

Exercise—Your Health Depends on Doing It Right

A 37-year-old Navy lieutenant collapses and dies of a heart attack after jogging .75 miles to a train station, en route to home.

A senior chief inadvertently steps in a hole and dislocates his ankle while out for his daily PRT. He subsequently loses 21 workdays.

An RM2 dies of a heart attack after an exercise class at the base gym. He had been on a self-imposed weight-control program.

A Navy lieutenant commander breaks his leg while participating in command PRT (playing football).

Incidents like these are a reminder of what can happen when people try to get back into shape too quickly. Here are some tips to prevent you from making the same mistake:

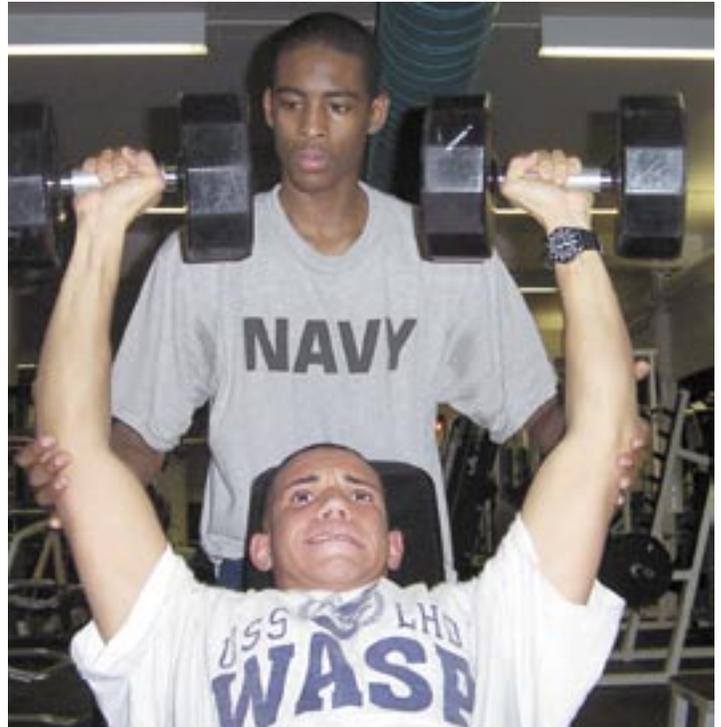
- Get a medical check-up if you haven't been exercising regularly.
- Start slowly and gradually build up to a sustainable level of performance for an effective conditioning program; don't just run 1.5 miles every six months. A complete program will help you develop and improve flexibility, cardiovascular fitness, and muscular strength.
- Warm up and stretch for 10 to 15 minutes before and after each vigorous workout to prevent strains and sprains. Talk to your command physical-fitness coordinator for ideas about establishing a program. Don't overlook recommendations in OpNavInst 6110.1H (Physical Readiness Program); it's an excellent source of information.
- Don't use alcohol prior to or during fitness training. Alcohol accelerates dehydration, reduces performance, impairs judgment, and increases willingness to take risks.
- Drink plenty of cool water to prevent dehydration. When it's hot, schedule your activity during the coolest part of the day or exercise indoors where it's air conditioned.

• Jog on established jogging paths where available. When jogging on roads, run against the traffic flow.

• Light-colored clothing and reflective clothing (during reduced-visibility conditions) are required while jogging on base.

• Follow the rules that pertain to your choice of workout. For example, if you're working with free

Navy photo by SM3 Derrick M. Ingle



If you work out with free weights, be sure you have a spotter.

weights, be sure you have a spotter, and follow the safety guidelines for weightlifting. It's recommended that you use collars and a weight belt.

• Remember the acronym "RICE" when an injury occurs: Rest the sprain, put Ice on it, wrap something around the injury to Compress it, and Elevate that part of the body. Seek medical attention if you experience any of these symptoms: inability to move your arm or leg, a locked joint, persistent swelling, or a grinding feeling. ■

Resources:

- <http://safecen.navy.mil/ashore/recreation/safetybriefs/joggingBrief.htm> [*Jogging/Running/Physical Fitness Safety Brief*]
- http://www.aarp.org/health/fitness/work_out/a2003-03-06-safety.html [*Working Out*]
- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/exerciseandphysicalfitness.html> [*Exercise and Physical Fitness*].