

March 18, 1974

Mr. Lou Torok
332 West 23rd Street
New York, New York 10011

Dear Mr. Torok:

I thank you for your inquiry. I do believe that the New York Times captured the idea well and I would prefer to balance the picture rather than to play up the controversial stance forced by the assignments given us for public debate on this issue of high level intense exercise.

In other words, I would like to see the emphasis as follows: that I believe an increased physical activity is fine, as tolerated, after a heart attack, as well as before. That exercise is an important "stabilizer" of the cardiovascular and nervous system. That the effects of athletic-type conditioning and peak exercise must be carefully monitored and prescribed and rigorously tested in a sound controlled trial to determine if its beneficial effects outweigh its dangers.

Meanwhile, such high level physical conditioning for high risk men should, I believe, be limited to those having a recent history of and a strong desire to return to such exercise, or in the ideal conditions of an informed physician who can measure exercise capacity, prescribe exercise as he would a patent drug, and supervise any conditioning program he prescribes.

There is nothing particularly new or revolutionary in these ideas and they are actually not terribly newsworthy. Both the support and interest for definitive controlled studies of this important question are insufficient. Moreover, the availability of facilities are inadequate in many communities for supervised testing and conditioning of deconditioned persons, including cardiac patients.

I enclose, for background material, examples of opposing viewpoints taken, again, for the sake of debate.

Sincerely,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:jp
enclosures

*Controversy
Burr article*

Blind copy to Harold Lewis

memorandum

27/February/1974

MAR 4 1974

*J Was Fri the follow
due to come in this
week? if not, I'll write him. no*

Dear Dr. Blackburn--

Sorry I missed you when you were in New York for the American College of Cardiology. I am working on a story for the NATIONAL ENQUIRER which will focus on parts of the debate reported, between you and Dr. Froelicher on "To exercise or not to exercise". If you would like to add further comment--I will be glad to quote you in my article. Perhaps you have written a paper on this matter that you would like to have me quote from.

Perhaps you have had after-thoughts which would help bring your debate into better focus for 15 million American readers.

Your help in making this a worthwhile article will be appreciated. If you have a suitable 8 x 10 or 5 x 7 black and white glossy photo of yourself in your office or in your practice I will be glad to consider it for publication along with your views.

Best personal regards,

Lou Torok
Lou Torok

Lou Torok - 332 West 23rd Street - New York, N.Y. 10011 - (212)