

Work Hard – Rest Easy

Losing fat & improving your physique

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(If your body fat is reasonable - and have the diet/food intake component under control - keep honing and refining it and proceed to the exercise component below).

THE DIET/FOOD INTAKE COMPONENT

If you are way overfat, start with diet. 80% of the entire fat loss effort is what you shove down the old pie hole.

- Change your body chemistry by consuming good fats, protein, and quality carbs in the proper amounts.
- Start with the 70% rule. If seven out of every 10 meals are good, that gives you a bit of wiggle room if you go astray.
- When the food intake issue is under control you will see results, sans exercise. Until that occurs, any non-strength training exercise should be confined to just walking.

Obviously, there is much more detail to discuss regarding the diet/food intake component. All I can tell you here is to sift through the good, bad, and ugly on the Internet, find reputable experts who can provide you with sensible and safe recommendations, and then it is all up to your commitment and discipline to follow those guidelines.

It CAN be done because your body is essentially a chemistry set, so if you consume the proper type and amount of chemicals (food), it will react positively to help you meet your goals. But it comes down to discipline because food manufacturers have hijacked our brains with sugar, sodium, and bad fats. They concoct a plethora of great tasting (but addicting) products and want you to consume them because it generates piles of \$ for them. You consume them, you like them, you want more, you over-consume them, they make big \$, but over time you degrade your body, and it responds with type two diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and all the ailments that come with those.

Remember, though, YOU control your food intake. Get a grip on it, slowly make better choices (they are out there!), and you will succeed.

After you get that straight we will deal with the exercise component.

THE EXERCISE COMPONENT

Before proceeding, understand this:

- Doing *something* is better than doing nothing.
- If you are doing *something*, give *100% of your effort*, whatever that 100% is.
- Do this *something at 100% effort on a consistent basis*. Two or three times per week is better than zero times per week (and not a huge time commitment).
- If you do not agree with those three points do not bother reading any further.

Okay, assuming you have shored up your diet and are now eating the appropriate number of calories coming from quality carbs, protein, and good fat, it is time to consider implementing sensible exercise choices.

Here is the precursor to the forthcoming discussion: ***there is no need to make a bee line to the “cardio” machines when you enter the gym/fitness center!*** Look left or right...yes, those are weight machines, barbells, and dumbbells. Befriend them even though you will be using them to inflict some temporary pain and discomfort on yourself.

ELIMINATE conventional “cardio” sessions. Expunge those 3-mile runs, the one-hour, low effort dates with an electronic device (i.e., elliptical), and those minimal muscle stimulating and low energy consuming yoga classes because they…

- Catabolize muscle and increase cortisol levels. This results in losing good body shape and decreasing your calorie burn potential. The goal should be to build or at least maintain shapely muscle mass.
- Lower your metabolic rate. That means you will lose muscle + burn fewer calories = the body will respond by storing more fat. AGAIN, you should attempt to **build muscle**. For the love of Richard Simmons, DO IT!
- Increase the risk of overuse injuries. Lots of running = thousands of ground contacts ON EACH LEG = a heap of joint/muscle stress to deal with. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO RUN IF YOUR GOAL IS TO LOSE FAT. Yoga and Pilates are joint-friendly, but they POORLY tax a lot of muscle…an awful option for the time committed to them.
- Make you either “skinny-fat” or “unshapely-frail.” Weak, soft, and thin is no way to go through life, son (just like fat, drunk, and stupid according to Dean Wormer).

Time to explain how “pinchable” adipose fat is used…the “U.S. Oil Reserves” of the body…only in emergency situations.

You need to create an environment which taps into those reserves, so know this...

Pure aerobically work *does* proportionally burn more fat than carbs, but minimally at best, due to fat being nine calories/gram and carbs only four (your pinchable gut and love handles have at least one marathon in them). So, you can “exercise” aerobically for one hour, burn 500 calories, but not create a high post-session calorie demand. Not much of an advantage since you are also NOT building metabolically active muscle tissue. Think about that.

Pure aerobic work uses less overall MUs/fibers, and that equals less overall energy used. Minimal muscle is worked so only a minimal amount of post-session calorie demand is needed due to only recruiting the low-threshold type 1 MUs/fibers for the lengthier, lower intensity work demands. Think about that…you are only using a small percentage of your total MUs/fibers (the smaller ones) and the larger ones remain dormant because they are not needed. You are limiting yourself and literally taking the easy way out.

It does not fully tap glycogen (sugar/carbohydrate) stores. Glycogen depletion is needed for the first “phase” of targeting fat stores. One needs to empty their intramuscular glycogen stores to put the onus on stored fat for recovery energy while the depleted glycogen that was used for high-effort training are being refilled during that recovery process.

Strength train. Yes, strength train. Lift weights. Resistance train. It is the missing link in an effective fat loss program. Here is why you should choose it over conventional cardio…

- It recruits and overloads more MUs/fibers. More energy used during a hard training session AND following it.
- It builds good muscle shape. Tone and hardness, not soft and mushy. More type 2A and 2X MUs/fibers are recruited and overloaded (in addition to the always-recruited type 1). That increases metabolic rate EVERY DAY.
- It creates better post-exercise calorie usage from the U.S. oil reserve fat stores. Remember, depleted glycogen from the highly taxed 2A and 2X

MUs/fibers must be refilled. To accomplish that, the body runs on stored fat while the newly ingested food goes to glycogen refilling.

Additional exercise during your “More attention to food intake + doing strength training” lifestyle (if you cannot live without it)

Proper calorie intake (quality food and a calorie deficit of some type) and sensible strength training is all one needs to lose fat and look better. However, if you are obsessed with “I need to do cardio,” or if you simply like to run, then do it if you can squeeze it into your weekly schedule. But be safe and eschew excessive work which can 1) increase the risk of overuse injuries and/or 2) lead to over-training/under-recovering = greater risk of illness and fatigue.

Do this rather than opting for the potentially over-burdening longer and joint-pounding choices:

Walk. A safer ancillary calorie-burn with these benefits:

- Less joint stress.
 - Less cortisol increase = does not catabolize muscle.
 - Less lowering of your metabolic rate.
 - Other benefits such as lower cholesterol and blood pressure.
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- It increases cortisol, but not excessively. It also increases testosterone and growth hormone which counter any cortisol increases. That is a good thing.
 - It is safer on the joints. Proper strength training methods minimize injury risk compared to joint “unfriendly” conventional cardio training. Run, run, run = pound, pound, pound.
 - It is less time-consuming. If you train hard, less total training time is required. Yes, going 80 minutes is easier (and boring), but not very time efficient for what is gleaned from it (fewer calories burned and less calorie demand post-workout). Go hard, by necessity train less (20 to 45

minutes?), and you will have more time to focus on other aspects of your life. Eureka!

- Makes you stronger and injury resistant. You cannot deny the upside of that. Think about it, lifting heavy objects off the floor or shelf, traversing stair steps, surviving a fall caused by tripping on the edge of the 1970's shag carpet in your man cave, or rising up from the throne after 20 minutes of defecating and reading the latest issue of Mad Magazine. Those daily tasks and situations can all be enhanced and injury-proofed by becoming stronger. 45 minutes on a treadmill watching a television program will not do that.

I am all for reasonable options provided they are safe, time-efficient, and productive. So, *if you need to run*, consider this...

Interval train. If addicted to running, do higher-effort interval training. You are still running, but with 1) a higher effort that recruits more muscle and 2) less single-leg ground contacts, and 3) less total workout session time.

What it be?

As opposed to running three miles or mindlessly slogging away for 40 minutes on a stair-stepper, interval training/running may involve less than 1.5 total miles or no more than 20 minutes total session time.

It is essentially periods of high-effort work followed by brief rest time, repeated for anywhere from four to 20 bouts depending on the distance or time of each "interval." Examples:

Running: 5 x 400 meters @ 1:20 with a 2:40 rest between each (around 20 total minutes of your time).

Electronic device (a.k.a. cardio machine): 20 x :30 all-out high effort bouts on an elliptical device with a :40 lower or no effort between each (around 25 total minutes of your time).

If you need a ton of interval training options, go to my web site www.777workouts.com and you will discover 80 interval workouts (and many

other time-efficient workouts, including 350 circuit/boot camp/interval-type workouts to choose from).

ONE LAST POINT OF ADVICE

There is no need to do something every day. Not even five days per week. Think two to four days. Those are schedule-friendly AND ALLOW YOUR BODY TO RECOVER from previous high-effort (productive) training sessions.

Understand your body needs down time/rest days to adapt and grow muscle, replenish energy, and fully recover from hard training. Training hard should be the number one goal if you want tangible results. That necessitates between session biological recovery. Think about that. Just like recovering and healing a flesh wound or joint sprain. Your body has been compromised and needs TIME to recover and make repairs. In most cases 24 hours is not enough. It may take 48 hours or in some cases three days to fully heal. You must “let it happen” if you want results, otherwise you will end up overtrained/under recovered and more susceptible to injury or illness.

People who train every day do so for one or more of these reasons:

- They are addicted to exercise.
- They think more is better.
- They need to satisfy a social need, “hanging at the gym with their homies.”
- They are competitive athletes and need to practice specific sport skills (completely different than strength & endurance training).
- They do not understand stress-recovery biology.
- They are bored and need a diversion.

Proper productive exercise requires a precise dosage, just like medicine. Your physician prescribes an exact amount of medication, not a random amount for the entire container. Overdose and you are in trouble. Exercising too much or too soon and it is the same.

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