



Exercise and Diet Myths

The Truth.....

Nirvana Spa and Pulse 8 Seminar Series – Week 8



Overview

- Many of us have heard people discussing the best ways to get into shape, or the best diets to use in order to lose weight and other weird and wonderful exercise tips
- This seminar will address some of these common myths that we hear everyday, and find out how many of them are actually true....



Specific exercises will cause spot fat reduction

- Fat deposits are tapped in multiple places around the body, not adjacent to body part requiring energy
- Fat is not pulled from the area it is stored in to serve as energy in its own 'neighbourhood'.... it is a genetic disposition
- Therefore, a specific exercise will not cause you to lose fat in the area, it will only increase the muscle mass of the area which will increase metabolism and potentially lead to greater fat reduction.



For girls, lifting heavy weight will add bulk?

- Females lack testosterone. There are higher levels of testosterone found in males, which means that men can bulk up more than women as a result of resistance training
- In a nutshell... women **CAN** do resistance training and see the benefits and results they desire without the worries of bulking!



Low carb diets are THE only way to lose weight

- Most people who go on low carbohydrate diets lose weight and lose it quickly. The majority of weight loss comes from loss of water and muscle tissue, **not fat** which is what you need to lose to keep the weight off
- Losing lean muscle tissue is like sabotaging your body. Muscle is **metabolically active**, and burns calories **even when you are at rest**. A decrease in the amount of muscle tissue = a decrease in the number of calories you need each day to maintain your weight, making it much harder to keep your weight under control when you stop following the diet
- Essential vitamins and nutrients come from balanced diets and low carb diets are not balanced. You can only get essential nutrients from fruit, vegetables and grains - low carbohydrate diets only allow very small amounts of fruit and vegetables.



Not eating is the best way to lose weight

- Your body needs food to provide it with energy. When you starve yourself you are starving your body of what it needs. Your body will adapt to these changes and begin to store fat as an energy reserve. Consequently your metabolism will decrease and the disadvantages of this have been previously mentioned
- To lose weight the 'right' way, you should burn more calories than you consume in a day, however you should eat a minimum of your BMR (dependant on body composition).



Eating late at night will cause you to gain weight

- Eating late at night is and isn't bad for you. Providing you are not exceeding your daily recommended intake you will be fine. High carbohydrate foods are **not** recommended late in the evening because high energy foods are not required
- High protein and vitamin based foods are more suitable. Eating late at night which takes your calorie intake beyond your BMR is bad for weight maintenance/loss as any additional calories will be stored as fat
- Metabolism is at its lowest after 8pm (and especially when you are sleeping/inactive). Ingested food will be stored!



If my body is not aching then my workout was not hard enough

- It is important to mix up your workouts to keep your body guessing, both physically and mentally
- **DOMS (Delayed Onset of Muscle Soreness)** = a **natural** process where the muscle fibres break down after exercise – they do repair and get bigger and/or more tolerant to exercise as a result!
- Improved conditioning means less likelihood of DOMS. So in summary DOMS is a bad way of monitoring exercise intensity and **does not** mean you have worked harder
- If you have provided your body with adequate nourishment and rest to repair damaged muscle tissue then you will recover quicker.



More protein means bigger muscles.... too much equals body damage

- To gain muscle mass you need enough protein and carbs to provide your body with the energy it needs to build muscle. But the only way to 'bulk up' is to use the muscles through strength training. Exercise builds muscle, and no amount of protein will work if you don't move your muscles
- Ketogenic diets (**high fat; adequate protein; low carbohydrate**) can thrust your kidneys into overdrive to flush these ketones from your body. As this happens you can lose significant amounts of water, which puts you at risk of dehydration
- Water loss often shows up as weight loss, but along with losing water, you lose muscle mass and bone calcium. The dehydration strains your kidneys and puts stress on your heart resulting in weakness and dizziness, bad breath, and other issues.



Muscle turns into fat and fat turns into muscle

- The key process here is **replacement**, rather than material change – you can't turn metal into gold!
- Muscle and fat are two distinct types of tissue, so it's physiologically impossible for one to "turn into" the other. Muscle will lose tone if it is not used, which may result in a flabby appearance where you used to be solid. If you don't adjust your diet after you quit training, some of that food you're eating will turn to fat
- **'Use it, or lose it!'**



Weight training reduces flexibility

- Frequent stretching alongside resistance training improves dynamic flexibility and can improve technique in exercises such as Olympic style lifts. These Olympic lifts can also improve flexibility (dead-lift exercise – hamstring flexibility)
- **Functional movements** (such as squats and lunges) are more beneficial to promote this, rather than the use of isolation exercises (e.g. Leg Extension and Seated Leg Curl).



Weight plateaus even after exercise and diet

- Increases in muscle mass and decreases in fat mass leads to better shape and tone and is more specific/beneficial to you (better fit of clothing and looking/feeling better). Muscle is more dense than fat (1kg muscle weighs the same as 1kg fat mass) therefore muscle takes up less space hence clothing fits better
- Patience is important in weight loss programs! 1st stage = fitness gains, 2nd stage = muscular tone (and therefore fat replacement) and 3rd stage is continued fat loss!



Are crunches, sit ups and other abdominal exercises ideal for losing weight around the abdomen?

- See myth 1
- Specific exercises will not cause you to lose fat in specific areas, it will only increase the muscle mass of the area. Additional fat burning/CV exercise will help with weight/fat loss
- **Example:** A bodybuilder who is looking to gain definition (or 'cut') will increase CV activity to do this rather than over emphasise the weights!



How many calories should I burn to lose a pound of fat?

- 1 pound = 3500 calories, 2 pounds = 7000 calories (1 week)
- 500-1000 calorie deficit per day, made easier to achieve by additional exercise
- A weightloss of 1-2lb per week is recommended in order to lose weight gradually and to sustain it.



How accurate are calorie counters on CV kit?

- Simple, they are not accurate!
- Machines estimate calorie burn based on HR and unless you are using a heart rate strap they are inaccurate. They also extrapolate generalised values based on age and body mass but not gender
- However to monitor intensity, you should use perceived exertion to gauge how hard you are working (Scale of 1 to 10). Within reason, we should be reaching a 6 or 7 at least!



Why do I feel sore 2 days after going to the gym?

- DOMS...Delayed Onset of Muscle Soreness sets in 24-48hours after exercise
- Caused by little or no movement post training
- Lactic acid build up? Hydrogen Ions!
- A light workout the following day can help alleviate this pain due to increased blood flow to the sore muscles for recovery.



Questions?