



Welcome back ladies!

As the official fitness partner of the AWGA for the past 6 seasons, I have had many questions posed to me regarding current women's health issues and concerns. Year after year seems to bring much of the same theme: weight loss, distance off the tee, pain prevention, anti-aging exercises.

I decided to Google some names of prominent current LPGA players (Annika, Michelle Wie, Christie Kerr, Suzann Pettersen) as well as a few from the past (Judy Rankin, Nancy Lopez, Betsy King). I definitely found differences in what was written about the influence of health and fitness on the sport of golf as opposed to straight practice of the fundamentals and mechanics of the swing. Female players these days are much more in tune with golf as a sport and spend more time preventing pain and injury instead of passively waiting until the injury strikes then try to "play through the pain".

As the start of the 2011 year is now upon us, let's all as women of the AWGA make a pact to help each other adhere to some healthy lifestyle changes which will make us more ***fit for golf AND fit for life!***

1) **Let's lift weights!** One of the biggest differences between men and women golfers is our overall muscle strength, especially in the upper body. As we age, we lose even more muscle mass which may lead to more injury in our wrists, elbows, and shoulders due to over-swinging to compensate for lack of distance. Resistance exercises also are best to help build bone and prevent osteoporosis. Purchasing a set of 3, 5, 8, and 10lb dumbbells for your home would be a great start. Also, heavy balls (medicine balls) are fast becoming a staple around home gyms. It literally takes just a few minutes each day! Get a partner, grab a routine, focus on form and control, and just do it!

2) **Become more balanced!** Accidental falling is a main concern for injury as we age. During the golf swing, we must maintain our posture while transferring our weight. It is a very coordinated effort to stay aware of our center of gravity and stay upright. Many of my clients see improvements in their balance within the first day of practice! The best way to start working on balance is to stand on one leg, then work toward closing your eyes. Stability balls are fabulous, inexpensive pieces of equipment for balance training.

3) **Pack our bags!** FACT: If we regularly play a full round of golf (over 4 hours) WITHOUT eating anything, we are training our metabolism to slow down and conserve energy (fat). We need to make it an absolute habit to always have high fiber bars, protein bars, fruit, and nuts in our bags. It is not a bonus or something for us to be proud of when we “last” over 4 hours without eating. Golf is a sport and should be treated as such. For us, as women, to lose weight and fight our metabolic slump and widened midsections, we must treat nutrition as the science that it is. Eat protein/fiber based snacks every 2 hours on a daily basis. If you are walking the course, it is even more important to maintain energy eating and sipping water at least every other hole. ****Yes....I AM recommending bringing our own food to the course. Until golf course snack carts take the next step to have healthy fuel on their carts instead of cheap, high calorie, low-nutrient snacks, it is our duty to put our own health and wellness first.*

4) **Stand tall and proud as we walk!** The way we carry our bodies, whether walking from our car into the pro shop, from our cart to the ball, or even just around our houses says a lot about how we feel about ourselves and have a long term impact on our skeletal system and joints. Let's be more aware of our own movements this season. Walk with our head a little taller and abdominals a little tighter which lifts weight off of our hips, knees and ankles. Looking at the ground as we walk shows uncertainty and pulls our shoulders forward into a permanent “C” posture. When walking, take slightly larger, purposeful steps with heels touching the ground first, shoulders back, and a smile on our face! Gait analysis is the first step in rehabilitation and it starts the moment our feet hit the floor in the morning!

Ladies, I am honored to be your AWGA fitness coach. Let's make this season our healthiest yet! Please do not hesitate to call or email me at any point if you have questions regarding the health of your body and your game. That is why I am here!

Yours in golf and fitness,

Mindi Boysen, TPI CGFI

Mindi Boysen is the official AWGA fitness partner. She is a TPI Level III certified golf fitness coach and owner of *"Fit For Golf! Fit For Life!"*. Her book, *Synergistic Golf*, contains additional exercises and outlines each day of the year with golf performance & life enhancing tips while the 3 DVD series demonstrates flexibility, strength, and stability exercises used in the golf swing. Mindi is available for private or group golf fitness training as well as seminars and nutritional consultations. Contact her at (480)203-6228 or mindifitforgolfusa.com or visit her site at www.fitforgolfusa.com