Fitness Center Protocols

The North Salem Fitness Center is open to students, faculty and staff. Children under 12 are not allowed to use the facility.

The following are not permitted in the Fitness Center:
- Personal items
- Bags
- Drinks. Only water in a sealable, plastic container is allowed.
- Food

The stereo is controlled by the fitness center. Personal music devises can only be used with headphones.

Dress Attire:
- Proper athletic attire must be worn at all times.
- Absolutely no sandals, open-toed shoes or open-backed shoes are permitted.
- Shirts must be worn at all times.
- No jeans or jean shorts allowed.

Weight Training Area Protocol:
- To be eligible to use the facility, you must complete the fitness room training and safety program.
- All weight training should be performed in a controlled, safe manner.
- Patrons are asked to wipe down equipment after each use.
- Patrons should use extreme caution when lifting weights to avoid potential injury to themselves or others.
- Use of equipment other than its designed function is prohibited.
- Return weights/dumbbells to tree or rack.
- Weights may not be left on a bar against the wall, benches or other equipment.
- Weights or dumbbells may not be dropped on the floor or benches.

Cardio Vascular Area Protocol:
- All patrons are required to wipe down cardio equipment after each use.
- Fitness wipes or paper towels and disinfecting spray are available for use.
- During busy times or whenever someone is waiting for a cardio machine, observe the 30 minute time limit on all cardio equipment.

Teachers/coaches are on duty whenever the Fitness Center is in use. They are responsible for enforcing all rules, regulations and procedures. If at any time a patron does not comply with the rules and or the teacher/coach, the patron will be asked to leave and his or her Fitness Center privileges may be revoked.

North Salem Fitness Center Safety Tips

All of us here in the North Salem Physical Education and Athletic Department want you to get started on your own personal journey to fitness, or continue to make gains if you're already well on your way. But it's vitally important to be safe in all the physical activities in our fitness center.

One helpful term to always keep in mind when planning your workout is "overloading." It simply means "doing more than a system is used to doing." If your goal is to achieve a new level, you'll need to overload your system by increasing the amount of weight, the number of repetitions or by adding new exercises.

If you're just started out after a long layoff, you will be overloading simply by beginning to exercise, so be conservative in your goals and expectations.

One good overloading rule of thumb … regardless of whether you are adding weight, time, distance, repetitions or speed, never increase by more than 10% of what your body was used to previously. Overloading more than 10% will increase your risk of injury and can be counterproductive to your training program.

Below are some weight training safety tips for strength training.

Operating the Weight and Cardio Machines:
- Read and understand the instructional placards.

- Before using a piece of equipment, be sure that it is in proper working order.

- Adjust the equipment to your personal specifications. Most seats, carriage and foot plates are adjustable, and allow the equipment to be modified to accommodate a wide variety of body types.

- If you are not sure how to use a piece of equipment ask for help from an instructor!

- Always check the weight before lifting. Insert weight pin securely into the channel of the appropriate weight plate.

- Please allow other students to work-in.

- During busy times or whenever someone is waiting for a cardio machine, observe the 30 minute time limit on all cardio equipment.

- Wipe down equipment when finished.

Safety Tips for Weight Training:

Please keep the following key points in mind when performing any strength training exercises:
- Never hold your breath while lifting weights. This can cause you to feel lightheaded, dizzy, and can lead to fainting.

- Never lock your joints (knees, elbow, etc.) while lifting weights. Locked joints are put under an enormous amount of stress, which may lead to injury.

- Always use collars on the bar when lifting weights.

- Focus on controlling the weight. To avoid injury and maximize the effectiveness of the exercise, weights should always to lifted and lowered slowly.

- Always have a "spotter" present when performing free weight exercises. Spotters can assist you with form and ensure that you avoid injury.

- Keep both hands at equal distance from the center of the bar when using free weights. Not doing so could result in harmful stress to one side of your body.

- Never excessively twist or bend the spine, which can cause lower back problems.

- When standing, always maintain a slight bend in the knees to reduce stress on the lower back.

- The knees should always remain in alignment with the toes when performing leg exercises.

- Always replace weights to the proper racks so that others do not trip over them.

Safety Tips for Cardio Training:

Treadmill:
- **Get Familiar with the Treadmill's Control Panel –** Read the instructions on the machine console before you turn it on. Most treadmills have the same features, including preset or manual workout selections, start and stop buttons, speed and the incline adjustments and body weight input.

- **Know the Safety Features –** Learn where the emergency off switch is and test it. Typically, it is a large red button in the middle of the machine console.

- **Get a Handle on How Fast it Goes –** Before you jump on a treadmill for the first time, stand on the treadmill with your feet on the side rails (not the belt) before you start the machine. Select a manual program and increase the speed of the belt to about 2 or 3 MPH to begin.

- **Start Slowly –** To start walking on the treadmill, it's often easiest for a beginner to hold on to the handrails and place one foot on the belt and "follow along" with the machine pace. When you are comfortable with the pace, step onto the belt, let go of the handrails, and walk normally.

- **Get to Walking –** Start by walking at a slow comfortable pace, such a 2 MPH. Keep your head up, and stay centered in the middle of the belt (not too far forward or back).

- **Find a Comfortable Pace –** Find a comfortable walking speed for you. Warm up by walking for a few minutes before increasing the pace.

- **Select a Program –** If you choose a preset program, the machine will take you through all the phases of warm up, exercise and cool down. This is a great way for a beginner to get comfortable on the machine.

- **Try Jogging and Running –** Once you are comfortable walking, you can start jogging and then running on the treadmill. This takes some practice. Getting on and off a moving treadmill can make you feel a bit dizzy the first few times, so be careful of this unexpected sensation.

- **Once You're Comfortable, Don't Hold On –** The biggest mistake treadmill users make is holding on to the handles while walking or running. Holding onto the treadmill creates a long list of problems for the exerciser, including:

  ° Decreased exercise intensity (burning fewer calories and reducing aerobic conditioning benefits)

  ° Compromised posture and body mechanics

- ° Increased risk of muscle strain

- ° Reduced coordination and balance

- ° Reduced proprioception (the ability to naturally sense and adjust your position in space)

- **Use the Incline –** You can increase the incline to increase your exercise effort without increasing your pace. But, again, don't hold on to the handrails. Holding on while the treadmill is inclined creates an even more compromised body position. When we walk up an incline, we naturally bend at the hips and knees as your body leans slightly forward; holding on to the handrails on an inclined treadmill actually forces your body to lean back.   To compensate for the mechanical advantage of the belt moving, set the incline 1-2°.

- **Stop the Treadmill –** There are a few ways to stop a moving treadmill:

  - ° Decrease the speed (using the control panel) until the belt stops.

  - ° Hit the big red stop button, which reduces the speed quickly.

  - ° Hold on, step onto the sides, and turn off the machine.

  The first two methods are recommended for novice treadmill users; the last method takes some coordination and practice.

Stationary Bike:
Stationary bicycles come in two varieties: upright and recumbent. Upright bikes simulate a regular bike. The recumbent offers more back support and may be more comfortable for people with lower-back pain.

- **Adjust the seat.** When the pedal is at the lowest position, your leg should be almost, but not quite, straight. You shouldn't have to strain or rock your hips to pedal. Your knees shouldn't feel crunched when they're at the top of the pedal stroke. With a recumbent bike, you adjust the seat forward and back, rather than up and down, but the principles are the same.

- **Set the handlebars correctly (if your bike allows adjustments).** You should be able to hold the bar so that your arms extend out at shoulder level. You shouldn't have to squirm around to get comfortable. Handlebar adjustment is especially important if you're very tall or very short.

- **Get to know the display panel.** For instance, notice how many levels the bike has. Some bikes feature 12 levels; others have 40. So if you just hop on the press Level 6, you'll get two very different workouts. Also, pay attention to your cadence – that is, how many revolutions per minute (rpm) you're cycling. Varying your cadence is a good idea. You may want to hum along at 80 rpm for 5 minutes and then do 30-second intervals at 100 rpm using the same tension level.

- **Adjust the pedal straps so that your feet feel snug – but don't let the straps cut off your circulation.**   Riding a bike with the foot straps is much more comfortable and efficient than pedaling without them. Don't remove the pedal straps from your bike; this forces the next person to waste time putting them back on.

- **Don't pedal with your toes.** Otherwise you may bring on foot and calf cramps. Instead, press from the ball of your foot and through your heel as you pump downward on the pedal, and pull up with the top of your foot on the upstroke.

- **Don't hunch over.** Rounding your back is the way to develop back and neck pain. Don't get your upper body into the effort, either. Instead, keep your chest up, shoulders back and down, ears in line with your shoulders, and belly button drawn in. Unlike some other machines, riding a

stationary bike is not a total-body workout; don't try to make it one. If you have to rock wildly from side to side, grit your teeth, or clench the handlebars, you need to lighten your load.

Elliptical Trainer:
Elliptical trainers can take a bit of getting used to, but they don't require great skill. You'll be up and running in no time by following these tips:

- **Limit backward pedaling.** Contrary to popular belief, pedaling backward does not work your buttocks more than pedaling forward (and it may even be hard on your knees). Both motions emphasize the front thigh muscles, so do it once in a while, but not for any prolonged amount of time.

- **Use the machine's versatile features.** To adjust the intensity of your workout, you can pedal faster, raise the incline, increase the resistance, or any combination.

- **Don't lock your knees.** Keep a slight bend in your knees, keeping the motion smooth.

- **Remind yourself to stand straight.** Although the elliptical trainer lends itself to better technique than the stair-climber, you can still commit postural violations such as leaning too far forward and hugging the console.

**North Salem Physical Education/Athletic Department
Permission Statement for Fitness Room Usage**

**I have completed the North Salem Physical Education/Athletic Department
Fitness Center Safety Course and I have read and understand the North Salem
Fitness Center protocols/safety tips and, by signing this declaration, agree to
adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined in the policy protocols which I
received and are posted on the North Salem Athletic Department web page.**

Student Signature _____

Teacher Signature _____

Date _____