

Exercise Physiologists and Developmental Coordination Disorder



What is an exercise physiologist?

Accredited Exercise Physiologists (AEPs) are university qualified allied health professionals equipped with the knowledge, skills and competencies to design, deliver and evaluate safe and effective exercise interventions for people with acute, sub-acute or chronic medical conditions, injuries or disabilities.

What role might an exercise physiologist play in DCD diagnosis?

An AEP would not diagnose DCD, however, they may identify some concerns when working with a person that may lead them to seek out a diagnosis or further assessment.

What role can an exercise physiologist play in intervention for DCD?

When prescribed with a purpose, exercise does not only improve health and wellbeing, it can be functionally beneficial. Exercise can improve cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of developing health conditions. An Exercise Physiologist will be able to implement individual or group-based exercise programs, supporting the development of knowledge and skills required to lead an active healthy life. An AEP can support the development of gross motor skills (e.g., running, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking), along with the attainment of specialised motor skills required for recreational and sporting based pursuits (e.g., playing soccer, football, cricket). AEPs can also develop and deliver exercise programs within gym-based settings taking into account the individuals needs and goals.

How do you find an exercise physiologist?

To locate an AEP near you, 'find an Accredited Exercise Physiologist' on Exercise Sport Science Australia's (ESSA) website: <https://www.essa.org.au/Public/find-aep.aspx>.

What to ask when looking for an exercise physiologist.

Ensure that the AEP you contact is aware, or willing to learn, about the challenges associated with DCD, including the broader impacts it has on emotional wellbeing too.