FAST FACT
D-FEND: Diet, food, exercise, and nutrition during social distancing

Exercise and Your Immune System

A study published in 2016 states that exercise can enhance and impair immunity; depending on whether the exercise is joyful or stressful. Here are some facts about their interactions

**Perks of Exercise towards the Immune System**
- Increased respiration can help move bacteria out of the lungs and airways.
- Increased white blood cells and antibodies that help the immune system fight off disease may detect illness earlier as they move faster and more often during exercise.
- Increased body temperature with exercise may help prevent bacteria from growing because the temperature can help the body fight infection (like a fever).

**More is Not Better**
- Like everything, moderate is the key. People who already exercise should not do more just to increase their immunity. Excessive long-term exercise (like marathon running and intense gym training) can actually cause harm if the proper rest and recovery is not met.

**How Much is Enough?**
- Studies have shown that people who follow a moderately energetic lifestyle, benefit most from starting (and sticking to) an exercise program. Regular, moderate intensity exercise can amplify natural killer cell function to increase resistance to both viral infections and help prevent the formation of malignant cells.

**Exercise Options to Boost Immune Health**
- Bicycling with your children a few times a week
- Taking daily 20 to 30 minute walks
- Muscle training every other day
- Aerobic exercises; those who do this type of exercise five or more days of the week have proven to lower their risk of a common cold by more than 40% over a 12-week period.

The development of even a cold can throw your body off track. At the first symptom, avoid intense training and allow your body to rest so it can focus energy on fighting off the cold or illness. If you continue working out, you will weaken your immune system. It is best to miss a week at the gym and allow proper rest and recovery for your body!

*EXERCISE WILL NOT PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF COVID-19*