Workouts on the Go for health!

Lack of time is often the first excuse people have for not being physically active. Having a healthy lifestyle should not only be confined to an exercise facility or gym. In this seminar, participants were shown exercises they could do at home, in the office or when traveling. A combination of different exercises that focused on improving aerobic ability, strength, flexibility and balance were described and demonstrated, which provided participants ideas on how to be physically active anywhere and anytime.

The seminar started off with an introduction of common exercises that people can do at a gym or fitness centre. IHP’s Exercise Specialist Kevin Tang explained the value of such exercises; however, they do require equipment primarily found at fitness centres. Many of these exercises can be adapted, allowing them to be done anywhere with simple household equipment or even your own bodyweight.

Kevin showed the participants a simple training programme consisting of a warm-up with dynamic stretching, aerobic exercises, muscle strength exercises and a cool down with static stretching. The table below shows a recommended training programme of exercises that can be done anywhere without expensive equipment.

| Exercises involved                                                                 | Warm up with dynamic stretching: Active functional exercises in which you move your limbs through the full, natural and functional range of motion. Suggested exercises such as walking lunge, high knee drill and butt kicks (lower limb muscles group) | Aerobic exercise: Walking, biking or hiking for 20 minutes or repeated exercises in limited space such as marching for 60-90 seconds each time (either standing up or sitting down on chair). Progression exercise such as matching with arm swing or matching with arm lateral raise (upper and lower body muscles groups) | Muscle strength/endurance exercise: Upper body major muscle groups training for: • chest - push up • shoulder - shoulder press • back - bent row • Core muscle groups training for: • abdominal - core rotation and side bend • Lower body major muscle groups training for: • quads - squat • hamstring - lunge • glutes - deadlift Muscular endurance training: 12 to 15 repetitions at 2 to 3 sets (can change to overload muscle strength training for 8 to 10 repetitions if you have heavier equipment with good technique after practice) | Stretching and cool down: Reduction in muscle and joint stiffness by doing 10 to 15 seconds of each stretching exercise for 2 sets each time |
| Programme setting                                                                  | Due to the limited of time for doing dynamic warm up and aerobic exercise, try to do 10 to 20 mins in total with your own body weight | 6 to 8 different muscle group exercises by using simple equipment (towel, water bottle) | 5 to 10 mins of static stretching in total |

Kevin concluded the seminar with the message that exercising for 30 minutes, three times per week is beneficial for all ages, whilst stretching exercises can prevent muscle tightness and fatigue. Kevin also stressed the importance of taking short breaks from sitting in a chair at the computer and becoming more physically active throughout the day during the long working hours, which also helps with releasing stress. Just getting up and walking every 15-30 minutes, even with a short walk to the rest room or to the water cooler, or using the stairs instead of the lift, can make a big difference over a year.