk on level ground, your body weight is distributed on both legs. Climbing an incline puts pressure on your joints, shifting body weight on one knee. "While climbing, your knees carry two times the body weight. While climbing down, they carry three times the body weight, leading to wear and tear of joints," says Dr Pispati.

DR HARSHADA RAJADHYAKSHA
Orthopaedic
Physiotherapist



Ensure that you wear good shoes that cushion your foot. Practicing yoga and stretching exercises will keep your muscles flexible.



ACTRESS BIPASHA

BASU experienced knee

pain while shooting for an item song in upcoming film, Aa Dekhen Zara. She had injured her knee a few days before shooting the item number. Though, she had been advised complete rest by her physiotherapist, Bipasha chose to continue working, visiting her physiotherapist whenever she found the time.

How to exercise without ruining your knees

While exercising, you need to be careful to avoid injury. Knee problems can occur if there is an imbalance in muscles (where you may have a strong hamstring and a weak calf or vice versa), wrong alignment of the foot, degeneration of the knee joint and repeated activity that can put pressure on the joint.

DEANNE PANDEY
Fitness
Trainer

GUIDELINES TO KEEP IN MIND

CLIMBING STAIRS is fine once a week, but don't overdo it. Be sure that your heel hits the surface first, and while lifting your foot, see that you lift your heels first. Land your feet lightly so that the joints don't bear the brunt of all your weight.

CLIMBING UP an incline is good for the heart, and climbing down is good for the hamstrings. It is a great cardio-vascular exercise; good for the lungs too. With a proper diet, it can also help reduce thigh cellulite.

WHILE EXERCISING, alternate between various types of workouts so that the same muscles and joints are not under pressure.

ENSURE THAT your joints gets sufficient rest. Don't treat your body like a machine and exercise too rigorously.

DON'T GET obsessed and follow fads. Realise that the body takes time to adapt, so, make changes gradually.

AVOID CLIMBING stairs if you have a knee problem or are overweight.

AKKI CLIMBS HIS WAY TO FITNESS

During the shoot for Singh Is Kinng in Australia, after pack-up every day, Akshay Kumar used to climb up and down the stairs of an 80-storey building where he was put up.



SMOKING CAN AFFECT KNEES

Smoking and drinking have an indirect effect on the knees. While smoking leads to back problems and delays recovery, alcohol affects the hip joints.

ASK ALTAF



Dr Altaf Patel

Honorary professor, medicine, Grant Medical College and honorary physician JJ Medical Hospital

Dear Doctor,

Are there any mood elevating foods?

Include protein in each meal as this increases your tryptophan levels. Tryptophan converts to serotonin, which elevates the mood. Also, eat carbohydrates an hour before meals as this helps tryptophan to enter the brain, where it can be metabolized to serotonin.

My son is an endurance athlete and suffers from frequent respiratory infections. What do you advise?

I would suggest he either take probiotics or yogurt, which helps to boost the immune system in athletes.

My servant has AIDS. His CD4 count is 400. Should he start treatment?

There is some controversy about this. Data does show that starting proper treatment at this stage does prolong survival.

Is it wise to use vaginal douches after sex?

Douching potentially raises the risk of STDs by flushing the semen up the cervix. Women who regularly douche are 84% more likely to develop a sexually transmitted disease. There is also some evidence linking it to reduced fertility, pregnancy outside the uterus, pre-term delivery and cervical cancer.

Is frequent sex the cause of prostate cancer?

No, in fact, frequent ejaculation reduce the risk of prostate cancer. Men in their 20s, who have 5 or more ejaculations a week reduce their risk of prostate cancer by a third. In older men, 21 ejaculations a month lowers the risk of prostate cancer as well.

Write in to us:

Need health advice?

Confused about your ailment? Let Dr Altaf Patel solve your queries. Write in to us with your full name, age, address, problem and photo (optional) to altafpatel69@gmail.com Queries with incomplete details will NOT be answered.