No Pain, No Gain Myth Leads to Harmful Strain

Last week we gave you some suggestions that will help you stay on a good exercise program. The next few articles will add some more depth to each of the suggestions. This article will examine the results if an individual does not start slowly. For too long, no pain, no gain was an “in” word in exercise. People were suggesting that the faster you start and the harder you work out from the beginning, the better the results would be.

Nothing could be further from the truth. As a matter of fact, no pain, no gain has a negative effect on you. Here is what basically happens. When you start out doing too much, too soon, too fast, you may feel tired and feel like you have experienced a good workout. However, the next day you will feel some soreness and the following or second day you will feel like “partial rigormortis,” has set in (I am sure we have all experienced this). This is due to damaged z-lines or end plates in the sarcomeres. It takes between 30 and 45 days for these plates to repair.

The problem with this occurring is that the body doesn’t like it and says, “He or she is trying to kill me again.” This leads to the basic starvation/survival mode. Because of this, the body has to go into action to prevent you from continuing to do this.

The body protects itself by storing body fat. As a result, the body will take amino acid that should be used for tissue repair of muscle and will convert this protein to body fat as preparation for the next workout. The body also uses fluid retention as a protective device.

As an example, if you sprain your ankle, some of the swelling occurs to form its own cast so you won’t use the ankle. Likewise, if you overuse a muscle and “strain” it, your body will retain fluid in the area (partial swelling) to lower your neurological response and prevent you from using the affected area properly.

Because of all this, the body has to work harder to recover, and lowers it’s level of fitness. Physiological and psychological depression starts to occur and although you continue to work out, because recovery is harder than it should be, your body decides
three or four weeks later it can’t handle this recovery properly. As a result, you decide that exercise is not for you and you quit.

Of course, this was not what you wanted to happen and you are discouraged. You should be! But wait, all is not lost! By starting the program properly, positive results happen. In the next article, we will tell you how the results occur positively if you start slowly.