



EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST

HOW EXERCISE CAN BE THE BEST MEDICINE

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Introduction

An exercise physiologist is a university trained allied health professional who specialises in using exercise to improve health, manage medical conditions, and restore physical function. Accredited Exercise Physiologists work with people who have injuries, chronic diseases, or health risks, helping them use structured exercise programs as a form of treatment. At Advanced Physiotherapy, our exercise physiologist works closely with our physiotherapists to help patients improve strength, mobility, fitness, and long term health. For many people, the right exercise program can be one of the most effective ways to reduce pain, manage chronic conditions, and improve overall wellbeing.

What Does an Exercise Physiologist Do

Exercise physiologists are experts in how the body responds and adapts to physical activity. They complete a four year university degree studying anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, pathology, and clinical exercise prescription. In Australia they are accredited through Exercise and Sports Science Australia.

Their work focuses on assessing a person's health, identifying limitations in movement or fitness, and developing personalised exercise programs designed to safely improve physical capacity.

An initial consultation typically involves a detailed assessment. This may include discussion of medical history, medications, previous injuries, physical activity levels, and current symptoms. The exercise physiologist may also assess strength, mobility, balance, cardiovascular fitness, and functional movement.

Using this information, a tailored exercise program is developed. These programs may include aerobic exercise, resistance training, balance work, mobility exercises, and functional training. The program is progressed gradually over time as strength, fitness, and confidence improve.

Exercise physiologists often work with people who have conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, osteoporosis, chronic pain, obesity, and neurological disorders. They also help people return to activity after injury or surgery and assist individuals who want to improve general health and fitness in a safe and structured way.

Exercise Is One of the Most Powerful Medicines Available

Over the past several decades, research has consistently shown that exercise has profound effects on health. Regular physical activity improves the function of nearly every system in the body, including the cardiovascular system, muscles, bones, metabolism, and brain.

Because of these widespread benefits, exercise is increasingly recognised as a powerful form of medicine. In some cases, structured exercise programs can be as effective as medication for managing certain chronic diseases.

Exercise improves cardiovascular health by strengthening the heart, improving circulation, and reducing blood pressure. It also improves metabolic health by increasing the body's ability to use insulin effectively, which is particularly important for people with type two diabetes.

Resistance training helps maintain muscle strength and bone density, which becomes increasingly important with age. Strong muscles support joints, improve balance, and reduce the risk of falls and injuries. Regular exercise also supports mental health by reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Exercise and Chronic Disease Management

Exercise physiologists play a particularly important role in helping people manage chronic health conditions. Many chronic diseases are strongly influenced by lifestyle factors, including physical inactivity.

For people with type two diabetes, regular exercise improves glucose control and insulin sensitivity. In cardiovascular disease, structured exercise programs can improve heart function, lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of further complications.

People with arthritis or chronic musculoskeletal pain often benefit from carefully prescribed strengthening and mobility exercises. These programs can help maintain joint movement, strengthen supporting muscles, and reduce pain over time. Exercise is also important for osteoporosis prevention and management. Weight bearing and resistance exercises stimulate bone tissue and help maintain bone density, reducing the risk of fractures later in life.

Importantly, exercise programs need to be appropriate for each individual. The type, intensity, and progression of exercise must take into account a person's medical history, current fitness level, and physical limitations.

Why Professional Guidance Matters

Many people understand that exercise is important but are unsure where to start. Others worry that exercise may worsen pain or aggravate an existing condition.

An exercise physiologist provides the knowledge and supervision needed to exercise safely and effectively. Programs are carefully designed to match each person's ability and progressed gradually to build confidence and capacity.

This professional guidance is particularly valuable for people managing chronic conditions, recovering from injury, or returning to exercise after a long period of inactivity.

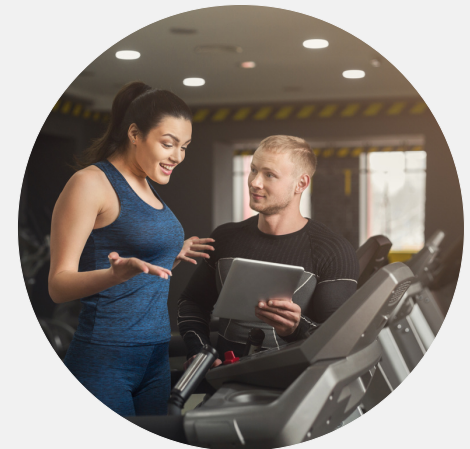
Exercise Physiologists and Physiotherapists Working Together

Exercise physiologists often work as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team. Physiotherapists typically focus on diagnosing injuries and guiding early rehabilitation, while exercise physiologists focus on longer term exercise programs that support recovery and improve overall health.

This collaborative approach allows patients to move from injury treatment through to long term health management using exercise as a central tool.

At Advanced Physiotherapy, our exercise physiologist works closely with our physiotherapy team to ensure patients receive coordinated care. Whether the goal is managing a chronic condition, improving strength and fitness, recovering from injury, or preventing future health problems, structured exercise programs can play a powerful role.

With the right guidance, exercise can help people move better, feel better, and maintain long term health.



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