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

Ever Tried “Interval Training”

Unfortunately, the general population in almost any country in the western world is facing an epidemic. It is obesity. Not only does it contribute to someone experiencing low back pain, but it is one of the largest contributors to diabetes and heart disease.

I would hope that all of you reading this participate in some form of exercise at least a few days per week, other than what you do at work. For those of you who don't, I don't need to tell that you should be. For those of you who do, the following is a little tidbit of information that will allow you to make your time exercising more worthwhile.

Ok, are you ready to shake up your workout routine? Do you wish you could burn more calories without spending more time exercising? Consider “interval training” when you are doing aerobic exercise. It used to be done by only elite athletes, but interval training has become a powerful tool for the average exerciser too.

So what is interval training? It's not as complicated as you might think. Interval training is simply alternating bursts of intense activity with intervals of lighter activity. Take walking. If you're in good shape and accustomed to walking already, you might incorporate short bursts of jogging into your regular brisk walks. Even if its only for 30 to 60 seconds. If you're less fit, you might alternate leisurely walking with periods of faster walking. For example, if you're walking outdoors, you could walk faster between certain mailboxes, trees or other landmarks. You will burn more calories in the same amount of time!

What can interval training do for you? Whether you're a novice exerciser or you've been exercising for years, interval training can help you jazz up your workout routine. Consider the benefits:

- You'll burn more calories. The more vigorously you exercise, the more calories you'll burn — even if you increase intensity for just a few minutes at a time.
- You'll improve your aerobic capacity. As your cardiovascular fitness improves, you'll be able to exercise longer or with more intensity. Imagine finishing your 60-minute walk in 45 minutes — or the additional calories you'll burn by keeping up the pace for the full 60 minutes.
- You'll keep boredom at bay. Turning up your intensity in short intervals can add variety to your exercise routine.

- You don't need special equipment. You can simply modify your current routine.

How will your muscles respond to interval training? During intense exercise, muscles produce the waste product lactic acid. Too much lactic acid can make exercise painful and exhausting. But by alternating bursts of intense exercise with easier intervals, you'll help reduce the buildup of lactic acid in your muscles. The result is more comfortable exercise.

Does interval training have risks?

Does interval training have risks? Interval training isn't appropriate for everyone. If you have a chronic health condition or haven't been exercising regularly, consult your doctor before trying any type of interval training. Also keep the risk of overuse injury in mind. If you rush into a strenuous workout before your body is ready, you may hurt your muscles, tendons or bones. Instead, start slowly. Try just one or two higher intensity intervals during each workout at first. If you think you're overdoing it, slow down. As your stamina improves, challenge yourself to vary the pace. You may be surprised by the results, fitness and weight loss wise.