

General Health - Before you start in the Fitness Room

Before you start to use the Fitness Room ask yourself some questions; common sense is your best guide when answering the following questions:

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?
2. Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?
3. In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?
4. Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?
5. Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity levels?
6. Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs for your blood pressure or a heart condition?
7. Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?

If you answered YES to one or more questions talk with your doctor before you start becoming much more physically active

If you answered NO honestly to all questions you can be reasonably sure that you can start becoming more physically active - begin slowly and build up gradually. This is the safest and easiest way to go.

Delay becoming more active if you are not feeling well because of temporary illness such as cold or fever – wait until you feel better.

Planning your regime - guidance on using the Fitness Room

- Warm up and stretch.
A vital part in every exercise routine are stretching or warming up. Often overlooked when starting out one's exercise regimen, stretching actually prepares your muscles to the impending rigidity of your workout. A good 5- to 10-minute warm up is necessary before you exercise.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
Dehydration is one of the common problems suffered by individuals who frequently exercise. Make sure you hydrate by drinking plenty of fluids so that which is lost from sweating is restored back to your body. Fluids help muscle endurance, as dehydrated muscles easily get sore and tired.
- Wear the right kind of clothing and footwear.
Wearing the wrong shoe is usually the common cause of exercise injuries. Make sure that you're wearing the right shoe size, and provide much needed support for your feet. Appropriate clothing is also a must. Wear comfortable clothes that are quick to dry and allow you to move freely during your regimen.
Non-essential belongings should not be taken into the fitness room
- Know your limitations.
Most of us tend to overdo our fitness regime just to shed off those extra calories we have gained. Try resting for a day in between your fitness regime to allow your muscles and body to recover. Muscle soreness and discomfort may lead to burnout and you may have to give up all too quickly.
- Be guided by a qualified fitness instructor.
If you have a pre-existing injury or medical condition, consult a sports medicine doctor, exercise physiologist or physiotherapist.
- Avoid or modify any exercise that causes you pain or discomfort.
Don't ignore your body's signals of fatigue, discomfort and pain. Increasing the speed of any exercise can increase the risk of injury. Start slow and build up. Trying to 'work through' the pain will cause more damage to soft muscle tissue and delay healing
- Work with a Fitness partner.
A Fitness partner or a buddy may be helpful. A fitness friend can be your spotter, motivator, or warn you in case you are overtraining. Besides, working with someone is better than exercising alone. It makes all the exercise much more fun.
- Cross-train with other sports and exercises to reduce the risk of overtraining.
- Make sure you have at least one recovery day, and preferably two, every week.

Stop exercising and seek medical help if you experience symptoms such as:

- Discomfort or pain
- Chest pain or other pain that could indicate a heart attack, including pain in the neck and jaw, pain travelling down the arm or pain between the shoulder blades
- Extreme breathlessness
- A very rapid or irregular heartbeat during exercise.



Once you've started - safety in the Fitness Room

Everyone has responsibilities for their own health and safety and that of others. To this end, the following simple rules must be observed:-

- Pieces of equipment, such as the weights, must be put away after use so that they do not endanger the safety of others;
- Users must not use any piece of equipment which they are not familiar with;
- Check equipment thoroughly before you use it
- Any defect in any item of kit must be reported to your Common Room sports rep or the Bursar so that a notice can be placed on the piece of equipment concerned and repair(s) arranged.
- In order to maintain cleanliness and prevent the spread of germs, equipment must be cleaned with the wipes provided at the end of each use;
- Litter must be placed in the litterbin provided;
- Building security arrangements must be followed at all times;
- Although the LMH Gym Committee members will take every effort to ensure the safety of persons using the gym, the main responsibility for health and safety rests with individual members when using the gym.
- Report any accident or 'near miss' via the Porters Lodge straight away
- When deciding if any exercise is safe, you need to consider the technique used and the load, as well as your individual condition, such as injury history and fitness level.

Guidance on using weights

Understanding how to properly use weights is critical in ensuring everyone is safe.

1. Make sure that weight plates, bars, and dumbbells are placed securely on racks. Also, regularly examine racks to make sure they are in good condition and not wearing down anywhere. Weights must be re-racked straight after use.
2. Examine weight locks. If weight locks have become worn through frequent use they may slide off and cause weights to fall. Always use weight locks when lifting.
3. Return all equipment including mats, dumbbells, bars, plates, weight belts, collars, and anything else used in the weight room to its designated place.
4. Make sure benches and lifting apparatuses are adequately spaced apart to ensure that lifters do not interfere with one another.
5. Make sure all weight stack machines have proper pins in place and that all pins are in good condition.
6. Understand and encourage correct spotting techniques
7. Wear appropriate footwear - it is especially important in weight lifting areas.

Guidance on using machines

- Ensure the equipment is used for the purpose it is intended.
- Follow manufacturer guidelines closely. Check all machines are working correctly and looks sound before using, every time - report and clearly publicize any defective equipment.
- Allow a generous distance behind the treadmill to prevent being trapped or burned by the fast moving belt.

If in doubt – don't use it



Discipline in the Fitness Room

Users can be disqualified either indefinitely or for such period as appears appropriate. A committee of the JCR and MCR Sports reps and a College representative will hear any case and make a judgement. The judgement may be appealed to the relevant Common Room President and College Treasurer.

The following behaviours will be considered sufficient for a case for disqualification to be heard:

- Failure to observe the rules set out here
- Physical harm caused by one member to another;
- Harassment of another member;
- Misuse of equipment;
- Removal or defacement of instructions, advice or any other material displayed which displayed by or on behalf of the Committee;
- Any other act that is prejudicial to the safe operation of the gym;
- Theft of any equipment or other properties belonging to the gym;
- Permitting access to the gym by a non-member

but this list is not exhaustive and other similar behaviour may be considered sufficient for a case for disqualification to be heard.