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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Tips on Weightlifting

The saying "No Pain No Gain" is well known to be associated with weight training. This leads beginners and regulars alike to believe that they have to experience pain during and after weight lifting to make progress or gains. This is not true! Experiencing pain is our body's way of telling us that something is wrong, not that we are doing something that is good for us. When a weightlifter challenges his/her muscles too much, muscle pain or soreness will result. This will be mostly felt 24 to 48 hours later. Overdoing it when weightlifting actually causes excessive microscopic tears in the muscle fibers. Until the tears heal, virtually any movement of the muscle reproduces discomfort. If weightlifting is done properly, the muscles should be very fatigued after a workout. A mild amount of stiffness may be present over the next two days but the muscle should be capable of lengthening or stretching without excessive pain.

When the physical demand on any muscle is increased, the body will gradually compensate by making the muscle stronger. This is why the more often you lift weights, the more gains in strength and muscle size you will make.

Below are some simple tips for beginners. If you are already going to a gym or fitness center, watch for even the biggest and strongest weightlifters still doing these things improperly.

- 1) Warm up and stretch before you begin weightlifting.
- 2) Practice good body mechanics and posture while performing your lifts.
- 3) Lift and lower the weight smoothly.
- 4) Do not jerk or bounce the weight.
- 5) Do not squirm or alter your body position in order to gain a mechanical advantage while lifting.
- 6) Only lift what you can handle comfortably.
- 7) Choose a weight that allows you to lift it at least 8 times and a maximum of 18 times before the muscle becomes fatigued. If you can't lift it eight times, it is too heavy. If you can lift it more than 18 times, it is too light.

There are other benefits to weightlifting as well. Firstly, as the amount of muscle in your body (commonly called your muscle mass) increases, so does your metabolism.

Therefore, the more muscle you have, the more energy or calories required to sustain it. This means that if you already have a reasonable diet but increase the muscle mass of your body, you will be in a much better position to burn more calories than you consume. This will allow you to lose weight much easier. Secondly, the muscles all attach to the bones and therefore stress is put on them as well. This has a beneficial secondary effect. Just as muscle does, when stress is repetitively put on the bones, the body will make them stronger. This is why weightlifting is recommended for people who are at risk of osteoporosis.

For all beginners, I would also strongly recommend that you seek professional help from a Certified Personal Trainer. This will allow you to start with a weightlifting program that is safe and suited to your goals.