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Health & Fitness

Anybody's Sports Medicine Book: The Complete Guide to Quick Recovery from Sports Injuries

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Peter Radetsky
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With summer season here people will be pounding their bodies into shape in an attempt to correct weeks, if not years, of neglect to get in shape for the beach. Perhaps someone will try to prove his athletic skills are just as good at age forty-five as they were at twenty-five.

The question, according to Garrick, an orthopedic surgeon, and Radetsky, a writer and faculty member of the Science Communication Program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, is not when these well-meaning souls will injure themselves, but what can they do to hasten their recovery. “The fitness boom keeps booming, and people who never before dreamed of pulling on a pair of tennis or running shoes… are doing just that. Along the way they find that things come up—things like sprained ankles and the rest of the wide world of sports-related injuries—that they never had to deal with before.”Anybody’s Sports Medicine Book offers concrete suggestions on how to reduce recuperation time and get back into the swing of things. Equally as important, the authors offer exercises to minimize the chances of injuries. Why does the professional or elite amateur athlete get back to his game so quickly while the weekend sportsperson limps along, seemingly forever? The difference, they note, is in the timing of the treatment. The pampered athlete, usually representing a large financial investment, is surrounded by doctors and trainers whose sole function is to keep them at their craft. The average fitness enthusiast, on the other hand, can go for hours ignorant of the severity of their problem, allowing the injury to develop into a situation that will require extensive recuperation, and with that down time comes medical bills, work days missed, and other life upheavals.

The authors are thorough and anecdotal in their style, going through each potential sore spot, the basic “anatomy” of the various injuries and how to treat them. One problem endemic to this type of self-help book: Despite the authors’ warnings as to which symptoms merit a trip to

the doctor, the reader may have a tendency to self-diagnose, choosing rather to “heal thyself,” and get back to the court or the gym sooner. While the information is quite useful, erring on the side of caution should always be the rule. (July

Ron Kaplan