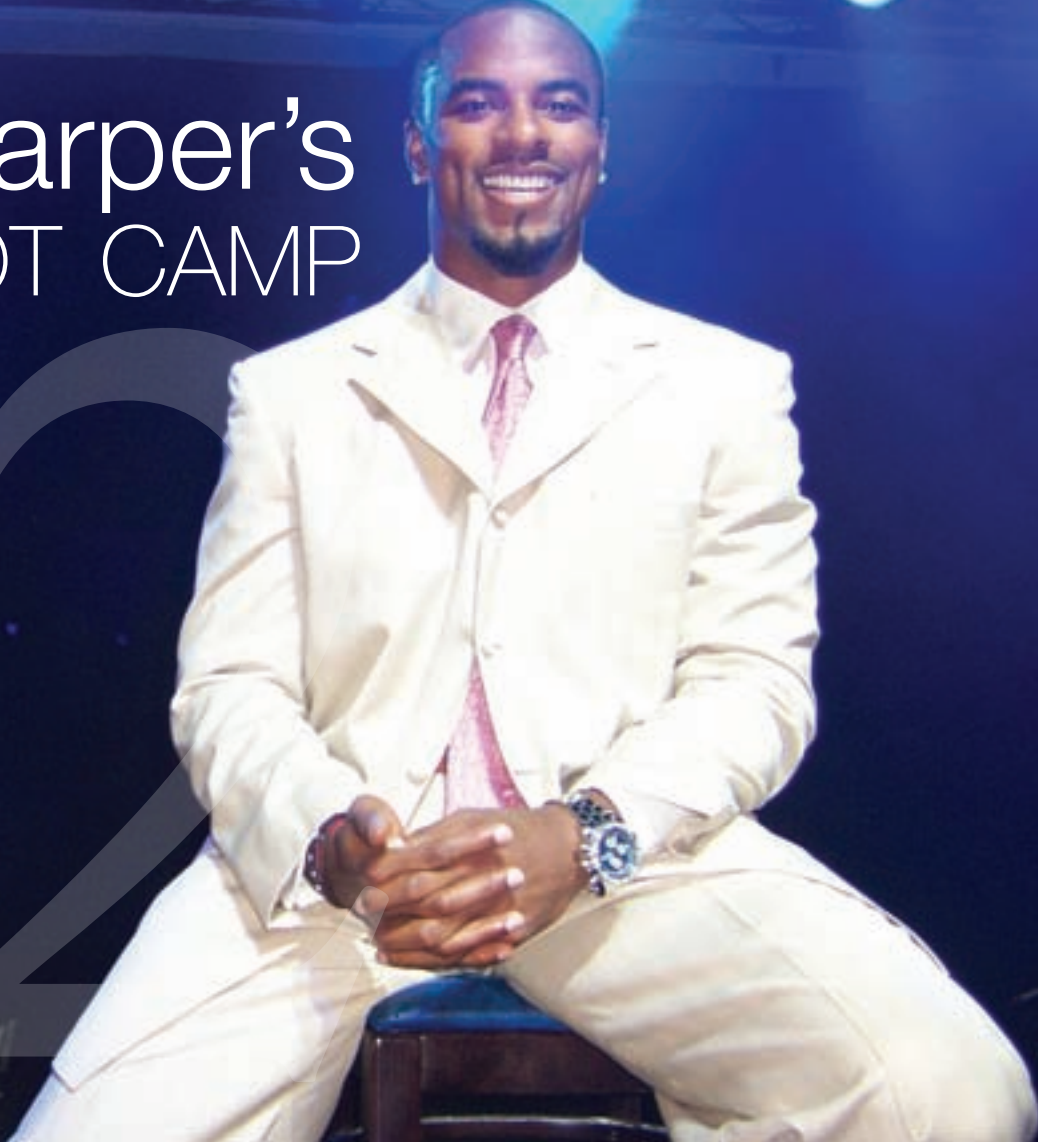


# Darren Sharper's GET FIT BOOT CAMP



Getting your children to exercise can be a challenge. But if it's fun, then kids will want to do it. New Orleans Saints free safety Darren Sharper has launched a series of fitness camps for children in the New Orleans area that will be fun for the kids and good for their health.

Sharper has organized football camps for children in his former homes like Wisconsin and Minnesota. Upon arriving in New Orleans, Sharper was eager to get involved in the community and he has hosted football camps for children. However, after living for a year in a food-and-leisure city like New Orleans, he became interested in fighting the obesity problem, specifically the problem of childhood obesity. So, he has started his own Get Fit Boot Camp in partnership with Get Checked or Check Out. These will be the first camps he has ever organized specifically to combat childhood obesity.

The camp setup is simple. A trainer will lead a group of campers through an hour of cardio and functional strength training. The routines will

be shuffled to maximize effectiveness and to keep it fun for the kids. The program will include aerobics, basketball training, dance, kick boxing, football training, Wii Fit, and more. And Darren Sharper himself will make an appearance at the first and last session of each camp!

Each camp will be a two week program that will meet three days a week, giving campers 6 comprehensive workouts. The current schedule is tentative, but the expected dates are September 6-17, September 20-October 1, October 4-15, October 18-29, and November 1-12 (please call the number at the end of the article to confirm all dates/times/locations for the camps).

One of Sharper's goals with the camps is to not just get children to exercise, but to get them to eat healthier as well. "We want to show them the benefits of not only living healthy, but eating healthy," Sharper said. Sharper says exercise without nutrition is often futile. He uses the analogy of trying to climb a hill. Climbing a hill (becoming fit through exercise) is challenging enough. But without proper nutrition, trying to

become fit is like trying to climb a hill in roller skates during a snow storm.

Sharper acknowledges that eating healthy in a city like New Orleans can be particularly challenging for both kids and adults. "A lot of it has to do with how good the food is down here," Sharper said.

That being said, Sharper does not believe that people should have to completely eliminate their favorite foods and beverages from their diets and he confesses to having his own weaknesses when it comes to food. The key is not to overindulge. "It's all about moderation," Sharper said. Aside from moderation, Sharper advises people to monitor the times at which they eat meals and snacks during the day. Eating after 9 o'clock at night is a definite no-no.

And it's not just New Orleans' food that can make a healthy lifestyle difficult. The weather, specifically the intense heat and humidity that occurs from mid-April to October, can make exercising feel like a burden. It can be hard for an

individual to motivate him/herself on a 93 degree day when it's so much easier to stay inside a comfortably air conditioned home. But making appointments on a regular basis, as well as exercising with a group, can make exercising become a good habit that's hard to break.

The end result of exercising more and eating healthier will not just make the children physically healthier, but mentally healthier as well, as better eating and exercise habits are shown to increase the self esteem of both children and adults. And the more children exercise, the more they burn off a lot of their built-up energy. As a result, kids who exercise are better behaved in class, have longer attention spans, and are more likely to earn good grades. And children who exercise with their families often become closer with their parents and siblings, as exercise is a great bonding ritual that can be fun and worthwhile for the whole family.

## SHARPER TALKS INJURIES AND THE SAINTS

Darren Sharper's 13th NFL season was a memorable one. He finally achieved his dream of winning a Super Bowl ring, finished tied for the league lead in interceptions, was named to the Pro Bowl, and set a record for most interception return yards in a single season. Considering that he battled a nagging knee injury for much of the season (which required postseason surgery) and that he turned 34 before season's end, many casual observers might wonder why a player in Sharper's situation would return for another season.

But when asked for his motivations for returning for another season with the Saints, Sharper answers without hesitation: he wants to win another championship. And he feels the rest of the team has the same desire and will remain just as motivated as they were heading into the 2009 season. "We don't think winning one championship is enough," Sharper said. "A lot of teams have done that...To be a dynasty, you have to win multiple championships."

While the mental aspect of returning is one thing, the physical aspect of returning from knee surgery poses another challenge. And it's not a challenge limited to professional athletes like Sharper. Lots of recreational athletes suffer injuries that require surgery. What can such athletes do to help themselves return to competition?

Sharper offers a few tidbits of advice. For any injury below the waist, it's best for people to keep their weight down. If you let yourself gain weight while recovering from surgery, you're putting more weight and more strain on the injured leg, which will hinder the recovery process.

And it's important to remain reasonably active while recovering from surgery. Sharper says that many people want to sit around after surgery and let the injury heal, but that people should try to be reasonably active. Moving around can actually help the recovery process. Of course, overdoing it is a mistake, but being completely inactive while recuperating can be just as big of a mistake.

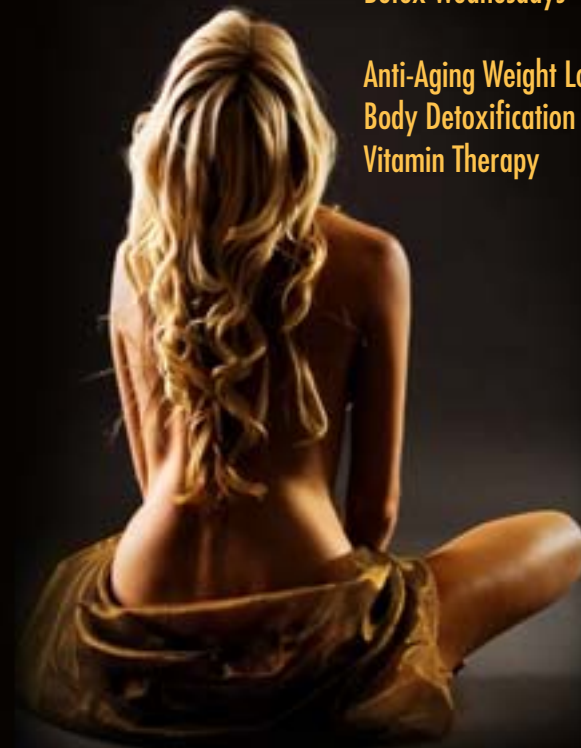
For more information about the Get Fit Boot Camp, contact Darryn DeWalt at [dewalt@getcheckedorcheckout.com](mailto:dewalt@getcheckedorcheckout.com) or (612)695-0072.

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