



WHEN THE COLD COMES CALLING!

Roger Jones

*BSc (Exercise & Sports Science)
Masters of Exercise Science (Strength & Conditioning)
Diploma of Remedial Massage | Cert IV Fitness Master Trainer
Level 1 Olympic Weightlifting and Sports Power Coach (AWF)
ESSAM and NSCA member*

"... Should I or shouldn't I exercise? That is the question!"

THIS IS THE RHETORIC SURROUNDING THOSE SUFFERING FROM THE COLD OR FLU, WHEN CONTEMPLATING WHETHER OR NOT TO EXERCISE.

A wise person once told me "if it's below the neck and in the chest, take a rest."

Basically, if the common cold strikes and it is contained above the neck, runny nose, tickly throat, then you can continue your exercise regime but consider lowering the intensity.

US researchers studied people who exhibited an upper respiratory tract infection or "head cold" over 10 days. They compared people who exercised for 40 minutes every second day with people who didn't exercise at all. They found no difference in symptoms at the end of the study, and that exercising with a minor cold did not alter the severity or duration of the illness.

Although if you're chesty, or suffering fever, aches and pain, fatigue, it's best to rest and avoid physical activity that will exacerbate your condition. Take a rest and progressively build up your exercise when you are feeling better.

Listen to your body, if you start your session and you feel ok as you warm up, continue on. Otherwise, take a break and recover.

But out of respect of others, maybe best avoid the gym if you feel cold or flu symptoms coming on, complete the session at home or take the dog for a walk.

Weidner TG, Cranston T, Schurr T, Kaminsky LA. The effect of exercise training on the severity and duration of a viral upper respiratory illness. Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise. 1998; 30(11):1578-1583.