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OPTM SPORTS & PHYSICAL THERAPY, INC  
SARATOGA  
LOS GATOS

KEEPING FIT WITH OPTM

## PREPARE FOR SUMMER FUN!

Summer is here and with it brings an increase of recreational and household activities. Is your body ready for action after a winter of rest? In the past, have you had aches and pains in your feet, knees or hips? If so, perhaps the new activities will recreate these symptoms. What can you do for yourself to avoid these unnecessary pains?

**OPTM** would like to help you proactively care for your health. We specialize in biomechanical examinations with instructions for proper training techniques. Let's look at some common maladies.

Deficiencies of muscular length and strength in the feet, legs, thighs and hips can predispose you to a variety of pains, including plantar fasciitis, Achilles bursitis or tendonitis, tearing ligaments in your knee, pain around your kneecap, trochanteric bursitis and hip impingement.

Pain in the lower extremities often results from poor muscular control or over-stress from physical activity. Correcting the dynamic control of your legs and feet will normalize the stress distribution to the joints, helping to decrease demands on susceptible tissues. Rest from activity is also helpful to allow injured tissues to heal.

Poor judgment regarding the choice of activity and intensity is the cause of over-use injuries. Intensity refers to the resistance, the distance, the speed, the range of motion, the frequency, the duration, the number of sets and repetitions and the type of terrain used for an activity. Choosing activities and an appropriate starting level based on comfort is difficult, as the first day of exercise often feels good, only to leave you very sore for the next week and injured after a month of performing your exercises. This happens because the intensity exceeded the tissue stress tolerance.

Proper training programs to correct the poor motor control, perhaps in conjunction with orthotics or braces, are essential to the prevention and care of these problems. Medications, injections and operations involve little effort on your part, but your effort is necessary to develop the essential control of your joints when you move. **Only your effort will create fitness.**

The intensity of your

program should increase by 5-10% per week. Increase only one of the intensity parameters at one time. If walking or running is your chosen activity, avoid hills until you have exercised for 6-8 weeks. Going uphill will stress your calves, Achilles tendons and feet. Going down will stress your shins, kneecaps and lower back. Decrease the time or distance while running the hills to avoid exceeding your tissue stress limit. Or, if you play sports that demand lateral movement, which stress your hips and knees, perform shock absorbing exercises to develop control of your legs in the pre-season and continue the exercises throughout your season as part of your warm-up.

Physical activity is essential for health. Everyone can be active. Your effort will pay huge health dividends. Do good things for yourself everyday. Eat right, sleep 8 hours each night, think positive thoughts and stay active. **With your effort and help from OPTM, you can have a better life.**

### OPTM WELCOMES REYNA SAMALEA, DPT

Reyna graduated from the University of Southern Cal with a Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology in 2003. She earned her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Southern Cal in 2006. During her time at USC, Reyna was on the athletic medicine staff for the USC football; women's basketball, soccer, and water polo teams.

