

Stay Safe! Use Proper Form While Strength Training

Proper form is a key part of injury prevention, especially with strength training. If you are new to strength training or it's been a while since you've done a particular exercise, talk with your health care provider to make sure that exercise is appropriate. If you've had hip or back surgery, talk about which exercises might be best for you.

Safety tips for strength exercises:

- Breathe when you exercise! Breathe out as you lift or push, and breathe in as you relax. If you're doing leg lifts, for example, breathe out as you lift your leg, and breathe in as you lower it.
- Use smooth, steady movements to lift weights into position. Don't jerk or thrust weights.
- Keep arm and leg joints slightly bent. Avoid "locking" your arm and leg joints in a tightly straight position.
- Take 3 seconds to lift or push weight into place, hold the position for 1 second, and then take another 3 seconds to return to your starting position. Control the movement, and don't let the weights drop.
- If it's difficult to hold hand weights properly, try using wrist weights.
- If you are starting an exercise program or your arms feel tired after several repetitions, complete the exercise by using one arm at a time. Alternate sides, and then work your way up to using both arms at the same time.
- A steady rate of progress is the best approach. Over-exercising can cause injury.
- Challenge yourself, but listen to your body, and use common sense when you exercise.



Quick Tip

Exercise should NOT cause severe pain. Exhaustion, sore joints, or painful muscle pulling mean you're overdoing it.

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