

Getting Started: why weight?

Weight training is not just for athletes or those who want large, bulging muscles. No matter what your age or fitness level, following a proper weight training workout is one of the best ways to keep your entire body strong, supple and ready for activity throughout your life.

As we age, our muscular fitness naturally declines. But this loss is mainly due to physical inactivity. An inactive adult will lose an estimated 30 to 40 per cent of their strength by age 65, and that will have a major impact on daily living. Physical activity such as weight training can minimize this loss of strength and provide many other health benefits to keep you functioning better and longer. With increased muscular strength and endurance comes more muscle mass and an increased metabolism – meaning you'll have more energy and find it easier to

control your body weight. So don't wait. Begin your weight training program today. All you need to get started is:

- some comfortable exercise clothes;
- a good pair of shoes
- a basic knowledge of weight training terminology;
- a weight lifting routine that suits your needs; and
- a place to lift weights, either at home or in a gym.



Beginner Basics:

WEIGHT TRAINING TERMS

SETS:

A set is a group of consecutive repetitions.

REPETITION OR "REP":

One complete motion of an exercise from start position to end position.

RESISTANCE:

This refers to the amount of weight you use.

REST INTERVAL:

The time period between sets that you allow your muscle to recover from fatigue.

Health Benefits of Strength Training

- Revitalizes the mind, reduces fatigue and increases energy.
- Relieves stress and tension.
- Reduces risk of certain lifestyle diseases.
- Helps to boost your self-image.
- Reduces risk of osteoporosis.
- Assists with weight control.
- Fit muscles help to maintain good posture and prevent lower back pain.
- Fit muscles help to protect the joints from shock and injury.
- Strong muscles themselves are more resistant to aches and pains.



For more information on being physically active
Call (306) 975-7808

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Pressing Issues

A Smart Start Guide
to Weight Training

Designing a Plan for You:

How to get pumped and stay pumped.

Keep in mind that the very nature of starting an exercise program means making some adjustments to your lifestyle, but the results will be well worth the effort. To make it easier to get pumped and stay pumped, schedule your weight training at a time that's most convenient for you then stick with it. It's easier to maintain regular exercise when you don't have to constantly resolve scheduling conflicts.

If you have not been very active, it takes time for your

body to adjust to a new exercise routine. You may have some stiffness for the first few days, but this will soon go away. Start small and don't worry about your long-term goals. Just do what you can given your daily commitments to family, work and community. Most of all, be patient – it takes time for a lifestyle change to become a habit, but it will happen.

Consult a Fitness Professional:

Strengthen your knowledge before you strengthen your body



Weight training, when done properly, has many fitness benefits as we've already discussed. But when not done properly, it can actually do more harm than good. That's why it's a good idea to talk to a fitness professional when you're just starting out.

The degree to which fitness professionals get involved depends upon you. They can simply help you get started on a safe and effective program by advising you and showing you proper technique. Or, they can help set up an individualized program designed to suit your current level of fitness and your fitness goals. Some fitness professionals even offer one-on-one personal training for each workout. Whatever your needs, remember to choose a fitness professional with recognized qualifications such as a Kinesiology degree, PFLC (Professional Fitness and Lifestyle Consultant), or CFC (Certified Fitness Consultant).

Five Steps to a Great Weight Lifting Workout:

1

Warm-up with light aerobic exercise for 5-10 minutes to get the blood flowing and the muscles warm and ready for exercise.

2

Stretch all the areas you will be exercising, this will help to prevent injuries.

3

Follow a prescribed exercise plan (consult a fitness professional).

4

Cool down to return your body to a comfortable level.

5

Stretch to help reduce stiffness.

How to strengthen your results

Ease Into It

Start by committing to weight training 2 times per week. Once you have maintained this goal, set a new goal to make strength training part of your routine 3-4 times per week.

- A strength training program for beginners should incorporate 8-10 exercises that target ALL the major muscle groups.
- For each exercise perform one set of 8-12 repetitions in

which the resistance is sufficient to bring the muscles you are working close to fatigue.

- In general you should exercise larger muscles before small ones. Legs, chest and back muscles before shoulders and arms.
- Choose exercises that prepare you for and complement your other activities.

Use Proper Technique

Learning proper technique can protect your joints from undue stress. It can also help you avoid injury to muscles, tendons and ligaments. Here are some basic hints for more enjoyable and successful weight training.

- Strive for a correct body position, maintain your balance and keep your abdominal muscles tight to help stabilize the lower back.
- Breathe naturally and don't hold your breath. Exhale as you lift.
- Use a continuous, controlled (not too fast, not too slow) movement.
- Stop any exercise that causes pain.
- Talk to your fitness consultant if you have any concerns or need help getting started.

Progress Slowly

Intensity should progress slowly to allow time for adaptation.

- Rest for at least one day between strength-training sessions.
- Increase the resistance in small amounts to produce safe strength gains.
- Vary your program to keep it interesting.
- When performing multiple sets be sure to include a rest interval of at least 30-90 seconds.

Avoid The Myths

Despite wishful thinking and advertising claims spot reducing – reducing fat in a certain spot – is not possible. Fat is lost from the entire body, not a specific area. Weight loss is most safely achieved by a combination of healthy eating habits in combination with a fitness program that includes cardiovascular exercises and weight training.

Home or Gym?

CHOOSING A PLACE TO WORK OUT.

Whether you weight train at home or at a gym, the key is to choose a place that makes it easy to fit exercise into your daily routine. Here are some things to think about in choosing your weight training environment.

Training at Home Means Buying Equipment:

- Resistive bands and tubing are the cheapest alternative and can offer a wide variety of exercise. They are, however, limited to how much strength you can gain.
- Free weights (dumbbells and barbells) are the most versatile and are relatively inexpensive. Safety is always an issue with free weights especially if you plan on weight lifting alone.
- A more expensive option is a home multi-gym with which you can perform multiple exercises all from one or two weight stacks. For the most part, multi-gyms are safe and easy to use. Choose quality and don't fall for the quick fix exercise gadgets.
- Whatever you choose for your home gym, having a fitness professional come to your home to help you figure out what you need and how to do the exercises is always a safe bet.

Training at a Gym Means Paying as You Go:

- When choosing a gym, shop around to find a facility that is convenient and suits your budget, goals and personality.
- At a gym you should find everything you need to strengthen your entire body.
- Gyms will have the qualified staff on hand to design and show you a weight training program that suits your needs and experience.
- The gym environment offers the opportunity to meet people with similar interests. This may help to keep you motivated.