

Turning pain into power

Personal trainer Denise Beatty found the Fitness Fix by exercising her way to a life of chronic pain freedom

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CALGARY -- Denise Beatty knows the struggle of living in chronic pain.

The Calgary-based personal trainer and exercise physiologist was in two serious car crashes within two years in the late 1990s.

The second crash left her with extensive knee, hip, neck and back injuries. It also left her in tremendous, unrelenting pain down her left side.

Yet, throughout her recovery, Beatty kept working out, doing her special brand of core stability exercises.

Using the balance ball, resistance bands, weights, and compound exercises that engage multiple muscle groups at the same time, Beatty found relief from her pain as she built up overall muscle strength.

She also ended up whittling herself into extremely lean shape, losing 30 pounds and reducing her body fat by eight per cent. "The exercises saved me -- that's for sure," says the 32-year-old.

Now Beatty hopes to spread the message of pain-free living, and pain-free fitness and exercise, to the masses.

Beatty's personal program, named the Fitness Fix, is now available on three fitness DVDs. The Fitness Fix, which stands for Functionally Integrated Training with Fun Innovative Exercise, is focused on building overall core strength, balance and endurance to prevent exercise injuries in the first place or help people recover from injuries.

Unlike other exercise videos, Beatty's has no background music. Instead, throughout each video she talks about body mechanics, proper alignment and injury prevention as she demonstrates each exercise.

Each DVD is divided into multiple sections targeting different body zones.

Beatty says she fine-tuned the program with the help of a physiotherapist, a chiropractor and a physician.

Apart from her own recovery, Beatty was inspired to develop the Fitness Fix after seeing "client after client" with chronic injuries and pain caused by exercising. She says she was convinced there had to be a better way for people to train safely.

"I am so focused on building the muscles you need to prevent injuries," says Beatty, who runs her personal training company from her home.

To that end, her DVD exercise program focuses heavily on strengthening core (torso) stability muscles, proper exercise posture, body alignment, flexibility and body toning, and strengthening using a balance ball, balance disk, free weights and resistance bands.

The program isn't meant to replace cardiovascular workouts, but rather to supplement them as part of a larger fitness regime.

More than just preventing injuries, Beatty says the program will help anyone drop weight, reduce their body fat and lose inches. "The amount of calories burned is so huge because you are using so many different muscles," she says. "The results are fantastic."

Beatty's sister followed the program and lost 65 pounds following the birth of her child.

Her own mother, who was diagnosed with advanced lymphoma in July 2005, followed the beginner DVD throughout her cancer recovery. Today, her mom is free of cancer and still on the program.

Beatty's Fitness Fix DVDs cost \$19.95 each, or all three for \$49.95. They're available at fitnessfix.ca.

For more information about Beatty, visit www.fitnessfix.ca.

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