

Is your body ready to return to the gym? Speak to an exercise professional first

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As gyms start to re-open following coronavirus restrictions, Australians can finally resume previous workouts they may not have continued during the almost 3-month lockdown period, or perhaps continue an exercise routine they started during COVID-19 on their own and unsupervised.

If you have not completed any exercise within the last three months, the chances are that you will need a review of where your current exercise capacity is at. Even if you have completed some at-home workouts, your body may not spring back as you might expect once you step foot back in the gym.

Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) wants to remind those heading back to their usual workouts of the importance of starting slow and getting the right advice before jumping back into their gym routine.

“Whilst protecting ourselves and other people from the COVID-19 virus is important at the gym, we also need to make sure that we are exercising right for our current health and physical fitness because, for some, this may have changed significantly over the lockdown period,” says Anita Hobson-Powell, ESSA Chief Executive Officer.

“Although we are happy to see gyms slowly re-open across the country, by returning to a new or existing workout program too hard or too fast without a review of your current physical fitness status, some individuals may be placing their body at increased risk of serious injury which could be easily prevented with the right advice.”

Even for those who completed at-home workouts during COVID-19 confinement, they will still experience ‘detraining’ as a consequence of not having access to complete their workouts at their usual accomplished intensity.

“Research tells us that detraining can occur [after just two weeks of not training](#) in your usual manner with the same level weights and intensity, and affects your muscle strength, size and endurance. Detraining can lead to injuries if the person attempts to jump straight back into their previous exercise routine after a period of no training or decrease in training load,” adds Anita.

“We recommend that whether Aussies are returning to the gym after a break or kicking off a new exercise routine post-lockdown, they should consider talking to an accredited exercise professional for individualised advice to gradually introduce exercises and intensity of workouts to reduce their risk of injury.”

Accredited Exercise Scientists (AES) are exercise professionals with at least 3-years of degree level training who use exercise to improve health, well-being and fitness. Speaking to an Accredited Exercise Scientist before kickstarting a new gym program can help to ensure you keep yourself safe by exercising right for your current health and physical fitness.

“With the exception of those who had the ability to utilise a home gym and continue training at the exact same level and intensity, the fitness levels of most Australians have likely changed since lockdown. Especially for those

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lifting weights, if you have not maintained your strength training routine during the past few months, jumping right back into an existing program at the gym could be potentially unsafe and cause serious injury,” says Nardine Presland, Accredited Exercise Scientist.

“Speak to an expert – An Accredited Exercise Scientist or an Accredited Exercise Physiologist can work with you to make sure that you know how to exercise right for your health and fitness levels after lockdown and help to avoid any injuries in the gym.”

To find an accredited exercise professional in your area, visit the online [ESSA Search Function](#).

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