



Here are some fitness myths that you must consider before starting your exercise programme.
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It is well-known that exercise is good for you in almost every way, but there are a lot of myths around exercise that science has been illuminating every now and then. Here I have thrown light on some of them so that you know the truth about your fitness options and gain only the best from it.

MYTH 1: When it comes to strength training, women should train differently than men.

Fact: There is no evidence to prove that men and women should train differently when it comes to strength training. Women should also participate in free weight training as much as men. This is important since the stabiliser muscles of the joints also need to get strong along with the prime muscles which are working in an exercise. If women only perform exercises on machines, their chances of getting injured during their daily chores are more. Women however need to reduce intensity of their workout during their menstrual cycle. This is because the stabiliser muscles in the lower abdomen may get shut-off during the menstrual cycle due to their close proximity to the ovaries and may pose injury.

MYTH 2: Lift lighter weights to make your muscles more defined and leaner.

Fact: Muscle reacts best to overload. When one lifts heavy weights with sufficient intensity, it creates microscopic wear and tear in the muscle. When the muscle repairs during rest days, it eventually becomes tighter and stronger. There is no



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truth to the common perception that heavier weights bulk you up and lighter weights get you leaner. For best results on getting leaner and reducing body fat, support your weight training workouts with good nutritious and well-balanced diet and 3-4 sessions per week of cardiovascular training.

MYTH 3: Change in workouts is not important.

Fact: The body adapts to any exercise routine in 4-6 weeks. To take your workout to the next level and make your body stronger, it is important to inculcate change at least every 4-6 weeks. Change in the volume of sets, time between sets, number of repetitions, variety in strength exercises and in the cardiovascular routine are important to get results. Besides, change in routines gets rid of boredom and thus motivates you to exercise. Interesting workouts also improve consistency.

MYTH 4: Slim people should not exercise.

Fact: Slim and fit are not synonyms. You can be thin but not necessarily fit. It is important for everyone to exercise — whether slim or over-weight — as it helps strengthens the muscles, joints, heart and other organs. Most of us have sedentary lifestyles and suffer from back and neck problems due to lack of exercise and poor postures. However, workouts will vary from individual to individual, but exercise is a necessity for all.

MYTH 5: If you are not sore after every strength training workout or you haven't worked out enough.

Fact: Soreness need not be experienced immediately after workouts but can also be delayed. Some days you might experience more soreness than other days. It depends on a number of factors. Different exercise movements, lifting heavier weights and exercising after a break of few days can result in soreness. But soreness should not be a measure to qualify if you are working out enough.

MYTH 6: As you get older, you will gain fat.

Fact: Gaining weight as you age is a direct result of inactivity and over-eating. Adults spend most of their time in chairs and some people stop participating in sports activities after school are some of the reasons. Besides, they indulge in over-eating, processed and fast foods, having huge gaps between their meals or skipping meals, going on yo-yo diets – all of which results in weight gain. Indeed after the age of 30 one tends to lose 5-7 per cent of muscle mass and bone density every decade. Thus, one needs to work out, be more active, indulge in daily chores and eat healthy to maintain their metabolic rate.

MYTH 7: Yoga can help cure back pain.

Fact: Yes! Yoga can help cure back pain, however it is not the best option for every one. When pain is muscle-related, Yoga will indeed help by stretching the tight muscles and strengthening the weak muscles. However a very qualified yoga professional will have to test which muscles are weak and which are tight. If the cause of the pain is not known, the patient can face more complications. For example, a patient with a ruptured disc needs a doctor's approval before starting on an exercise programme. Thus, getting diagnosed by a doctor is important before embarking on any exercise programme.

MYTH 8: Lose weight before you begin weight training or you'll just bulk up.

Fact: False. Lifting weights is exactly what you should do if you're overweight. If you had to choose only one type of exercise, weight training should be it. This is because muscles drive the metabolism. The less muscle we have, the slower our metabolism and vice versa. Over-weight people have more of fat and less of muscle which results in slowing down their metabolism. The fastest and best way to improve muscle tissue is by weight training. Cardio should also be a part of your exercise programme but not the only part. Weight training will help you stay strong and get lean.

MYTH 9: Restricting the number of meals is the best way to lose weight.

Fact: False. By doing so you are inviting more trouble. When you skip meals, the body begins to store more fat as a protective measure and at the same time reduces the fat burning enzymes. Thus, over a period of time you gain more weight. The best way to maintain a healthy weight is to eat 5-6 small meals a day, eat slowly, chew your food and drink plenty of water.

MYTH 10: The more you exercise, the better.

Fact: Exercise is good for everyone. However, over exercising has its own disadvantage. Many high level athletes and fitness enthusiasts give in to this myth, and pay the price with injury, illness and depression. To gain from exercise, one needs to find an appropriate balance of training and rest in order to perform optimally.

Now that a few popular myths have been unmasked for you, don't be fooled the next time your friend tells you about some latest fitness fad. The sooner you learn the truth about exercise, the closer you'll be to achieving your desired results.

Stay Well

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