Protecting Your Neuromusculoskeletal Health

Student Information Sheet

National Association of Schools of Music
Performing Arts Medicine Association

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Protecting Your Neuromusculoskeletal Health

An NASM – PAMA
Student Information Sheet

• Neuromusculoskeletal health is essential to your lifelong success as a musician.
• Practicing and performing music is physically demanding.
• Musicians are susceptible to numerous neuromusculoskeletal disorders.
• Some musculoskeletal disorders are related to behavior; others are genetic; still others are the result of trauma or injury. Some genetic conditions can increase a person’s risk of developing certain behavior-related neuromusculoskeletal disorders.
• Many neuromusculoskeletal disorders and conditions are preventable and/or treatable.
• Sufficient physical and musical warm-up time is important.
• Proper body alignment and correct physical technique are essential.
• Regular breaks during practice and rehearsal are vital in order to prevent undue physical stress and strain.
• It is important to set a reasonable limit on the amount of time that you will practice in a day.
• Avoid sudden increases in practice times.
• Know your body and its limits, and avoid “overdoing it.”
• Maintain healthy habits. Safeguard your physical and mental health.
• Day-to-day decisions can impact your neuromusculoskeletal health, both now and in the future. Since muscle and joint strains and a myriad of other injuries can occur in and out of school, you also need to learn more and take care of your own neuromusculoskeletal health on a daily basis, particularly with regard to your performing medium and area of specialization.
• If you are concerned about your personal neuromusculoskeletal health, talk with a medical professional.
• If you are concerned about your neuromusculoskeletal health in relationship to your program of study, consult the appropriate contact person at your institution.
• This information is provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA). For more information, check out the other NASM-PAMA neuromusculoskeletal health documents, located on the NASM Web site at the URL linked below, http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=NASM-PAMA%3A+Neuromusculoskeletal+and+Vocal+Health
• See also the NASM/PAMA Student Information Sheet on “Protecting Your Vocal Health.” Vocal health is an aspect of neuromusculoskeletal health.