

Most Common Fitness Myths



Knowing the Myths Can Help You Stay Fit!

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Importance of Knowing the Myths

Have you ever found yourself performing a task or thinking in a certain way because of something you've heard throughout the years? From old wives tales, rumors, and myths, fitness has also fallen victim to various misconceptions that the average person may often base their workouts on.

Just as we learn about the facts of fitness, it is important to learn about some of the biggest myths surrounding fitness and health. Knowing about these myths help you to question them and find out exactly what is true by consulting experts such as doctors, nutritionists, and personal trainers.

This report helps to point out some of the most common fitness myths still circulating today. While this report could not possibly cover every single fitness myth (with new ones being created every day) it does strive to focus on some of the most popular. You may even come across a few that you have always thought were true. Let's get started by blowing some of these myths out of the water!

Fitness Myth - Working Out at Home isn't as Good as a Gym

Having a gym membership is great but working out at a gym isn't for everyone. Whether it is out of your range financially or you simply don't like gyms, doesn't mean you can't get just as an effective a workout at home. All you need is some room to move and basic equipment like a set of dumbbells and a few exercise DVD's and you're set. Most exercise videos I've seen don't require anything more than a pair of light weights. I belong to a gym and I still do exercises in my home. I do various body resistance exercises before I hit the sack. Don't think just because you don't belong to a gym you can't stay fit. You can be just as fit as long as you're willing to put in the time and effort – right from the comfort of your own home.

Fitness Myth – Drinking a Sports Drink for Every Workout Keeps You Healthier

Sports drinks are great for replacing needed electrolytes and nutrients during a strenuous workout. Many athletes drink sports drinks to rehydrate after a strenuous workout. However, for the average person exercising, drinking a sports drink for every workout isn't necessary for good health.

Sports drinks are great for very strenuous workouts that last for 3 – 5 hours or more, like marathons, triathlons, etc. Drinking only water during these types of workouts can lead to hyponatremia (low blood sodium concentration.)

For regular exercise lasting 30 minutes to 1 hour, water will do the job just fine.

Fitness Myth – You Have to Sweat to Have a Good Workout

You may see someone dripping in sweat after their workout and may think, wow, they must have burned a ton of calories! Sweating isn't an indicator of a good workout. Sweating is simply your body's way of cooling itself. You can still burn a good amount of calories without sweating profusely. Light activities like a brisk walk will still burn calories and help maintain fitness.

Fitness Myth – Aerobic Exercise is Better Than Lifting Weights

Aerobic activity does burn fat but it doesn't necessarily make it better in comparison to weight lifting. When you are trying to lose weight, you essentially need both aerobic and strength training. However, the key is knowing how both work in terms of burning fat. You will burn more fat during aerobic exercise but once you stop, the fat burning ends. When you lift weights, your muscles will continue to burn fat after your workout is over. It is important to use a combination of both types of exercise to maintain fitness.

Fitness Myth – Eat Fat Burning Foods to Lose Weight

You can search for lists of fat burning foods but the fact of the matter is, no foods can burn fat. Fat burning foods is a myth and a fad that many marketers are playing on. The reason certain foods are listed as fat burning is because they are typically low in calories or help to make you feel more satisfied. The best way to lose weight will never change which is proper diet and exercise. Calories in/calories out!

Fitness Myth – To Be Fit, You Need the Latest Equipment

I know for a fact that this is not true. Several years ago, I was in the best shape of my life and it did not require any fitness equipment at all. Gym equipment like ellipticals, treadmills, and weight machines are great but they are not required to get in shape. You can use your own body for resistance training as well as for cardio workouts.

Although I do belong to a gym, I also have my own home gym, which consists of nothing more than a stability ball, dumbbells, and resistance bands. Remember, you already have what it takes to stay fit, and that is you!

Fitness Myth – You Need Huge Muscles to Be Strong

When you think of strength your thoughts might turn to big muscular individuals such as body builders. Building bulk is not a true sign of strength. Strength training can be done without adding any size. Take a look at the size of a martial artist or gymnast. They are not huge muscle wise but perform activities that require a great deal of strength. If building muscle to be bulk is your ultimate goal, then by all means, go for it. Just remember that strength training doesn't really have much to do with size.

Fitness Myth – Lifting Weights Stunt Growth

Lifting weights at a young age such as in your early teens can be a concern for teens as well as their parents. You wonder if it is safe and many wonder if lifting weights can stunt a young person's growth. So can lifting weights at a young age stunt growth? The short answer is no. It is another myth. Teens can receive the same benefits as adults by incorporating weight training into their lifestyle. However, just as with adults, teens need

the proper guidance when it comes to strength training.

A teen should lift weights with parental supervision as well as looking into entry-level programs created specifically for young adults.

Fitness Myth – Reach Your Target Heart Rate to Burn More Fat

I've heard many times from people about reaching your target heart rate to burn fat. While reaching your target heart rate does burn a higher percentage of calories from fat, if your goal is to lose weight, then you need to focus on the number of overall calories that you burn during a workout.

Many cardio machines have target heart rate monitors and will let you know when you are in the "fat burning zone." There is nothing wrong with working within this zone but if you want to drop weight, then remember calories in / calories out. If you burn more calories than you take in, you'll begin to lose weight.

Fitness Myth – Pasta and Breads Can Make You Fat

First off, you have to remember what it is that causes weight gain. Basically – calories in/calories out. Food is stored as fat when you take in more calories than your body uses up. Keeping that in mind, any food you eat can be stored as body fat if you are not burning off excess calories.

Pasta and breads are good sources of complex carbohydrates, however, you have to eat them wisely. They are calorie dense and are high glycemic foods (if you follow the glycemic index) which means they have a higher impact on blood glucose levels. The

key is moderation and when you choose to eat these types of carbs. Consuming pasta or breads several hours before a good workout help to increase energy levels.

Fitness Myth – You Need to Have a Workout Routine to be Fit

You don't need to belong to a gym or some type of organized group to incorporate fitness into your life. If you are active throughout the day, you may be getting enough of a workout already. It doesn't take much to get in at least 30 minutes of exercise per day. A nice brisk walk at lunch or in the evenings can be a big benefit to your cardiovascular health. If you are constantly lifting things throughout the day, you're already working in resistance training.

Being active throughout the day definitely counts as some form of exercise. You don't need a formal workout plan to get in a good workout. Being physically active counts in all its forms even if it's spread out through the day.

Fitness Myth – If You Don't Look Overweight, You Don't Need to Exercise

Exercising is about more than just looking good. Just because you don't appear to be overweight, you can still have more body fat compared to your muscle mass. Having a high body fat increases your risk for various diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, etc.

Heart disease risk can be reduced by exercising regularly. The main cause of heart disease is inactivity and eating foods high in fat and cholesterol. Exercise has a ton of benefits besides improving your overall health so just because someone doesn't look overweight, doesn't mean they should live a sedentary lifestyle.

Fitness Myth – Eating Once a Day To Lose Weight

Eating once a day is the worse way to try to shed excess pounds. In fact, by eating only once, your body goes into starvation mode and begins to store more of the calories from your meal as fat. Our bodies adapt and will change in order to keep us alive.

It is healthier to eat 4 to 6 healthy mini-meals throughout the day. Your metabolism will actually increase because your body is no longer in “survival mode.” You also provide your body with nutrition and fuel to last the entire day.

Fitness Myth – You Can Lose Weight with Pills or Drinks

This myth continues to make many diet supplement manufacturers millions of dollars a year. Many of my family members and close friends still fall for the “magic in a bottle” to try and lose weight. What many people don’t realize is that many diet supplements are marketed with misleading advertising.

Regular exercise and a well-balanced diet will always remain the best way to maintain a healthy weight. Deciding to be healthy and fit is a lifestyle change. Depending on something found in a pill or drink will more than likely hold you back, rather than promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Fitness Myth – Just Walking Doesn’t Require Warming Up

Walking is a low impact exercise but it is just as intense as running as far as your muscles are concerned. You shouldn’t workout with cold muscles. It is important to warm up your muscles before any exercise. Spend at least five minutes walking at a

steady pace to break a sweat.

Once your muscles are warmed up, you can begin walking at an elevated pace. Also remember to cool down as well and stretch. Stretching while your muscles are warm is an ideal time because your muscles are more flexible.

Fitness Myth – You Can Eat Whatever You Want if You Exercise

The myth that if you exercise, you can eat whatever you want, couldn't be further from the truth. If only it were that simple! The fact of the matter is, your diet is the first thing that needs a major overhaul when you plan on getting into and staying in shape. When you are trying to lose weight, your diet should consist of more fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and staying away from processed foods, sugar, and alcohol.

Sure, you may run into the occasional person who is thin and seems to eat whatever they want and not gain weight. Exercise and diet go hand in hand so don't be fooled!

Fitness Myth – Burn More Fat by Exercising Longer at Lower Intensity

Calories in – calories out. That is the basic principle of controlling your weight. If you take in more calories than you burn in a day, you begin to gain weight. Therefore when you are exercising to drop weight, remember that the total calories burned is more important than the percentage of fat calories burned. A high intensity workout will burn fewer fat calories, however, you will burn more total calories and be well on your way to shedding extra pounds.

Fitness Myth – Drinking Water While Exercising Causes Cramps

Not drinking enough water throughout the day can happen to many of us. A lot of us walk around dehydrated and don't even realize it. That is why not drinking water while exercising is a big myth. We need water all day, even while we are inactive.

Water should be consumed before, during, and after exercising. Not having enough water can lead to headaches and cramping during a workout. Be sure you're getting enough water, especially during the summer months.

Fitness Myth – Stretching Isn't That Important

Stretching is probably one of the most overlooked activities when it comes to exercising. Unfortunately, many people don't feel it is that necessary. Here are several reasons why stretching is so important:

- Increases range of motion in your muscles and joints
- Reduce the severity of muscle soreness
- Increases flexibility
- Helps to prevent injury

Stretching should be done before and after a workout. The above reasons are all important, but more than anything else, you want to reduce your risk of injury.

Fitness Myth – Eating Food After 8pm Will Turn Into Fat

The no eating after 8pm myth is a very common myth and one that I've even believed until recently. The myth states that if you eat after 8pm, the food you eat will turn into body fat. Your metabolism does not shut down at night. In fact, your metabolism can't even tell time.

Your body still needs fuel to repair itself during the night and if you workout later in the evenings, it is even more important. The key is to choose healthier foods such as lean proteins, good fats, and lots of vegetables. If you workout later in the evenings, don't be afraid to eat a meal, just make it a healthy one!

Fitness Myth – The Best Time to Exercise is Early in the Morning

There isn't one specific time of the day that is best to exercise. The best time is anytime that you can fit into your schedule. There is a misconception that waking up at 5 a.m. and heading out to the gym or for a run provides your body the most benefits. Some people prefer to rise early and start their day with fitness, while others feel that ending their day with a good workout helps to relieve the stress of the day.

Either way, do what works for you. As long as you get some exercise into your routine, you are adding a great benefit to your overall well-being.

Fitness Myth – Sitting in a Sauna Helps to Lose Weight

Sitting in a sauna can be a great form of relaxation. I have used a sauna after a good run and have always noticed people who sit in them for long periods of time wearing those full body thermal or vinyl suits. They are dripping in sweat and I think it is safe to assume they thought they were doing their bodies a huge favor by sweating out toxins and helping in weight loss. However, this simply isn't the case. The most you are doing to your body is dehydrating it.

Any water weight that you may have lost while sitting for long periods of time in a sauna is replaced once you begin drinking fluids again. So be cautious when spending too much time in a sauna. You don't want to become dangerously dehydrated.

Fitness Myth – Exercise Should Be Painful to Gain Benefits

You have probably heard of the saying, “no pain, no gain”, however that is far from the truth when it comes to working out. Exercise is not meant to be painful. There is a difference between muscle fatigue (feeling the burn) and actual muscle or joint pain. When you are working out, it is good to work your muscles to fatigue. If you feel sharp, irregular pains in any muscle or part of your body, you need to stop what you are doing. The most important thing you can do is listen to your body before an injury sets in. Remember to stretch before and after each workout. Start with a warm-up and end with a cool-down. Most of all, know the difference between feeling the burn and feeling actual pain.

Fitness Myth – Your Metabolism Slows After 30

Many people (including myself) have believed that your metabolism slows to a screeching halt once you hit 30. This isn't the case at all. The reason your metabolism slows down is due to a loss of lean muscle tissue. When you are not performing hard physical activities such as strength training, you begin to lose lean muscle.

Muscles burn calories and the more muscle you gain, the more calories they will need to burn. The part in which you need to be careful is not offsetting your strength training with other physical activities such as cardio. Also, in order not to gain fat, you need to watch your calorie intake.

Don't worry about bulking up. You would need to be training as a bodybuilder for that to happen and women do not naturally bulk up the way men do. Regular resistance exercise will keep your muscles firm and strong. Building lean muscle will increase your metabolism so learn to incorporate strength training into your workouts.

Fitness Myth – Wearing Ankle or Wrist Weights Adds Exercise Benefits

You've seen them before and you've probably used them yourself. What I'm referring to are those ankle and wrist weights some people wear during their exercise routines. There is nothing wrong with utilizing these types of weights but it is a myth that they will add benefit during aerobic or strength training.

By wearing them during an aerobic workout you are actually slowing yourself down. You want to get your heart rate up to the right level for yourself in order to improve your cardiovascular system and burn fat. Having the extra weight around your wrists and/or ankles is just quite literally – weighing you down.

These types of weights are also no help while strength training. You need to lift heavy enough weights to where you reach muscle fatigue by the time you are at your 8th or 12th repetition. As your muscles grow, you need to increase the weight to produce the same effect of muscle fatigue. Ankle and wrist weights are simply too light to be used for strength training.

I'm sure these types of weights have their place in the fitness world but don't use them incorrectly and believe you are adding benefit when you're not.

Fitness Myth – Women That Weight Train Get Bulky

When a good friend of mine hired a personal trainer to help her get into shape one of her first fears was that weight training would cause her to become bulky and masculine. This is a big myth that many women face due to the image of professional female bodybuilders. Female bodybuilders have a high degree of muscular definition.

I am no expert but from what I've been told and have read, women cannot naturally produce enough testosterone as men. Testosterone is one of the main hormones responsible for increasing muscle size. With that being said, women who are quite muscular (bodybuilder types) are often accused of using anabolic steroids to achieve such an effect.

Women should not be afraid of weight training. If done properly, it can increase your flexibility and stretching ability. You can build lean muscle while burning fat and you will tone up, leaving you firm and fit!

Fitness Myth – Muscles Grow During Exercise

Many people who are new to working out may not understand exactly how muscles become larger. A common misconception is that muscles “grow” during exercise, when in actuality, muscles grow when they are resting.

Exercise such as weight training acts as a stimulus to the muscle. During the exercise, your muscles develop a “micro-injury”, meaning that they are damaged and during recovery time, they repair the damage and overcompensate for the micro-injury by growing larger to prevent the same injury in the future.

That is why recovery after a strenuous workout is very important. Your muscles need time to repair and grow. It is a good idea not to work the same muscles every day, otherwise, they will never have the proper time to rest.

Fitness Myth – Muscles Turn to Fat

Myth: Many people believe that if you stop exercising, your muscles will turn to fat. This simply is not the case. Muscle and fat are two different types of tissues. If you have not exercised for a long period of time, your muscles may have atrophied (meaning they may shrink) and fat can take up the space where your muscle used to be. This is what gives the false impression that muscle turns into fat.

This also reminds me of the myth of people overdoing crunches and sit-ups in order to build 6-pack abs. You can do crunches every day, but if you have a layer of fat over your stomach muscles, those rock hard abs won't show.

If you have not exercised in a long period of time, you'll definitely want to ease back into it. Get clearance from your doctor and then slowly get into some cardio and weight

training. After awhile, your muscles will tone up and the fat will burn off.

Fitness Myth – Exercising Abs Will Lose Your Belly

Exercising your abs is great, but you are under the wrong impression if you think that doing hundreds of sit-ups will lose your pot belly. I was also under that impression for a long time. Working out your abs will still benefit them. You can have a great six-pack but you won't see it until you drop the fat surrounding your abs. The common myth is that you can spot reduce areas of your body, however, fat reduction happens uniformly. It all comes back to burning more calories than what you take in. So keep on working those abs but get in some good cardio also to help burn more calories, thus, reducing the fat.

Top Two Tips to Remember About Fitness

There are two top tips to remember when it comes to getting into and staying in shape:

1. Healthy eating habits
2. Interval Training

Healthy Eating Habits

Without eating properly, no amount of exercise will get you into the shape you want. That is why many people don't understand why they are exercising constantly, yet not dropping the weight they are trying to lose. Also, individuals who are seeking six-pack abs or toning up in general don't achieve their goals because of a high percentage of body fat. Knowing how to eat as well as what to eat is key in lowering body fat and losing weight. I recommend a program such as Tom Venuto's Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle in order to learn the ins and outs of lowering your body fat.

[Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle](#)

Interval Training

Incorporating interval training into your routine can boost your metabolism much more than a regular cardio session. The reason being is that many interval workouts use resistance training (mostly your own body weight) to help build lean muscle. Muscles burns more calories than fat. By building lean muscle using intervals, your metabolism gets a major boost because your muscles continue to burn calories even while you are at rest. Craig Ballantyne's Turbulence Training program is packed with information on how to utilize intervals and healthy eating. What is also great is that his workouts work well for the busy individual and most of us fall into that category.

[Turbulence Training](#)

Thank you for reading this report! I hope it has helped to squash any of the common fitness myths you may have heard throughout your life.