

MAY 2009

FREE

TWIN CITIES

...naturally

Your Resource For a Healthy, Active, Sustainable Lifestyle...Naturally

INTERVIEW
With
DR. MARK HYMAN

FAITH
God Handed Me a
Gift
Bernie Siegel, MD

THERMOGRAPHY:
*Radiation Free Breast
Screening*

**COSMETIC
ACUPUNCTURE**

OSTEOPOROSIS:
Not Just for
Your
Mother

Women & Weight Training



The Myth

Many women worry weight training will give them bulky muscles. Regretfully, that fear has prevented a lot of women from starting a weight lifting routine to slim down. Practically speaking, it is difficult for a woman to build up a lot of bulk, even if they try.

The Fact

There are countless other beneficial forms of exercise for women. Weight training, however, is the only form that builds bone density preventing, stopping or at times even reversing the degenerative effects of osteoporosis. Muscle gained from a weight program can stabilize the body's framework reducing the likelihood of pulls, strains and sprains. Exercises done correctly can improve balance and heal old and nagging injuries. Best of all, new science shows regardless of age, your body is capable of building new bone, muscle and connective tissue.

Weight Training Promotes Weight Loss

When a woman (or a man) adds a few pounds of muscle, it speeds up their metabolism. That is because each new pound of muscle burns between 35 and 50 calories per day. Thus, adding as little as three pounds of muscle to your body can have a dramatic effect over time. Three extra pounds of muscle will burn up to 150 calories per day. Multiply that by 365 days in a year and you get up to 54,750 extra calories burned! Considering it takes a 3500-calorie deficit to shed a pound of fat, that translates into a fat loss of more than 15lbs in a year! That doesn't even count the substantial calories you'll burn during each workout. Skip desserts, cheese and junk food as well and you can experience amazing results.

Lets Lift, but the Question Arises: Machines or Free Weights?

Once you've decided to try weight training, you'll consider whether to use machine or free weight exercise. An advantage of machines is that they are in nearly every health club in the country. Typically, once you learn how to use them it's easy to do the exercises. Club machines are designed with safety in mind. So long as you warm up and use moderate resistance, you will have little risk of injury.

Some disadvantage of many machines is the exercise

traverses a fixed track of movement. You'll work your muscles well but engage fewer supporting/structural muscles that are very important to overall body function and stability. There are also a limited number of exercises you can do on standardized machines so they can be less than all encompassing. Lastly, you may find yourself waiting for a machine, which is disruptive to a workout program.

Many fitness experts believe that free weight training is one of the best forms of exercise when performed correctly. Free weights allow nearly infinite types and variations of exercises. Each exercise can be done through a natural range of motion without limits of a machine, which promotes flexibility as well as strength. Over time using free weight dumbbells can also equalize each side of your body when, for example, one arm is stronger than the other.

Free weight training is fantastic but far from easy to do with perfect form and technique. After working with a trainer for years many people still need subtle corrections on their technique, especially when tired. If done properly though few things will benefit you more in terms of improving how you look, feel and your stamina,.

Give Weight Lifting or Something a Try!

If you've never tried weight training, you should. Be sure and start out easy and work your way into a more challenging routine. If you want instruction there are many great health clubs and trainers in the Twin Cities that can help you learn and keep you motivated. There are also many fun and effective forms of lifting classes done in small groups led by a fitness professional. Generally fitness classes are far more affordable than working one-to-one with a trainer and provide excellent motivation and accountability. And if you feel weight training is simply not for you, find a form of exercise you enjoy and do it regularly!

Phil Martens is a fitness author, fitness inventor, certified trainer, and the founder and fitness director of 501FIT (www.501fit.com) in downtown Minneapolis. He is also the designer of the patented G-Werx Gym used in a new form of group strength training classes (patent pending). If you have any questions about strength training, feel free to write him at Phil@501fit.com.