

EXERCISE TIPS FOR FAT LOSS

1. **Both cardiovascular exercise and strength training have a role to play in fat loss.** However, sit ups or leg lifts alone will NOT whittle your waist or trim your thighs. You'll increase your muscles' strength or endurance, but the fat pad on top will remain. Remember that you're working with your own genetic pattern, which determines your basic body build, where you will deposit extra fat and how your body responds to extra calories or exercise.
2. **Cardiovascular exercise is the best choice for burning calories and fat,** no matter where the fat is on your body. Cardiovascular exercise elevates your metabolism during the activity, requires lots of energy and makes you a more effective fat-burner.

Cardiovascular exercise activities include:

- * Brisk walking
- * Jogging
- * Cycling
- * Hiking
- * Aerobics classes
- * Rowing
- * Stair climbing
- * Many types of dancing
- * Swimming
- * Cross-country skiing/Nordic Track
- * Soccer, basketball and other high movement sports

Any activity that uses large muscle groups in continuous motion for 20-30 minutes will improve your stamina. The more muscles involved and the harder you exercise, the more calories you burn! For best results, take as many opportunities as you can to participate in high and low intensity cardiovascular activities during the week. Your goal is to burn about 1,000-2,000 kcal/week in exercise activity. This can usually be accomplished by exercising 30-60 minutes, about 4-5 days each week.

3. **Strength training does help with fat loss.** Weight training is designed to build muscle tissue, which is very metabolically active. Strength training two or three times a week can be an excellent supplement to your aerobic training by increasing the type of body tissue associated with a speedy resting metabolism. You will actually gain some muscle weight through strength training, but that's great! You may also prevent losses in muscle, which occur with low-calorie diets and aging. Lifting weights increases your strength to help you engage in vigorous aerobic activities without injury.
4. **The harder the intensity of exercise, the more calories are burned up by the body.** New research suggests that high intensity exercise or interval training cause changes in muscle chemistry that promote fat burning. However, when starting an exercise program, it's often very uncomfortable and unsafe to exercise at high intensities. That's one reason why a low to moderate pace is recommended for beginners. You just need to exercise longer to burn up the calories. Make your pace as brisk as you can handle. You should feel somewhat challenged, not exhausted. Feel yourself breathing deeply, but still be able to carry on a conversation. When you have established a good routine, you should begin to add intervals of higher intensity effort into your workout.

5. **If you're out of shape out, start slowly.** Who wants to get injured? Start with a 10-15 minute workout and add a minute or two each week. Limit increases in time or distance to about 10% weekly. Try non-weight-bearing activities like cycling or swimming in addition to walking, jogging, etc. This is particularly important if you're carrying extra weight, which can put undue stress on your joints. Gradually begin to do a form of interval training where you exercise briskly for a 1-2 minutes, then exercise easily until you catch your breath, then briskly, then easily and so on. Each week, try to add a few more minutes of challenging intensity intervals

6. **Variety and enjoyment are the keys to exercise adherence.** To lose fat you'll want to incorporate more than one type of activity into your life and find things you enjoy for many different reasons (social time, private time, competition, learning a new skill). This will help you avoid overuse injuries, keep exercise fun and provide for options depending on weather and other obstacles.

Example:

	M	T	W	TH	F	SA/SUN
Marjorie:	Bike/Weights	Walk	Bike/Weights	Walk/Dance	Gardening/Walk	-----
Laura:	Run	Martial Arts	Run	Martial Arts	-----	Run/Skate or Ski
James:	Ski/Step machine	Weights	Ski/Step machine	Weights	Ski/Step machine	Hike or Bike

7. **If you have previous muscle or joint injuries** (for example: back pain, knee problems), ask your doctor to refer you to a physical therapist who can evaluate you and develop a personalized strengthening and stretching program related to your injury. This will protect weakened joints and muscles from re-injury during repetitive aerobic exercise.

8. **Just how much weight should I expect to lose by exercising?** Exercise is most effective for fat loss when combined with a program of reduced calorie and fat intake. With exercise alone, your fat loss will be slow, but steady, and determined by the intensity and volume of exercise you're able to manage each week. That's why many people see better initial success if they also adopt a low-calorie, low-fat eating pattern. Regardless of how you lose your extra fat, **regular physical activity has been shown to be critical for keeping weight off once you've lost it.** A fat loss of no more than 1-2 lbs/week is recommended for most people. The faster you lose weight, the more likely you will be to gain it back. If you lose just 1-2 pounds of fat every 2 weeks through realistic lifestyle changes, you will be 24-48 pounds lighter by the end of a year!

If you would like to have an idea of the number of calories burned by a specific activity, you can ask us for an Energy Expenditure Chart. There are a few things to keep in mind.

- It takes about 3,500 calories to burn up one pound of fat.
- When you calculate the energy cost of an activity, remember that you would have been doing something else to burn calories (probably sitting) if you weren't exercising. This means that the extra calories you're burning through exercise must reflect the difference between your normal activity and your exercise activity.
- The benefits of strength training and aerobic conditioning go far beyond simple energy expenditure. The changes in your body chemistry and many aspects of physical function will promote health, vitality and an ideal weight.