ISSUE 5
JANUARY 2016

Your Prescription for Health
ExeRxcise is Medicine Singapore
www.eims.sg

EIMS NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

By: Dr Benedict Tan

Exercise is Medicine, Singapore has much to look forward to in 2016!

The past year has been a productive one as EIM (Singapore) continues its exponential growth. We have been working with our partners to set up EIM-compliant exercise corners in various locations in Singapore, to help Singaporeans get started on exercising regularly, safely and effectively. Singapore Polytechnic's energetic student leaders successfully introduced the EIMS Campus Outreach Programme. We expanded our training of EIM certified doctors and allied healthcare professionals both locally and around the region. Read on for details of these exciting activities in this issue of our newsletter.

As we usher in the new year, we are happy to see that the awareness and profile of EIMS has been gaining prominence. This year, we expect to build on our achievements and further promote the EIM message, with a focus on community outreach and enhancing our research activities.

For those of you that have had too much to eat and drink over the holiday period, we have included a simple guide on how to get started on your running programme, to help you kick-start a healthy lifestyle this new year.

Here's wishing you a healthy 2016 ahead.

EIMS RESEARCH UPDATES FOR 2015

By: Dr. Ivy Lim

This year, EIMS presented the results of 2 studies we have done:

Exercise prescription behaviour of doctors before and after attending the EIMS Primary Care Physician course

A survey was carried out on doctors who attended our EIMS Primary Care Physician Course in 2014, and results were encouraging. Six months after completing the course, the doctors continued putting what they learnt into practice, with a relative increase of 55.1% in the rate of patients receiving a written exercise prescription. The proportion of doctors citing insufficient expertise or knowledge as a barrier to exercise prescription has also dropped, from 55.0% of those surveyed before the course, to 12.5% 6 months after their course.

The results of this study were presented at the 10th Singapore Public Health & Occupational Medicine Conference in August 2015.

Exercise habits and perceptions of polytechnic students

As part of the EIMS on Campus initiative, our two interns from Singapore Polytechnic, Melissa Lim and Tan Ji Xuan, carried out a survey on their schoolmates to understand their exercise habits and perceptions better. More than 75% of respondents met national physical activity guidelines, higher than the national average. Interestingly, school- or process-related factors such as the presence of a co-curricular activity, exercise facilities in school and compulsory activities do not appear to increase the students' motivation to exercise, in contrast to outcome factors such as health, weight loss, stress relief and attractive incentives. More than 90% of respondents felt there were barriers to them exercising, including bad weather, injuries and lack of determination.

Information from this study will aid EIMS in improving our EIMS on Campus initiative, as well as refine our measures to increase physical activity in polytechnic students. The results of this study were presented at the Eastern Health Alliance Annual Scientific Meeting 2015.

EXERCISE HABITS AND PERCEPTIONS OF POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RUNNING

By: Exercise Physiologist, Shayne Hu Shixuan

Getting into a new sport requires a huge amount of mental and physical focus. How fast and how well one picks up running depends on many variables such as fitness level, training and injury history, available training schedule as well as genes. Some components of training which can help you ease into it is the FITT of your run, also known as Frequency (number of times per week), Intensity (speed of run/ distance/ total volume –→ distance x time), Time (duration of run) and Type (interval/ continuous etc). Along with these factors, here are some training principles that can guide you along this journey.

Progressive overload

A 5-20% increase in FITT every 3-6 weeks is recommended to elicit positive adaptations, and prevent over-stressing your body. The general rule of thumb is to modify only one of the component of FITT while keeping the rest constant, and listen to your body.

Adaptations different from people

The varied progression timeline stated means that different people adapts at different rates. While you can modify factors to optimize your training, overloading yourself to keep up with your peers may result in injury and further deter your progression. Set your own short and long term SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timed) goals, be patient and celebrate every little victory to keep yourself motivated.

Specificity

If you are training to complete a given distance, you should focus on achieving this mileage first rather than increase your speed. The run should be completed at an appropriate pace whereby you are pushing yourself, but comfortable enough to last. Similarly, if you are training for a race, your practice runs should be mainly done outdoors rather than on a treadmill.

Safety first

It is advisable to alternate between hard and easy or rest days, as well as cross-train like swimming or strengthening for the lower limbs and core. If a long break was taken, start with a lower intensity run before getting back to your previous intensity. Starting from a walk or a walk-jog may also be better for those with chronic diseases, past injuries and those who have never been active before. These concepts might take some time to grasp, but it is important especially for new runners to experience and learn how to pace themselves in their training regime. Start now to offset the feasting season!

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE ON CAMPUS

By: Tan Jixuan, SP Student
Melissa Lim, SP Student

Exercise is Medicine® on Campus (EIM-OC) is a program calling upon universities and colleges to engage in the promotion of physical activity in campus as a vital sign of health. It aims to incorporate physical activities into lifestyle of the students so as to improve their physical fitness, as well as to cultivate the good habit of keeping themselves healthy while they are still young. Adequate physical activity is essential for prevention of chronic diseases, which are prevalent in young adults these days. Thus, it is never too late to start early.

This year, Exercise is Medicine Singapore (EIMS) worked closely with Singapore Polytechnic to launch the EIMS on Campus for the very first time in Singapore. The program was first promoted through setting up a booth during the annual relay run in campus, namely Poly 50. Brochures and other materials were handed to students emphasizing on the importance of exercising.

A survey was then conducted to explore physical activity habits of the students in Singapore Polytechnic, motivating factors and barriers to exercise, as well as their knowledge on exercise benefits. Through analysis of the survey results, 76.8% of the respondents met national physical activity guidelines. The motivating factors includes health benefits, weight loss, attractive incentives, as well as stress relief. To our surprise, factors such as awards, having a CCA, having more exercise facilities in school, and compulsory school activities, were not motivating factors. 94.7% felt that there were barriers to them exercising. Such factors are injuries, poor weather conditions and having no determination. Through the survey, we also found out that students are interested in workshops targeted in increasing physical activity.

The EIMS on Campus team will be working closely with Singapore Polytechnic towards increasing physical activity in students by reinforcing motivating factors and breaking down barriers.

EIM COURSES

By: Dr. Mark Stoutenberg

On behalf of the EIMS teaching faculty, would like to thank all of you who have participated in our courses in 2015. We hope that you have found the contents of our courses and the learning resources provided useful, informative and relevant to your daily clinical practice.

2016 will definitely be a more exciting year for us. We have revised the curriculum contents for our courses in 2015 and published the Exercise is Medicine Singapore Exercise Prescription Guide in 2015, which is now available on sale. Our courses are now more inclusive, and we are inviting all allied healthcare professionals to attend and be certified at our EIMS Allied Healthcare Professionals' Courses planned this year. In addition, we would also like to welcome the medical officers from the Singapore Armed Forces, as well as the SingHealth Family Medicine residents on board, as we have now scheduled more courses for these physicians who have expressed their interest to master the skills of exercise prescription.

More details and information regarding the courses and the sale of our learning manuals will be available at our website: **www.eims.sg**

For enquires and feedbacks, pls email us at: **admin@eims.sg**

For more information on EIMS, visit our **website: www.eims.sg**

Like us on Facebook EIMSingapore

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EIMSINGAPORE