RecTip of the Week – 11/29/2012

Why you should REALLY should wipe down that machine...

You see the signs – “Please wipe down your equipment after use.” Although this is a common gym courtesy, it’s also crucial to wipe the treadmill, dumbbells, or tricep press down BEFORE you hop on.

Why? Skin Infections (from gym mats and equipment)
Folliculitis: you can get this acne-like infection from sharing dirty mats and not showering directly after your workout. Although relatively harmless, it’s just plain gross. Be sure to wipe down mats (and allow to dry) before you use them.

MRSA: This nasty bacterial infection can be very serious if not treated right away. It presents in the form of a boil or pimple – typically on the arms, leg or back. This is also spread via gym mats and equipment.

Dirtiest places at the gym:
1. Cardio equipment – Rhinovirus is the most common germ found; it causes the common cold. Also staph bacteria and E. coli are often present!
2. Gym mats. Wipe them down BEFORE and AFTER. Ringworm is easily transmitted via dirty mats.
3. Weights and weight machines – how often do you wipe them down after you lift? Didn’t think so. Start doing it now!
4. The locker room – the floor is crawling (ew) with germs (hot steamy showers are a breeding ground)
5. The drinking fountain – studies have shown more germs are found in water fountains than on toilets. People’s mouths often come in contact with the fountain

Solutions:
 a. Bring your own mat!
 b. Wipe down the equipment
 c. Wash your hands frequently
 d. Shower as soon as possible post-workout
 e. Wear flip-flops in the gym bathrooms
 f. Bring your own filled water bottle to the gym, and never let your lips come in contact with the spout.