

Have your Personal Trainer Clients all Undergone Proper Screening?

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Being a personal fitness trainer isn't as simple as just training clients who show up. You also have a responsibility to do due diligence and make sure they are healthy enough to do the routines or classes they sign up for.

Asking questions isn't always enough, but a [health history questionnaire](#) at the first meeting is a good idea. A signed, properly filled out questionnaire proves that you did ask about any potential health issues and had reason to believe you had all information about the client before preparing a treatment plan.

If you have a client whom you know is not in the best of health or who has suffered an injury in the past, following up by requesting a doctor's note stating they are fit enough to train is another good step you can take to protect yourself and your gym or studio. This is also good for clients who are rehabilitative, or who are seniors.

Reasons for having this kind of paperwork in your file include:

- Clients who start a training regimen, feel sore, and want to claim they weren't adequately in the right frame of health to participate. Without a signed health questionnaire, you have no way of proving you didn't know about their history of weak knees or the fact that they get short of breath and need a rescue inhaler when participating in outdoor exercises.
- Clients who ignore pain signals and keep pushing, or demand that you be "hard on them" in order to meet their set goals. They could end up getting pushed too hard, or getting upset and developing chest pains due to a heart condition they knew about but didn't tell you. Now it's suddenly your fault.
- A client who recently had surgery, but has showed up after a six week recovery period declaring themselves ready to go. The doctor has signed off on a light workout, but they end up pushing themselves too hard and re-injuring themselves. Can they sue you for the re-injury or not?

Make sure you have all the health information and, if needed, a signed doctor's note as well as [signed releases and waivers](#) from clients before allowing them to train. Also have [fitness trainer insurance](#) with CPH Insurance to give you peace of mind and provide you with a way to fight back in case a client decides to file even a pointless claim - it can save you headaches and money!