

Personal Training by Robert J. Bovee

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CONSIDER THE ADVANTAGES OF EXERCISE

Over the past few years, aerobic exercise has been given major emphasis. It hasn't been until recently that scientifically supported evidence has shown that weight training is also essential in overall health and physical beauty. Strong muscles, does not always mean large muscles. Strong muscles burn calories, protect bone structure, and burn fat. Muscles also allow us to easily perform many daily activities from walking to lifting a basket of laundry.

Studies have shown that we lose muscle over the years mainly because as we age, we use them less. Strength training helps prevent the body composition changes which occur in sedentary individuals between the ages of **45** and **85**. At **20**, the average woman has **23%** body fat; the average man has **18%** body fat. By age **30**, those numbers are up to **30%** and **25%** respectively. By the time **70** rolls around, body fat percentages are up to **54%** for women and **48%** for men. This change in body composition not only leaves an individual feeling sluggish and physically less attractive, it also is very unhealthy. Strength training has recently become an important component of preventative medicine. The American College of Sports Medicine, a governing body in the exercise field, added strength training to its exercise guidelines in **1990**. All findings have shown that strength training is effective in reducing risk factors for several age related diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis. Surprisingly, aerobic activity alone won't stop this muscle to fat progression.

Without exercise, controlling body fat is an up hill battle. The amount of lean muscle mass that an individual has is directly related to how fast or how slow their metabolism is. In other words, people with more muscle burn more calories and can therefore eat more than those with less muscle mass and not gain weight. Individuals with large body fat percentages and little muscle mass can eat few calories during the day and continue to gain weight. This is why dieting alone is often unsuccessful. In a recent study, a group of obese women were put on calorie restricted diets and either weight trained or did not engage in weight training. Both groups ended up losing roughly the same amount of weight, however, the sedentary subjects lost 2 pounds of lean muscle mass while the group that strength trained gained a pound of muscle while losing a greater percentage of fat. Without increasing your metabolism, losing weight can be very frustrating and often times impossible.

Pumping iron for health purposes is very different from bodybuilding. Body builders are usually in the gym six days a week doing numerous sets and using very heavy weights, whereas fitness-oriented lifters can obtain considerable results by training three times a week on a comparably moderate program. The emphasis on strength training has also resulted in a new generation of user friendly weight rooms. Personal training is available at affordable rates and programs specifically designed for women, for weight loss, for rehabilitation and for cardiac rehabilitation are now all available. Since so many people are catching on to the many benefits of strength training, there are a variety of people in health clubs today. Men and women, young and old, the gym is a great place to meet health oriented individuals.

Many people shy away from lifting because they're afraid of looking muscle bound. A three day a week weight training program will not make you look like a body builder. In fact, it will make overweight people smaller. You'll see some increase in muscle size and certainly an increase in strength, but there will also be a major decrease in body fat. Training is no longer just for the stereotypical "muscle heads". Anyone, of any age, with a concern for staying lean, active, and healthy, is well advised to jump into the weight room and pump a little iron.

For more information, please contact Robert J. Bovee at **(585) 330-0614**.