

PICKING A PERSONAL TRAINER

Exercise module

Getting someone to help design your program and then help hold you accountable for showing up to do your exercise can be a great help. How do you know if that person is going to give you a program that is safe, effective and enjoyable? One way is to make sure you hire a personal trainer who is certified. Some of the more reputable organizations are:

- The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- National Strength and Conditioning Society (NCCS)
- American Council on Exercise (ACE)
- International Sport Sciences Association (ISSA)
- National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASCM)

Most importantly, interview the trainer before signing up to be sure they have experience working with people who share your particular goals, interests and possible limitations.

Tips and Questions

Here are a few tips from the National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health for selecting a personal trainer. First, ask friends, family, or your healthcare provider for a recommendation. Check with local health clubs to see if they have trainers on staff or can recommend someone. Once you have a couple of names, here are a few questions to help you pick the right person:

Is the trainer:

- Certified by an accredited organization?
- Experienced or educated in exercise science and program design?
- Experienced in working with people of your age and/or with your medical condition?
- Comfortable working with the medical community?

Does the trainer:

- Listen carefully to you and answer your questions?
- Have a sense of humor and a personality that you like?

Has the trainer:

- Told you what you can expect from the sessions?
- Clearly explained the cost of the sessions and the cancellation policy?
- Stated that he or she is insured or bonded?
- Given you a list of clients so you can check references?

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions, the trainer could be a great fit for you. Ask for one or two trial sessions.