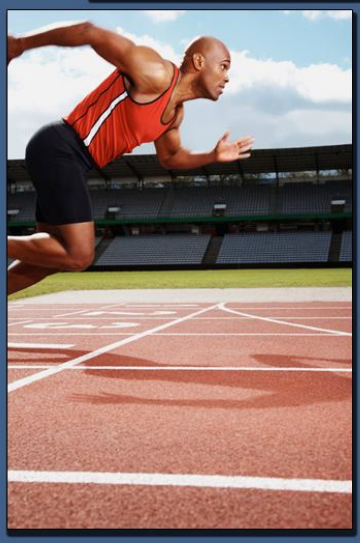
8 Steps to Unraveling Your Muscle Imbalances

Speed up Your Rehab, Training and Performance Results



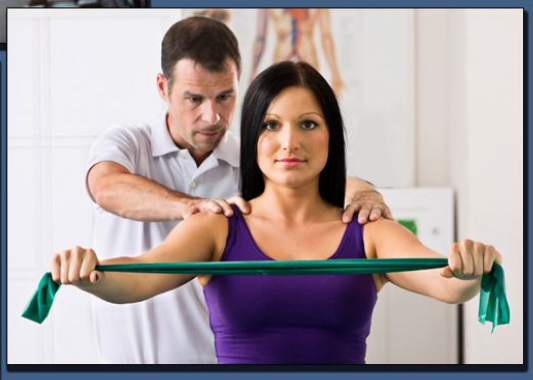


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Table of Contents

Getting Started

This is Rick Kaselj. I really want to thank you for joining me.

So, the title of this report is **8 Steps to Unraveling Your Muscle Imbalances**.

I am very excited to share with you as I know this is a major reason why you or your clients are not overcoming their injuries, busting through their fitness plateaus and achieving maximal results.

Before I go into the meat of things. Let's me start with a little bit of a background in my story and who I was.

Who is this Rick Guy?

If you want to get to the meat and potatoes of this report, skip this section.

If you want to learn more about the guy who wrote this report, read on.

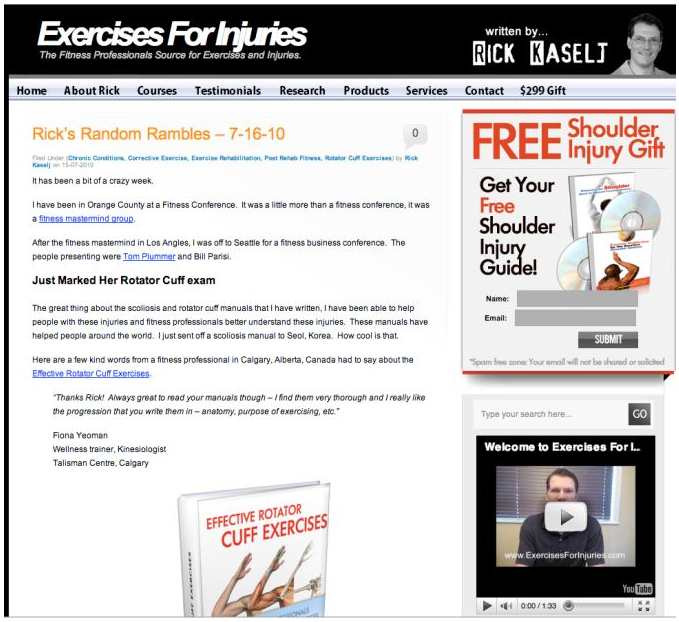
My name is **Rick Kaselj**. I have an academic background and done some university education. So, I've got my bachelor's degree in kinesiology, a master's of science in exercise science with a focus on therapeutic exercise and corrective exercise.

I work in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.

Over the last 16 years I've kind of worked in a variety of settings, physical therapy clinics, personal training studios, gyms, fitness center, recreation center, large rehab center. So, I worked in all kinds of places when it comes to designing exercise programs for people, and **my big focus is designing exercise programs for people with injuries**.

Now, I also run all kinds of live courses and webinars when it relates to exercise and injuries. I've done that for about 11 years and presented to over 5,000 fitness professionals. I do a ton of writing

when it comes to books and manuals for the public and fitness professionals when it relates to exercise and injuries.



Plus I run a very popular blog called "Exercises for Injuries" which I encourage you to swing by and visit. It gives tons of free information to help you with your clients that have injuries.

When people asked me why I focus on injuries, I reply, **who doesn't have an old nagging injury?**

Getting Into the Meat & Potatoes

Let's get into the meat and potatoes of the report. So, looking at the problem that I see so often, I want to ask you this:

Do you have these problems when it relates to your clients?

#1 - Do your clients have problems overcoming injuries?

Do they have these nagging injuries that just don't seem to go away or go away for a little bit, and then they end up coming back again?

Are these nagging injuries slowing them down on how hard they can work, how hard they can end up pushing themselves in your workouts and in their exercise fitness health endeavors?

#2 - Do you have clients that are hitting fitness plateaus?

They've been with you for a while. They've been working hard, training hard, being consistent, but they're just plateauing out, and they're just not getting the results that they want. The results have kind of stopped.

#3 - Do you have clients that are getting injuries with training with you or doing your exercise program?

They're starting to get aches and pains and nagging injuries that are kind of slowing them down from working hard with you and getting the fitness results that they want.

So, with me those are problems that I was having. I was having clients that were having a difficult time overcoming those nagging

injuries. They're hitting fitness plateaus, and sometimes with that training they would end up getting a nagging injury.

I've kind of explained the problem that I was having, and I'm wondering if you have the same problem as I had.

As I mentioned before, I have all kinds of academic background, gone to school for four years for an undergraduate degree and then a year for a master's degree. So, I've done all this education.

When I started, I was in university. I was training people while I was going to university, and then when I finished up university I **got my personal training certification**. I was training clients, and I was doing good, and I was getting good results but not 100 percent results, not getting all the results that my clients wanted.

What lead me to go **get my master's degree** was I wanted to learn more, get more tools and skills in order to help my clients get the fastest and best results.

I went and did my master's degree, focused on corrective exercise and therapeutic exercise in hopes that that was the missing piece to my exercise toolbox.

With all that schooling, **I did find things helped, but still I was not getting all the results my clients wanted**.

I knew I was missing something, missing something from my exercise toolbox.

What did I do?

I ended up searching.

I went to the research articles and journals and looked for solutions.

From my search, I ended up finding the answers I was looking for. I ended up finding the missing piece to my exercise toolbox.

I found the **missing piece was muscle imbalances.**

I was focusing in on strength, cardiovascular and flexibility with my clients, and I was doing good. I was getting good results, but still the best results or the maximum results just weren't happening.

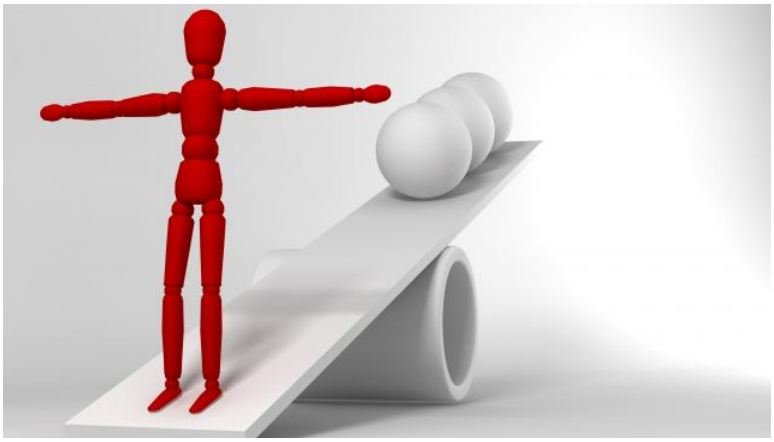
Even with my master's degree and focus on corrective exercise and therapeutic exercise, it still wasn't enough.

After searching and fully understanding what muscle imbalances are, this has given my clients the best and maximal results when it comes to training with myself.

In the next few pages, I want to clarify what muscle imbalance are.

Remember..

I'm not just talking about stretching tight muscles or strengthening weak muscles or just doing corrective exercises.



I've taught those principles, stretching tight muscles and strengthening weak muscles. You get some results, but you don't get the best results doing it that way.

Even with corrective exercise, I spent a year learning the ins and outs of it. It did help, but still there was a number of things that were missing from corrective exercise.

How Can Muscle Imbalances Be the Issue?

Lets go through how muscle imbalances can be affecting you or your client.

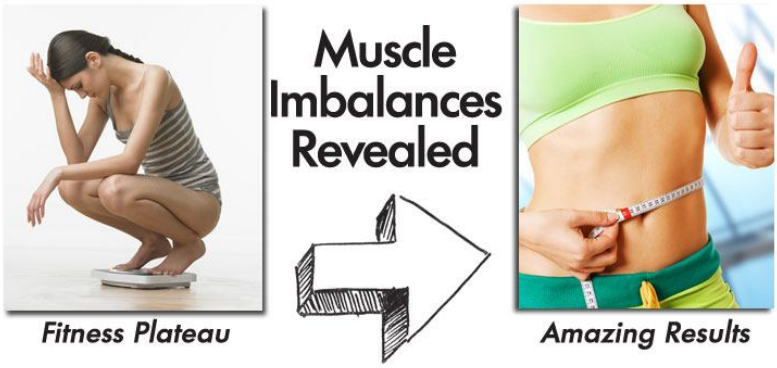
If we look at injuries - it could be aches and pains, an old injury, an injury that your client has had. They've seen a physical therapist, a doctor. Now they've been kind cleared to start an exercise program. They want to fully overcome that old injury. It's that nagging injury that goes and comes back. It's those aches and pains that are not allowing your client to push a little bit harder.

Now, what I've found is if I focused on muscle imbalances and identify muscle imbalances within my clients and address those muscle imbalances, I was able to get my clients back to doing what they loved doing.

For example, I have a number of clients that love recreationally running and they weren't able to run because of sore knees or sloppy ankles, and with me incorporating a couple principles when it comes

to muscle imbalances and incorporating just a couple exercises in their exercise program and being very specific on where I put those exercises in their exercise program; what time during the day and how many times during the week, that ended up helping them get back to running.

I'm quite sure you can think of a client or two that is being slowed down by injuries, and you might want to think - looking at muscle imbalances, that might be the piece that you're missing that can help your client get back to what they love doing.



Fitness plateaus - I see this a lot. One of the big reasons why fitness professionals aren't seeing the results with their clients is fitness plateaus.

The client is working hard, they're doing all the things that you say they should, they're consistent, they're doing great things away from you, they're doing great things when it comes to nutrition, but they're not getting the results as quickly as they want. Looking at muscle

imbalances, might be one of the reasons why they're not getting amazing results.

What I mean is:

- You've got to look and see what their stability is within their bodies?

- How is their endurance when it relates to their body?

- How is their alignment when it relates to their body?

- How is the mobility when it relates to their body?

Addressing all these things will improve their body and allow them to bust through fitness plateaus.

Risk of injury - a lot of times, let's say with an older clients, they're fearful of starting an exercise program and potentially having it lead to an injuries.

And looking at these clients, when it relates to muscle imbalances, this is something that's definitely is going to help them live injury free.

I am going to ask these questions when it relates to muscle imbalances:

- How is their balance when it relates to ankle, knee, and hip movement?

- How is their alignment when it comes to their lower leg?

- How is the stability when it relates to their knee?

You need to end up looking at all of these things and adding a couple exercises here and there to their exercise program to help them out, in order to overcome muscle imbalances and live injury free.

What About Bootcampers & Muscle Imbalances?

Even when it comes to bootcamps, your boot campers might have aches and pains and these aches and pains are slowing them down from pushing harder. These aches and pains might be coming from the workout you have given them.

Your campers are working hard and their bodies aren't recovering fast enough therefore they can push their body hard enough.

They might end up having trigger points within their calves or their quads that aren't recovering quick enough in order to allow them to push harder in the next boot camp class.

They might not have the mobility when it comes to in their ankles and in their hips to get full range of motion when it comes to squats and lunges in order to burn the most calories, get the most benefit out of those exercises - or they might end up having poor alignment when it comes to their foot, ankle, and hip.

It's important to address muscle imbalances when it relates to your boot campers.

Now, I'm not saying do a 45-minute session when it comes to addressing muscle imbalances. But a lot of times, you can end up doing it in the warm up, you can end up doing it in the cool down part of the boot camp or you can end up doing a 5-minute quick assessment with one of your boot camps or a group of your boot camps in order to give them the right exercises to help them out.

You can do a self-assessment to your boot campers and if they fail the self-assessment, you give them an exercise that they need to do at home in the evening in order to help prepare their bodies for the next day.

How to Fix it All?

Now, getting to how to fix all of this.

Lets break it down a little bit more for you and giving you a really good analogy that makes it simple and easy for you to understand this concept.

What we want to try to do is move from imbalanced to balanced.

Remember - **imbalanced**.

Most of us or our clients come to us imbalanced and we want to move them to balanced.

I = Identification

Breaking imbalanced into ten points that you need to end up focusing in on. Let's start off with the first point, point number one.

Point number one is identification.

"I" is identification.

A lot of people might end up saying "Well, Rick, why don't you just call it assessment?"

Assessment is a common term that I end up using in my courses and a common term that I end up seeing when I'm reading the research or reading other fitness educator work. But when you kind of look at the definition of "assessment", the definition is " the act of ascertaining or fixing the value or worth of".

That kind of sounds like what I do, but what if we look at the word "identification"? "The act of designating or identifying something." That probably sounds a little more accurate at what I end up doing.

When is it an Assessment?

How I've ended up separating both of them, when it comes to assessment and identification...If I have a client, where I'm doing a

detailed assessment. For example if I am checking ranges of motion with a goniometer and collecting values, I call it an assessment.

When is it Identification?

If I am not measuring specific values and observing things, then I call it identification.

- *Identifying things that are imbalanced.*

- *Identifying things that aren't looking right.*

- *Identifying things that I need to address in the exercise program.*

M = Mobility

Now, getting to "M".

"M" is for mobility.

You might have not heard of mobility. I know if you're in the performance world, work with athletes, are a strength and conditioning coach, mobility is a very common practice with the clientele you work with and within your profession.

It's not as well known when it comes to fitness professionals, exercise enthusiasts and incorporating mobility identification techniques and mobility exercises.

What is Mobility?

Mobility is the proper movement of a joint. A lot of times, with our awkward postures, with our prolonged sitting, with our prolonged driving, with activities that we do over and over again, this ends up effecting our bodies.

And a lot of times, what we end up losing is the mobility in specific joints. The most common ones that are affected are in the thoracic spine.

In fitness you might end up using the full foam roller to roll over your thoracic spine in order to help the mobility in your thoracic spine.

Well, that's one technique when it comes to improving thoracic spine mobility. There are two more techniques that you should end up doing when it comes to the thoracic spine.

Other joints that lose mobility are the hips, working on the mobility of the hip.

How many clients have we seen like this?

You see they are a little flexed in the hips.

That's an observation or identification and might be a sign that that individual has poor mobility in the hip.

One other area to look at is the ankles. Ankles are often overlooked, but they are very important.

B = Breathing / Balance

Now we're getting to "B: Breathing and Balance".

Which “B” applies really depends on the area you're focusing in on.

In the Upper Body, Breathings is Important

I find that breathing tends to be a really big thing when it comes to the upper body.

If you think about it, how it is your posture changes when you're hyperventilating (breathing quickly).

How does your posture change when you've done a really hard interval and you're breathing heavy?

It ends up changing.

Heavy breathing ends up changing things. If you have poor breathing that's going change your posture. It's going to affect how the muscles activate in your upper body.

Now looking at the lower body, balance ends up being important.

In the Lower Body, Balance is Important

I know there's been lots of debate out there when it relates to balance and performance.

It's understood now that **focusing in on balance does not help when it relates to performance**. But still, it's important to focus on balance, especially with those unfit clients, the healthy population, and even the fit individual.

Incorporating some balance work is important in order to work on alignment in the lower body.

Balance exercises help:

- identify imbalances in the lower body
- used to check when it relates to mobility in the body
- to highlight different weaknesses in the body

A = Alignment

Now focusing on the "A" in imbalanced.

Why Not Just Call if Posture?

I know, I just switched things up with "identification" instead of "assessment" and now I'm going "alignment" instead of "posture."

And once again, if you look and go back at the definition of what "**posture**" is, it's "*a position of the body or of body parts*".

That makes sense if I'm going to assess posture or if I'm going to identify postural deviations.

The big thing is, our bodies tend to be in movement, so we might be static in order for identification or to highlight muscle imbalances.

A lot of times, our bodies are in movement when we're doing exercise, activities of daily living, doing things that we love or doing sports..

I find "alignment" ends up being a better word.

The definition of “alignment” is “the process of adjusting parts so that they are in proper relative position.” That sounds a lot better than "posture, " and it really complements "identification" which we talked about when it comes to the "I" in imbalanced.

Posture tends to be more static, but alignment tends to be more related to movement.

L = Lengthening

Now coving the 5th letter in “imbalanced”, the letter “L”.

Why Not Just Call it Stretching?
Here we go again.

I keep calling things differently.

Now once again, you're saying, “Rick, why didn't you just calling it "stretching?"

I find "stretching" is beneficial and helpful, but it doesn't cover everything.

When someone mentions stretching, we think of static stretching. An example is supporting the upper body, getting the body in good alignment, getting the foot position in good alignment, holding the position for a period of time, and working on stretching the tight muscle.

I find static stretching ends up being beneficial, and you often get an acute effect (a benefit right after).

It's something that I do, and it's something I get my clients to do.

But it's not the only thing that I do in order to help lengthen the muscles.

If we look at why we end up stretching, we end up having a muscle that's tight. It might have decreased its length, and what we're trying to do is increase that length back to a normal level. Static stretching is one of those things that will help lengthen, but it's not the only thing you have to do.

Dynamic flexibility is important. Static stretching is holding a position for a period of time, where the muscle is lengthened, but dynamic flexibility is taking the body through ranges of motion to a point where you end up feeling a light stretch.

Examples of dynamic stretching are leg swings in the sagittal plane (forward and back), in the frontal plane (side-to-side), or in a diagonal. You move the leg in that direction to a point where you feel a light stretch and then move it back.

With dynamic stretching, you do more and more repetitions in order lengthen the muscle . This ends up helping with lengthening. It ends up helping increase the length of the muscle that ends up being short.

Now how is dynamic warm-up different from dynamic flexibility?
A dynamic warm-up is taking the joints through a range of motion prior to the workout.

You are doing this to lubricate the joints, lightly stretch the joint and warm up the muscles.

It ends up being different.

Dynamic warm-up might be during your first set of the exercise you are doing.

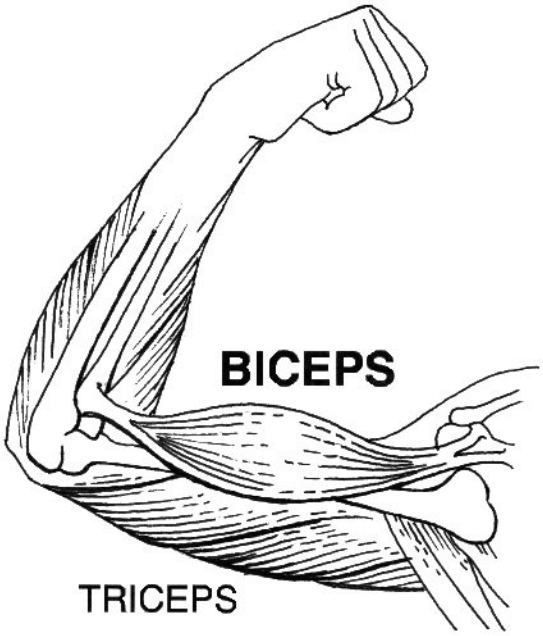
Now looking at **tissue resistance**, I find this is an interesting one.

With movements, let's say when is comes to flexion of the hip. If I'm trying to flex the hip (bringing the knee towards the chest), I'm going to reach some sort of point where I'm going to get tissue resistance from the hip extensors (muscles that bring the thigh back). The hip extensors are going to be lengthened, and if their length is shorter than ideal, I am going to have to create more force in the hip flexion muscles in order to overcome that tissue resistance in the hip extensors.

I find often times that that is ignored, yet it is important to address.

A = Activation

We want to make sure we're getting proper activation of different muscles in the body.



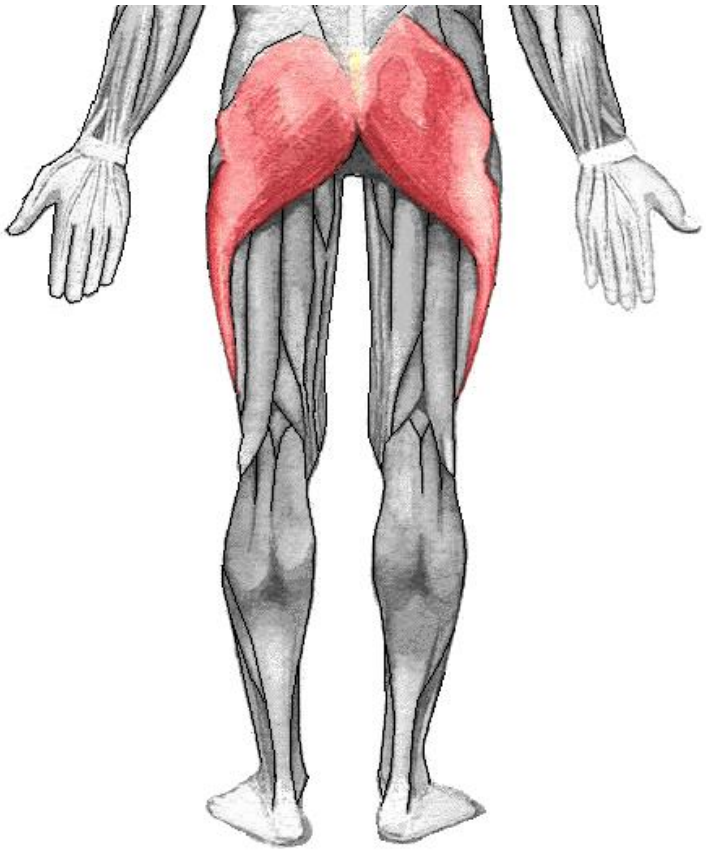
If we think about it, we have primary movers within the body and many times those muscles don't have issues when it relates to activation. Many times, it ends up being the stability muscles that have an issue with activation.

Many of the stabilizing muscles have poor activation. We want to make sure the proper muscles are firing during the movement or during the exercise. We want to make sure that there is proper sequence of muscle firing. You can definitely see this when it comes to hip extension (moving the thigh back) and hip abduction (moving the thigh to the side). A big thing when it comes to activation is isometric activation.

If we look at the stability of the hip. The hip needs stability in the frontal plane, side-to-side, and transverse plane (twisting). When someone stands on one leg, the muscles around the hip activate and provide stability to the hip.

One of the key muscles that provides stability to the hip is gluteus medius.

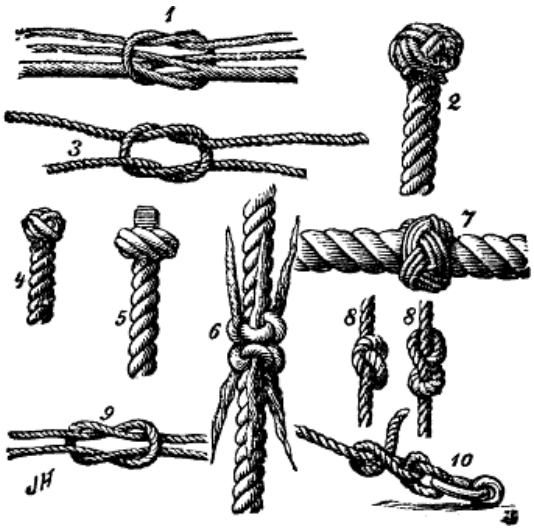
Gluteus medius needs to have the activation and the endurance in order to stabilize the hip. For many people they need an improvement in the activation of gluteus medius prior to improving the strength of gluteus medius.



K – Kneading / Knots

Now we go from "A" to "N: Kneading or Knots".

Sorry, I couldn't find a good "N" word.



If your clients often end up having knots in their muscles, especially in the lower body, this is something that needs to be addressed. This often times happens in the calf and hamstring

Some people will end up calling them trigger points and some people will end up calling them overactive tissue.

I find these trigger points or overactive tissue affect an individual when it relates to injuries, fitness plateaus, and injury prevention.

It's a key thing when it comes to muscle imbalances.

We need to address these trigger points with self-massage. This can be done by using a foam roller to massage the trigger points in order to improve the tissue quality of the muscle.

I find with this self-massage, once again, it tends to be quite standard in the athletic population, the professionals that work with athletes, for example, sports medicine doctors, sports physical therapists, sports chiropractors, strength and conditioning coaches--it tends to be common practice with athletes and those professions, but a lot of times it is ignored or not done when it comes to the fitness profession.

C = Core Stability

Now moving on to "C: Core Stability".

Looking at the core stability of key areas when it comes to the body.

In the Shoulder, Scapular Stabilization Exercises are Vital

When it comes to the shoulder, specifically the scapula, many times there is muscle imbalances in these areas that end up affecting your shoulder and neck.

In an exercise program, the lower back, inner unit of the core and outer unit of the core need to be addressed.

For the inner unit, the focus would be activation and endurance of it.

For the lower back and outer unit, the focus would be resisting motion, transferring force and creating force.

Looking at the knee, we would want do work on the core stability muscles in the knee.

The core muscles in the knee are called Vastus Medialis Oliquus (VMO).

VMO is a muscle that provides stability to the knee. With many people, especially if they have had a knee injury, this muscle does not activate properly which increases the risk of re-injury of the knee, decreases the performance of knee exercises and leads to muscle imbalances.

Do you train the core like this?

E = Endurance

I find a lot of times the endurance part is missing and this ends up being an issue and ends up leading to injuries, fitness plateaus and ends up potential leading to injury.

Many times people will focus on the tempo of 2-1-2.

Switching up the tempo ends up helping you address muscle imbalances.

Focusing on higher repetitions, a little lower load in order to focus on the endurance side of things. I find this endurance part to be very important.

Let's say when it comes to the general population, unfit population and rehab population, endurance is important.

D = Dimensional

OK. Now to the last letter, “D”.

“D” is the tenth step in “imbalanced” or moving your from imbalance to balance.

With “D”, I am referring to dimensional training.

If you look at our core movements; push, pull, squat, lunge and crunch.

I put the crunch in there kind of fun.

If you look at the four-core movement; push, pull squat and lunge all of these movements are in the sagittal plane (forward and back).

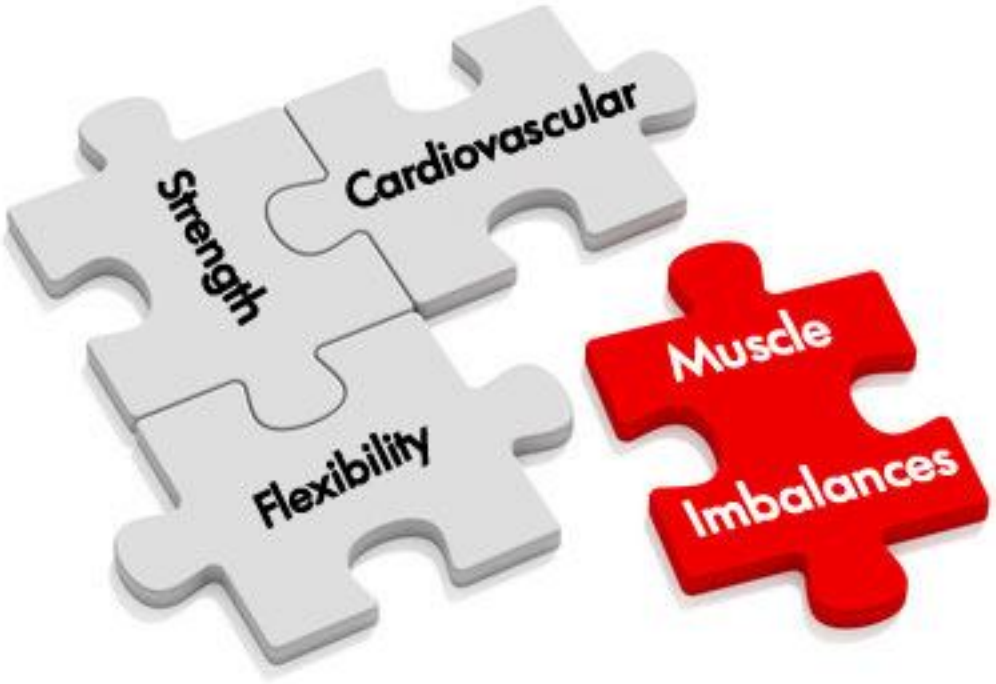
We need to work much more than the sagittal plane.

If we look at a lunge movement. The movement may end up being in the sagittal plane but our body needs to work in the other planes of movement.

We need to have stability in the frontal plane in order to prevent any movement from side to side. Plus we need stability in the transverse plane in order to prevent twisting

In order to move the body from imbalanced to balanced, we need to consider training the body in all three planes of movement.

8 Steps to Unraveling Your Muscle Imbalances



We have just gone through how to unravel your muscle imbalances. I find, not addressing muscle imbalances is the number one training mistake I see. Hopefully I have shown you from the ten points we went through from the typical person that is imbalance.

You can see how this is affecting yourself or your client. This can lead injuries and fitness plateaus.

Also earlier in the report, we kind of talked in more detail of how the number one mistake is affecting your clients and affecting them in those three areas.

We also talked about how the bootcamp individual is not getting the maximal result from the boot camp due to bootcamps.

In a few of the page we talked about the ten points within the word imbalance that are things that you need to address in order to move Yourself or your clients from imbalanced to balanced. If you are looking for a program that will help you better understand muscle imbalances check out Muscle Imbalances Revealed by CLICKING HERE.

Last Word

I want to thank you for downloading this special report and reading it.

I hope it opened your eyes to how you can start getting better results with your clients.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at rick (at)exercisesforinjuries.com

Talk to you soon.

Rick Kaselj

Special thank you to: Francesco Marino, Michelle Meiklejohn, graur razvan ionut, jscreationzs, Graeme Weatherston, renjith Krishnan, luigi diamant, djcodrin, Suat Eman, Simon Howden of FreeDigitalPhotos.net for their images. / Edition 1 – July 16, 2010