

## Negative Six Degrees of Separation



I've lived in Wisconsin all my life. As a Midwest gal I've had to adapt to the different seasons that we're dealt with. I consider myself pretty active and when winter rolls around I have to fight the urge to hibernate and try to avoid putting on the extra layer (i.e. weight) just to stay warm. Last year I was between 8-9 months pregnant when we received some brutal snow. So I decided to embrace the winter and stay as active as I could. In turn, I rented some snow shoes from REI and tackled some great trails. I was also a week and a half overdue so I was also trying to speed up the process of my son's meet and greet.

This winter I decided to have the same mind set, but be more adventurous. I decided to try snowboarding again. It had been quite some time since I had tried, but I still wanted to attack the hills. About three weeks ago it was a pretty cruel winter evening. We had freezing rain, horrible wind and it was negative 6 degrees out. To say it was cold is an understatement. As I was in my daring state of mind(that's what I'm calling it these days), I made my way out to the ski hills, got geared up and made my way up the hill to traverse my way down. I was doing pretty well, despite the wicked wind that was freezing my upper lip to my gums; even talking was a hard task. I chose to go down one last run before heading inside to thaw out. That one "last" run became my biggest challenge yet.

While attempting my last traverse, the hill was extremely slick so I got some major speed that I couldn't control. I fell forward landing on my clavicle and shoulder and kept rolling. I finally landed face up and my left arm totally immobile. I wish I could say I was trying an impressive trick, but that wasn't the case. To sum up the night I had the luxury of the ski patrol's services and I had to go to the emergency room. I was diagnosed with a separated shoulder and a rotator cuff injury. Mind you, I have a walking one year old to take care of and Personal Training and Bootcamp sessions to instruct. This meant: a lot of assistance doing daily tasks, Physical Therapy, toning down my normal high intensity workouts, and working hard on a safe and smooth recovery...what pressure!

Because of this obstacle I've endured, I've learned a lot and I wanted to provide you with an alternative to your workouts if you ever have an upper body injury (which I hope you never have to experience). I can now relate to some of my clients who battle rotator cuff injuries or recovery. There was no way that I would allow my workouts to be sacrificed, so I've included some tips and what my workouts have consisted of for the last three weeks. Feel free to modify the workout plan to cater to your own situation. I've also gone into detail of one of my lower body programs. Good luck and have a fast and smooth recovery.

#### Fitness Tips:

1. Perfect your nutrition: Because you may be limited with your normal workout program, take this time to better your nutrition or maintain it. Just because you have more constrictions with your workouts, don't let that be a reason to start bad nutrition habits.
2. At-home Physical Therapy: Do not neglect your exercises your Physical Therapist assigns you. Even if they seem simple, or your arm is feeling better. Do it! It will help you in the long run.
3. Fast pace strength training: So you can only work on your lower body? Don't let that bring you down. Speed things up. Take less time to rest. You can even pick the pace up as you perform your exercises. However, make sure your form stays intact. This will keep the heart rate up and help you burn calories.

#### **Weekly Workout Plan for a Separated shoulder...Ouch!**

##### **Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays:**

Physical Therapy exercises two times a day (May be different for your specific condition)

Recumbent Bike-35 minutes of Hill work (intervals) at a higher resistance

Note: I normally do Hill walking on the treadmill on Wednesdays instead of the recumbent. I take the ramp up to about 12.0 and set a pace where I can still remove my hands and not fall off. Go for 15 minutes, rest at a flat for 5 minutes and finish up your last hill for 15 minutes.

Abdominal work-15 minutes, with very little to no breaks.

## **Tuesdays/Thursdays:**

Physical Therapy exercises two times a day (May be different for your specific condition)

Stair Master-35 minutes of Interval Hill work at a high resistance.....this makes me sweat! Try not to hang on the machine. You should still be able to maintain great posture.

Lower Body Strength Training-30 minutes

Note: On Thursdays I trade the free weight training with machines. I do more of a heavy weight lifting routine, working on maximum fatigue.

## **Tuesdays Lower Body Program:**

Depending on your condition, you may be able to hold one weight. Listen to your body and know your limits. If it hurts....STOP.

Power Lunges-12-24 reps

Deadlifts-15-25 reps

One Leg squats-15-20 reps each leg

Repeat above three exercises 3 times

Deep squats-15-25 reps at a faster pace

Calf raises: 15 slow and 25 fast pulses

One leg squats (off the side of a bench or step)-15-25 reps each side

Repeat above three exercises 3 times

Stability ball squats-15-20 squats and one 30sec-60sec squat hold

Cable Lateral Leg lifts-15-25 reps each leg

One leg step or bench step ups-15-25 reps each leg

Repeat above three exercises 3 times

If you have any questions about the program please contact me for more information,  
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