

Exercise overdosing and under dosing effects

When managing any exercise-related injury, the amount of exercise you do is very important. Exercise is like a medication. With a medication you take a dose which will wear off over a period of time, after which you then need another. In the same fashion, after exercising you will get a physiological response, which gradually wears off over time. Consequently, similar to medications, there are there are 3 types of exercise dose:

- Under dose
- Overdose
- Therapeutic dose

Under dosing takes place when you essentially do too little. For most people, once they are injured and have pain they feel that the appropriate response is to rest it and give the body time to heal. Commonly what occurs during this period is that you get wasting of the tendon or tissue and so although there was no pain during this time, once you return to exercise there is increased pain with less activity. The concept of the an under dose of exercise can be summed up in the old phrase '*use it or lose it*'.

On the opposite end in the spectrum is an overdose of exercise. An overdose is where damage has taking place due to excessive loading of the tendon or soft tissues. Commonly people will experience pain during exercise, when they cool down after exercise and pain in the next day.

A therapeutic dose of exercise can provide us with a healing or growth effect. This therapeutic dose of exercise it is usually just below the threshold of overdose. Commonly, we can translate this therapeutic level of exercise as up to 2/10 in a pain range, with zero being no pain and ten being the worse pain imagined. We aim to have no greater than 2/10 pain during exercise or the next day. For those people that have pain that is continually above 2/10 we aim to decrease that activity level until we reach the optimal dose of 2/10. Naturally when performing exercise, the exercise should not make your pain worse. But for those people that have pain over 2/10 and are unable to decrease their activity level so that they reach 2/10, any activity should not make the pain worse during exercise or then next day.

The above is not medical advice and cannot be applied in all circumstances. Before commencing an exercise program while injured or recovering form injury you should consult your clinician and tailor a program to suit your specific needs.