

Words About Wellness

Strength Training

Submitted By: Danielle Baker
Assistant to the Chair

We often hear that the best way to stay healthy and fit is to engage in cardiovascular activities (e.g., running and swimming), but we often fail to acknowledge the benefits of including strength training into our regimen.



Strength training can:

- Increase physical work capacity
- Improve bone density - especially important for women
- Decrease risk of injury
- Improve heart health
- Manage weight
- Reduce the risk of diabetes
- Fight depression

It is highly recommended to start with bodyweight exercises, so you can learn the proper techniques (e.g., squats and deadlifts). Once you have mastered the proper techniques, you can gradually add weights.

One way to start including strength training exercises is to participate in a group weightlifting class (usually requires a membership) to get you started. You will learn how to use different free weights and get a sense of what works and does not work for you.

Once you get the hang of it, quit your membership and create a home gym. If you are not comfortable using weights, resistance bands are another option. Sometimes it is difficult to create a routine, so use your resources like workout videos, such as YouTube.



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If you need motivation, it may be wise to surround yourself with people who are dedicated or love to workout. They will become your accountability partners and you might even develop a competitive spirit, which can make your workouts fun and exciting.

There are so many ways to workout and changing your environment can keep the momentum going. Instead of working out at home or a gym, go to a park or a track and use the bleachers or a flight of stairs; just keep it interesting and you might find yourself falling in love with working out.

Switching up your workout equipment can also keep you from becoming bored with your routines; there are several options: kettlebells, free weights, bodyweight, resistance bands, and weight machines.

Fashion has also played a key role in how people perceive physical fitness. Fashion has increased people's desire to look "cool" while working out or just lounging around; so, if you want the latest pair of yoga pants and gym outfits, buy some, it might give you the encouragement you need to actually workout.



Sources:

1. U.S. News & World Report: <https://health.usnews.com/wellness/fitness/articles/2018-03-23/11-benefits-of-strength-training-that-have-nothing-to-do-with-muscle-size>
2. Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/strength-training/art-20046031>
3. YouTube: [Fitness Blender](#)
4. Amazon: [Resistance bands](#)