

health talk



Four Facts to Keep You Fit!

By Manni Wong
Registered Physiotherapist

RESISTANCE/STRENGTH TRAINING is a great way to stay fit and to improve performance in physical activities. Proper resistance training has some of the following health benefits*:

- Improved body composition (decrease fat, increase muscle)
- Decreasing stress and improving energy levels
- Improved muscle, bone and joint health with aging
- Improved cardiovascular status
- Prevention and management of chronic diseases (ie diabetes, depression, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis etc)
- Prevention of orthopedic injuries

*If you want more information regarding health benefits of strength training, stop by Form and Function and talk with one of our health care professionals.

Now that you know some of the benefits, let's start/improve your strength training routine. There are four principles to develop a good resistance training program. Remember and follow these principles to help you to start getting or stay **FITT**.

FREQUENCY: For general fitness, it is recommended by the American College of Sports Medicine to strength train 2-3 nonconsecutive days per week. For beginners, there should be at least 1 day of rest between workouts to let muscles heal. Training too often to start can lead to injury. For those who have experience strength training, the frequency can increase but be sure to spread the workload between different muscle groups on consecutive days (ie upper body day 1, lower body day 2). In this way, you can train back to back days and still allow muscles time to rest and heal.

INTENSITY: This depends on your goals for strength training. For muscle hypertrophy (increasing muscle bulk), you want a weight where you can only do 6-8 repetition of the exercise. Repeat 3-5 times after a short break. For increasing strength, try a weight that allows you to do 8-12 repetitions. Repeat for 3 sets. For increasing muscle endurance, a weight you can lift 12-20 times is ideal. Repeat 3 times.

TIME: Repetitions and Sets. Repetitions mean the amount of times you do an exercise at one time followed by a break. A set is when

you finish all repetitions one time. For example 3x10 means three sets of 10 repetition or in other words, 10 times for one exercises, break, then repeat 2 times. Time goes hand in hand with Intensity (see above). For beginners, 3 sets of 10 repetition is a good start.

TYPE: Different types of exercise target different areas of the body. A general understanding of anatomy can help you choose the right exercises. Here is a good resource for you to learn more about different types of strength training exercises (<http://www.exrx.net/>). There are a lot of different exercises of varying difficulties out there so consulting a personal trainer to find exercises appropriate for your level is a good idea.

MOST IMPORTANT: YOUR GOAL

All the FITT principles are affected by your goal. Always train with a goal or purpose. I cannot stress this enough. With a goal in mind, you are more likely to stick with your strength training, see better results and prevent injury. If you are new to strength training, consult a personal trainer to discuss any fitness goals you may have and how to achieve them realistically. If you have some strength training experience, you may still want to consult a personal trainer to see if you are doing your exercises with proper form or develop new goals to achieve. If you have a pre-existing injury, you want to first talk to a health care professional (physiotherapist or chiropractor) to discuss which exercises are suitable or unsuitable for you.

“FOUR PRINCIPLES TO DEVELOP A GOOD RESISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM”

These professionals can help set realistic goals with you and also develop a rehabilitation program to get you through your injury.

Now get going, set some fitness goals and have fun achieving them!

