

BE PREPARED NOT SURPRISED:

COMMON (MUSCULO- SKELETAL) PAINS IN MIDLIFE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Starting an exercise routine is hard no matter what your age but midlife has its own special challenges. Be prepared for them with this guide.

BY KELLY DUGGAN, DPT

3 KEY ELEMENTS

to a successful wellness journey:



When taking care of yourself,
don't forget to take care of yourself

Hydrate and Nourish
Partner Up
Listen and be kind to your
body



HYDRATE AND NOURISH

If you're starting an exercise program staying properly hydrated is not a suggestion, it's a necessary part of your survival. When we sweat we start to lose our hydration level. Dehydration can lead to heat stroke among other things. Staying hydrated can reduce your risk of injury, improve circulation (less cramping), among many other incredibly healthy things like reducing high blood pressure!

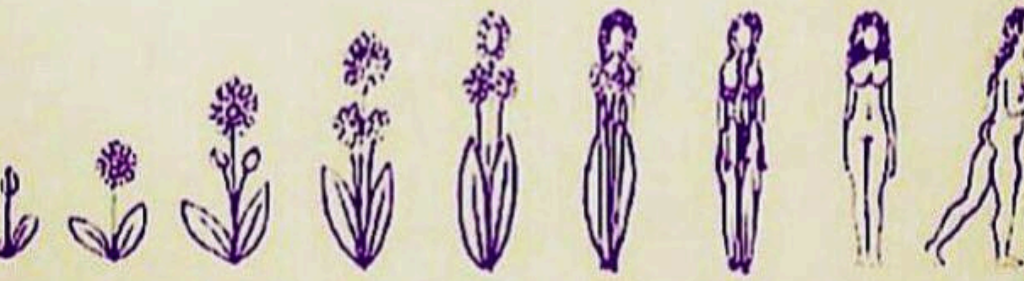
If you're looking to eat better, books and nutritionists are a great start, but registered dietitians are the GOLD STANDARD. Find an RD with this [link](#); bonus-many insurances cover a visit with an RD.



PARTNER UP

Whether it's with virtual check-in's or an actual work out buddy, studies show that having an accountability partner will improve your chance of success!

Having a partner can make you more motivated, competitive and committed.



“and i said to my body. softly. ‘i want to be your friend.’ it took a long breath. and replied, ‘i have been waiting my whole life for this.’”

Not everyone's wellness journey will be similar. If your weight doesn't come off as easy, or your muscle doesn't build up as fast, continue to remind yourself that you are moving in the right direction. If something doesn't feel right ask a professional. That could be a personal trainer, physical therapist, or your accountability partner! You are not on this journey alone and you should use all the resources you have available!

**LISTEN AND BE KIND
TO YOUR BODY**

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest of tall, thin trees. The path is covered in fallen leaves and twigs. The trees are mostly evergreens, with some deciduous trees showing bare branches. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day.

COMMON MUSCULO- SKELETAL PAINS IN MIDLIFE

3 frequently seen injuries, what to look for, and how to avoid them

Plantar Fasciitis
Back Pain
Runner's Knee

Plantar Fasciitis

What It Is

Plantar Fasciitis is an inflammation of the fascia on the bottom of the foot often caused by overuse activities resulting in foot and heel pain. Plantar fasciitis (PF) can also be brought on with increased weight gain as additional pressure is being placed on the fascia (connective tissue) in the foot.

What To Look For

Although PF is an inflammation of the fascia, you won't actually see swelling. You will typically notice pain in the heel and bottom of the foot, worse upon standing in the morning and when getting up after sitting for a prolonged period. As the tissues get a small stretch with walking they start to loosen up and so less pain is felt.

How To Avoid It

Before starting a new workout program make sure you are appropriately stretching your feet/ankles. You can find a great stretch [here](#). If you are already noticing some discomfort you can use a frozen water bottle and roll your foot back and forth over it for a few minutes.

Back Pain

What It Is

Back pain can be caused by MANY things (pulled muscles, weak muscles, disc issues, stenosis to name a few). What you need to take home from this ebook is that if you are having back pain have it assessed by a physical therapist early on to delay proper treatment. Different back pains result in different treatments so it is KEY to be seen by a professional. If you have had an x-ray or MRI you should talk with a physical therapist about what your scan means. Often times, things with scary names (like degenerative disc disease), are part of the normal process of aging. A diagnosis does not always equal a disability. Check the link in the references section to find a PT near you.

What To Look For

Slight discomfort and a pulling sensation in the back at rest or with activities are signs to have a mobility screen by a PT. This screen will help guide you as to what stretches and exercises you will benefit from.

How To Avoid It

Stretching can often times help, yoga is a magnificent exercise to add in at least once weekly if you are starting out on your own wellness journey! If you do have a mobility screen by a PT they can also give you specific exercises to your unique needs to help avoid a future back issue.

Runner's Knee

What It Is

Runner's knee is not really a specific diagnosis but a generalized term given to someone with knee pain. Runner's knee can mean 1 of many things but most likely patellofemoral pain syndrome. Runner's knee, or in our discussion, Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome, causes pain on and around the patella (knee cap). It is often brought on by starting a new cardio program without proper strength training. You may notice knee pain with bending/straightening the knee, pain with standing after sitting and pain with running.

What To Look For

Pain on and around the knee/knee cap which flares with standing after sitting, running or going up/down stairs. The pain can be waxing/waning or constant. You may even notice slight swelling in the knee.

How To Avoid It

Stretching and strengthening is key to preventing injuries like patellofemoral pain syndrome. Often times the weakness can be more significant in the hips than the actual knee. If you are starting a new wellness journey be sure you are taking care of your entire body top to bottom and including stretching before and after your activities.

Don't get discouraged by

RED FLAGS

Learn who to turn to when things take an unexpected twist

INCONTINENCE

Peeing/leaking when you aren't trying to
Leaking with exercise is common but **not normal** and will always worsen with age if left untreated. If you are experiencing this, talk to a pelvic health specialist. Many times leaking can be treated non-operatively and WITHOUT medication! Click this [link](#) and select "Women's Health" to find a specialist near you.

HEADACHES

During or after exercise

Headaches can be a sign that your blood pressure is elevating **too high** with activity. If you are noticing a trend during or after exercise contact your PCP for further guidance.

PAIN

During or after exercise

Pain does not always = injury. If your pain is consistent, getting worse or limiting your daily activities it's time to call your local PT for an injury screen. Addressing issues early on is key to preventing more serious problems down the line.

NUMBNESS

Or tingling in legs, arms or face

Numbness can be caused by many things from stress to bulging discs to signs of a stroke. Take this symptom serious and let your PCP know what's going on.

RESOURCES/REFERENCES

LINK TO PELVIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS

LINK TO YOUR LOCAL PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

LINK TO YOUR LOCAL REGISTERED DIETICIAN

LINK TO BASIC STRETCHES FOR EXERCISE

**THANK YOU TO SUSAN COEL CLINTON- PELVIC
HEALTH SPECIALIST**

**QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE CAN BE
DIRECTED TO KELLY DUGGAN, DPT AT
KELLY@PTUCLINIC.COM**

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