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Fitness injuries in the gym: don't be a statistic. Avoid these top 3 dangerous distractions.

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According to the Federal Consumer Products Safety Commission, more than 50,000 people were treated in emergency rooms last year for fitness-related injuries. There's a good chance you are at risk of becoming one of them...especially if you are guilty of falling prey to these three dangerous distractions.

Two of the toughest women in fitness, **Stacy Berman**, founder of Stacy's Boot camp and Tara Zimliki, founder of Tara's Boot camp shared these insights on what to avoid, and how to break a sweat, instead of a bone!

1. Reading a book or watching television

Reading a book or watching your favorite TV show while you are on the treadmill or elliptical seems like a great idea: it makes the time go by quicker, you're entertained, you hardly feel like you're working out at all!

According to Stacy, "being absorbed into TV or a book while using a treadmill or elliptical greatly reduces the amount of effort you can put into your workout – hence the feeling like you aren't even working out – you aren't!"

Don't zone out the entire time. Berman recommends using breaks in chapters or commercials to create an interval workout: keep a steady pace during your regular programming, then sprint for the duration of the commercials, or for 1-2 minutes between chapters if you are reading a book. This way you can "zone out" safely and still get a good workout in.



2. Cell Phones

What ARE you thinking! Chatting with your best friends while working out is not only annoying for those around you – it is very dangerous. Similar to driving and talking on a cell phone at the same time, you are not focused on the most important task at hand – staying on your cardio machine!

According to Tara, "even when using a hands-free cell phone, being focused on a conversation will keep you from watching where you are stepping." Tara also warns that texting while using machines is a big no-no: "the likelihood of falling

while walking and texting is great – whether you are on a treadmill or simply walking around your neighborhood! If you need to text – stop the machine.”

3. Headphones & MP3 Players



Sure, Stacy says, “Music is a fantastic motivator...it can help you push through those difficult hills and energize you when you think you can’t go any further, but I would say I see accidents at the gym because of a dropped iPod or tangled headphone cords on a regular basis.”

Wear your MP3 player on your body and tuck your headphone cords into your shirt if you can, to allow you to freely swing your arms and move your legs. If you do drop your player – remember to stop the machine before you get off and retrieve it – no iPod is worth a broken leg or sprained ankle!

If there is an upside to this news it's that with Spring almost upon us, here in Silicon Valley there are plenty of outdoor activities - including several area boot camps, and a new one opening downtown - so get ready to take a break from your bad habits and enjoy the coming months.