

Resume exercise regime gradually after long hiatus

Rajvinder Singh
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PETALING JAYA: As sporting activities begin to take centre stage in people's lives, especially during weekends, the trend is an acknowledgement that life is slowly getting back to normal.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said exercise is one of the main pillars for maintaining good health and regular exercise has many benefits, including improving a person's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

"However, if a person has not been exercising regularly, it is advisable that he begins with light exercises and takes time to build his fitness level, as sudden exercises at high intensity for those physically unfit can lead to undesirable outcomes.

“We believe professional organisers of marathons warn the public through disclaimers before they sign up to participate in fun runs. But participants must be honest in declaring their health status.”

Muruga added it is always best to see a doctor and get a medical checkup before deciding to participate in such events.

This is especially important for participants aged 35 and above, smokers, overweight individuals or those with an existing medical condition.

He said those experiencing shortness of breath, chest pain, giddiness and a weak heart must avoid running or high-intensity exercises.

“As these ‘fun runs’ are held outdoors, the risk of Covid-19 is significantly reduced. But if there are many participants involved, it is always advisable to keep a distance from each other to avoid possible transmission.”

Muruga said it should be noted that Covid-19 is another reason people should exercise regularly as it boosts their immune system and can significantly help in defending against infections.

Former deputy health minister Dr Lee Boon Chye, who is a cardiologist, said since the lifting of restrictions by the Health Ministry the public have begun carrying out activities as normal.

“Exercise is important, people were doing so during the Covid period to keep healthy. Those involved in fun-filled physical activities should not worry too much as we need to learn to live with Covid, which is not going to disappear overnight.

“The Health Ministry is constantly monitoring the number of Covid cases. Since the mask restriction was lifted, there has been no spike in the number of cases.”

He said it was important for the ministry to monitor the situation to ensure there were no new Covid-19 variants as this could cause problems.

Lee also said those who wanted to take part in physical activities have to do it gradually, adding that they should not jump into the deep end, but build up their endurance first.

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