Disney, Universal and the Ocean—Oh, My!

By Kris Hellenbrand, MPT

My husband, Tim, and I had been planning a family trip to Florida for several years to visit Disney World and Universal Studios. We wanted to make sure our youngest was old enough to have a great time and have great memories of the trip and ensure that our oldest still wanted to “hang out” with his family for a week, and 2018 was the year! We surprised our kids at Christmas with a box in a box style gift containing various Disney related items and finally a poem written by their dad telling them we were heading to Disney World the last day of school! We spent many hours leading up to our trip planning all the things we wanted to do while spending as little time in line as we could while we were there. Overall, mission accomplished!

The kids and I had never been to Disney and I was just as excited as they were! The kids finished their last day of school by 10 am and then it was off to the Milwaukee airport. It was their first time flying, so they were excited and nervous at the same time. My youngest, Ellee, loved the escalators and people movers at the airport and rode them many times! The kids also got to meet the pilot in the cockpit of our plane.

Our first day, we went to Magic Kingdom and were in the park for over 15 hours! Buzz Light Year’s Ranger Spin was a family favorite that we rode 3 times! I really loved the night show there, it literally brought tears to my eyes and made me feel like a kid again. The second park we visited was Epcot. Ellee was very excited to see what was in the “big golf ball” and Soarin’ was a favorite for 4 of the 5 of us. Emma however, was not a fan of heights or motion simulation. Animal Kingdom was one of my favorite parks. Both rides from the movie Avatar were amazing and the whole world of Pandora they created made you feel like you had stepped into the movie! Going on the Kilimanjaro Safari ride transported you to Africa. Kali River Rapids is was another family favorite that we rode 3 times! Our last day in the Disney parks was at Hollywood Studios. Toy Story Mania was another family favorite that we were able to ride twice!

After 4 Disney parks in 4 days, we were pretty tired and had a day to sleep in. We then drove to Cape Canaveral National Sea Shore to spend the day at the ocean. The kids had never been to the ocean and it seemed like a must do when we were that close. Ellee and I really enjoyed watching the hermit crabs and collecting sea shells. Emma enjoyed riding the waves and Tim and Ayden created master pieces in the sand!

We spent the next two days exploring Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure. We are all Harry Potter fans and enjoyed walking through Diagon Alley, Hogsmeade and Hogwarts Castle. The Harry Potter rides were awesome! On our final day in Florida, we were able to spend most of the day at the pool relaxing before heading to the airport.

Kris Hellenbrand has been a physical therapist at New Life since 2008. She enjoys living in the small community of Oxford and serving the people in Portage and the surrounding areas. Kris specializes in orthopedic physical therapy as well as pelvic floor rehabilitation for men and women and visceral manipulation. She is passionate about empowering her patients in body, mind, and spirit to do the important things in life!
How Stiff are Your Springs?

By Bryan Cummings PT, DPT, OCS, ATC

Improving lower extremity flexibility and strength may decrease running-related stiffness and improve your running comfort and enjoyment.

Running is associated with many health benefits, but also has lower extremity injury-risk. Stiffness of the lower extremity joints is associated with increased injury risk in runners. When running, the lower extremity has characteristics of a spring. The more range of motion and muscle involvement, the better the spring. Any reduction of range of motion and muscle control worsens the spring (a stiffer spring) and increases forces to bones and joints. Better springs result is less injury, stiffer springs increase injury risk.


The flexibility of these joints, absorbs the impact forces like a compressing spring when the foot hits the ground. Not only is flexibility important, but strength around these joints is as well. Having sufficient strength controls the flexion (compression of the spring) at the joints, thus preventing collapse. Also, when a joint lacks appropriate strength around it, the joint actually stiffens up, and prevents the spring from compressing at all (because the muscles cannot control the joint movement).

The most significant joints impacting overall lower extremity stiffness according to the study were the hip (internal rotation), ankle (dorsiflexion), and the foot (arch flexibility).

The hip joint is the where the thigh bone and the pelvis meet via a ball and socket joint (femoral head and the acetabulum). The hip joint moves in all three planes of movement and is surrounded by strong muscles to control the movement. The study found that lacking internal rotation of the hip (thigh turns inward towards the mid-line) was associated with lower extremity stiffness.

The ankle joint is the articulation between the talus and the lower leg. The ankle joint primarily moves in one plane (sagittal) and produces dorsiflexion (pulls foot up towards the head) and plantarflexion (points foot downwards). Decreased ankle dorsiflexion was associate with increased lower extremity stiffness.

The foot is composed of 26 bones and 33 joints, all of which deserve attention when considering lower extremity injuries and their prevention. The study however focused on the flexibility of the medial arch (what most people consider when describing their foot as “flat” or “high-arches”). Again, a lack of arch flexibility resulted in increased joint stiffness. Many persons are often concerned when they have “flat-feet” (flexible arches), however I find that high-arched feet with rigid arches are more problematic. As the foot hits the ground the flexibility of the arch “unlocks” movement at the ankle, knee and hip, allowing the key movements above to occur and compression of the spring.

Higher body weight also resulted in increased stiffness. Although there is no determination of “too heavy”, one must consider the flexibility factors above in combination with their body weight. Example, if a prior injury has resulted in decreased ankle flexibility, the runner should attempt to keep their BMI at normal values, and improve the relative strength of their lower extremity muscles.

Mobility of the hip, ankle, and foot, along with body weight are all consider “modifiable” (with some exceptions), meaning you can do something about it. A general fitness program that includes lower extremity strengthening and flexibility performed for 20 minutes 2 days a week is adequate for most people. In the event of prior injury and/or “arthritis” of a joint, a program tailored to your unique flexibility and strength is needed. A physical therapist is the best trained healthcare provider for this and will work closely with your personal trainer, running coach, and/or physician to get your back to, or start a running program.

If you feel you are “heavy” (common road race standards: over 190 lbs for males and 140 lbs for females), along with addressing mobility and strength issues, consider a run/walk strategy to get started. Note: I recommend this strategy for beginning runners as well. Below is a sample walk/run strategy (www.verywellfit.com/running-tips-for-overweight-runners).

Use a Run/Walk Strategy

Once you’ve built up your fitness through walking, you can get started with run/walk, which is an excellent strategy to safely and comfortably build your running endurance. Start your run/walk session by warming up with a 10-minute brisk walk to get your heart rate up and blood flowing to the working muscles. Next, run easy for 1 minute and then walk for 2 minutes. The walk should be an active rest, not a complete break. Don’t walk casually—do it with a purpose, like a power walk, to make sure you’re getting a good cardio workout. Repeat this cycle for 15 to 20 minutes, and then finish with a 5-minute walk as a cool down. As your 1-minute run intervals become easier, you can increase the amount of your run intervals and decrease the length of your walk intervals. While some people try to get to the point where they can run continuously without walk breaks, others decide to stick with run/walk as a long-term strategy, using intervals such as run 3 minutes/walk 1 minute or run 2 minutes/walk 30 seconds.

Improving lower extremity stiffness has application across any weight bearing activity, in addition to running. Consider an evaluation of your lower extremity flexibility and strength if you are considering starting a running program or other new physical activity. If you have seen your performance decline and/or increased joint pain with activity, we can help as well.
Tips for How to Keep Work and Life in Balance

✔ Set your goals.
Take an inventory on the important things in your life and decide on the tasks you need and want to get done. Don’t forget friends, family, exercise and hobbies or giving back to others.

✔ Make a plan.
Look at the calendar and dedicate the time you will need to do them. Start with the most important tasks.

✔ Separate time for smaller tasks.
Set an amount of time to take care of the quick and easy tasks that need to be done. Do them either before you begin or after your task, but not during your dedicated time.

✔ Be disciplined, stay focused and make your time quality time.
When beginning your task, completely block out as many distractions as possible. Turn off your e-mail and other notifications until you are finished. You can set time to check in on those when your task is completed.

✔ Other helpful tips:
• Unplug from devices and enjoy the moment and time spent with others.
• Occasionally remind yourself of what is most important in your life and filter out or limit things that are not.
• You may need to start with a few tasks to be completed and work your way up to completing all of your tasks.
• Your schedule may fall apart at times, but each day is a new chance at starting over.

Clinic Happenings:

Drawing Winner:
Steve won our drawing last month for a Kwik Trip gift card. Congratulations Steve!

Triathlon Time is here! New Life Physical Therapy is pleased to be a sponsor of the Silver Lake Triathlon again this year. Come kick off summer and cheer on our New Life Physical Therapy participants and your community on June 15th at Silver Lake Park in Portage. You can find more information and register yourself or a team online at SilverLakeTriathalon.com. It is a race for beginners, experienced athletes and everyone in between.

New Life, Jordan Hove and his wife Alicia served up a fantastic pancake breakfast at the annual Baraboo Kiwanis Club Pancake Breakfast. The current project they are raising money for is a pedestrian bridge crossing the Baraboo River which they hope to complete this fall. Their next fundraiser will be a rose sale at the end of May.

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New Life Physical Therapist and Co-Owner, Mary Rose Strickland, enjoyed a Cubs vs. Brewers game at Miller Park with her family before returning back to work full-time from her maternity leave. Originally born in Lincoln Park, it is no surprise that she (and her children by default) are Cubs fans.

New Life Physical Therapy / Sports Medicine / For Work supported Columbia County CASA by wearing BLUE on April 17th. We wore blue to help raise awareness about child abuse prevention and the work of CASA in our community! Pictured here are New Life PT team members: Nancy, Mary Rose, Kris, Sydney, Bryan, Amanda and Kyle.

Success Helping People Get Their “ING” On

Debra came to New Life Physical Therapy looking for help with pain in her neck. She shares her experience at New Life and tells us, “My pain started in January of 2018 from a domestic abuse incident. With numerous chiropractor appointments, I still had pain in my neck. I started PT and within a couple months I could lift things without pain, sleep without pain, and go to work without pain. I am very pleased with the outcome of my PT. Everyone was wonderful and understanding. I would recommend them to anyone.”

Pictured here is New Life PT Kyle Herbert with Debra.
Did You Know?
You do not have to waste time and money on unnecessary doctor visits and tests.
You are able to see our physical therapist directly with no referral required!

You do not have to miss out on doing the things you want, need or love to do because of pain or limitations in physical performance.
New Life Physical Therapy can help you reclaim your active life with our experienced and caring specialists.

Try Physical Therapy First.

Easy Oven Roasted Asparagus – Your Way

Asparagus is in season April through June. It is a great option to promote good health since it is low in calories and packed with necessary vitamins, minerals and antioxidants including folate, vitamins A, C and K.

When purchasing: Look for fresh asparagus with bright green color that is squeaky, firm and the tops are closed and compact.

Roasting:
- Turn oven on to 425 degrees.
- Wash the asparagus and remove inedible bottom sections by cutting or snapping the end off where it naturally breaks by holding both ends and bending away from you until the stalk breaks.
- Place asparagus in a mixing bowl and drizzle lightly with olive oil. Toss to coat and add your choice of the following: parmesan cheese, minced garlic, pepper, or salt.
- Spread on a baking sheet in a single layer. Line the sheet with foil to save clean-up.
- Bake until just tender, 10-12 minutes depending on the thickness of your stalks.
- Add optional toppings if desired.

Optional toppings:
Sprinkle with lemon juice just before serving if desired or top with 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese and broil until the cheese is lightly browned.
Enjoy immediately!