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KEEP IT PUMPING!

Cardio for Life

As a Personal Trainer and Fitness Success Coach the most frequently asked question that I get is, what is the best form of exercise that I can do?? I have to say that the number one thing you can do for yourself to be healthy or to lose weight, or to increase your energy level and quality of life is **CARDIO**.



I know you were looking for a much better answer than that. But it is reality! Without your heart you can't do much. You don't have to consult too many physicians to know this. The real question people should be asking is what I can do to maintain a healthy heart. Cardio activities have a number of benefits that everyone is looking for. These include disease prevention, weight loss, increased energy and longevity.

Getting your heart rate up for 20 min per day most days of the week can decrease your risk of heart disease by 30 %. Most days of the week is considered to be 5 out of 7, and by heart rate up, I mean any activity that makes you breath more heavily. The challenge is to do this most days of the week and maintain it for 20min.

How it works is like this:

By increasing your heart rate you are taxing your cardiovascular system. Much like your skeletal muscles become stronger the more you work them out, the heart responds to increased exertion levels by increasing the rate at which it pumps blood to the lungs and the working muscles. With regular exertion, the heart becomes stronger and adapts so that the rate at which it pumps blood is more efficient. The result is less wear and tear on the heart. On top of increasing longevity, cardiovascular activity has been shown to decrease clinical symptoms of anxiety, tension and depression. The increase in your blood flow also assists the body in eliminating all those toxins that build up in our system. Getting rid of these will make you feel lighter, more clear headed and put you in an overall better mood.

When you look at how your body systems work, cardiovascular fitness serves as a foundation for other fitness programs. The conditioning and health of the heart and blood vessels are the basis for safety and performance in nearly all athletic endeavors.

When your cardio consists of weight bearing activities like running or walking, this helps to strengthen your skeletal system. It will also reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis. Aerobic exercise is often part of a treatment plan for diabetics whose blood sugar levels are well controlled.

This increase in your activity will also help you to burn more calories. The general rule of thumb is: calories in equal's calories out to maintain weight. When caloric in take increase without the same increase in caloric out take, we start to gain weight. It is because of this that the most effective way to lose weight is to increase your cardio activity, while also making healthy adjustments to your diet.

And if you need one more reason to get moving, increasing your cardio might simply help you do something that you have never been able to do before. Exercise is something that should be as inherent as brushing your teeth. Would you go to work with bad breath?? (I didn't think so.)

Hope to see you out there!
Trina

EXERCISE OF THE MONTH

Triceps Dips:

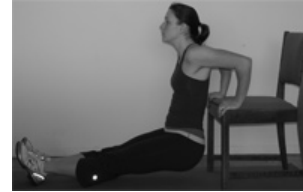
Level I 1-2 sets
Level II 2-3 sets

Target Area: Back of your upper arm (Triceps)
Equipment at the gym: Bench
Equipment at Home: Chair



Set up: Place your hands at the front edge of the chair with your fingertips pointing forward. Wrap your fingers down around the edge at the front of the chair. Have your feet flat on the ground with your legs outstretched in front of you, toes pointing up to the ceiling and your bum just off the edge of the chair. At this point your arms are holding you up.

Movement: Engage your abdominals. Slowly start to lower your bum down to the floor by bending at your elbows. Only lower down to where your upper arm is parallel with the floor. Pause for a moment then slowly rise up to starting position. Control your movement throughout the entire exercise. Exhale on the way down, inhale on the way up. Continue breathing and lifting for an entire set of 12 repetitions. Take a breath and wait 15-30 sec and then move on to the next exercise.



Tip: If you are finding this movement too hard, feel free to bend your knees to 90 degrees instead of having your legs out straight.

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