

INTERVAL TRAINING

Mention the word 'interval' training and it can be a sure fire way to intimidate some to steer clear. The thought of interval training conjures up images of super hard bodies, die-hard fitness enthusiasts and athletes. However interval training can be a most effective addition to any program allowing you to see faster results in less time.

The key to interval training is intensity. The technique involves intermittent exercise cycles of low and very high intensity. Each interval has a pre-determined time and intensity. The work interval (high intensity exercise) is immediately followed by a recovery interval (low to moderate intensity exercise) and repeated for duration of time.

For example: After an appropriate warm up increase your walk pace to an incline for one minute followed by 3/4/or 5 minutes back to regular pace. Or, jog at the same incline for one minute followed by 5 minutes of walking, repeat this interval 5 times.

Intervals allow you to perform many minutes at a much higher intensity that you would otherwise not be able to sustain consecutively. By interspersing recovery intervals, you extend your capabilities, you accomplish more work and you burn more calories!

Interval training like any other type of training should be introduced progressively into your workout plan. Add an interval session once a week to start. Challenging interval workouts should not exceed two workouts per week. As well be sure to separate your interval workouts by at least 48 hours to allow your body to fully recovery from the intensity.

It is important that you set a specific time for each interval rather than simply exercising strenuously for a while. Work and rest intervals do not necessarily have to be equal in time. In fact, in the beginning you may want to have rest intervals longer than work intervals. As you become accustomed to the training, gradually decrease your rest time until the ratio of work to rest is equal. Then you may wish to increase the work time while keeping the rest time the same.

It is important to select an intensity that you can maintain for each interval. In the beginning you will feel very fresh and be capable of a great deal of work, however, if you start out too intense, by the time the fifth interval comes along you may not have enough left to complete the time and pace.

Your ultimate goal is to perform 10 to 20 minutes of high-intensity work each session, excluding the recovery time. Interval Training is a great way to add variety and challenge to your workout. It can be done for cardiovascular conditioning and while working on weights. No matter what your level of fitness or goal there is a way to implement this kind of training in a safe and appropriate manner. It will assist you in every imaginable goal from weight loss to running your first 5km or a faster 10km.

Cardio or Aerobic workouts need to have a purpose, a plan and direction, just like you do in the weight room. Gone are the days of 'winging it'. Seek the advice of your trainer to help you plan a cardio program that will compliment not only your lifestyle but also your specific health and fitness goals!

Need help with your plan or wish to make the one you are on more effective. Join us February 8th for an informative Lifestyle Seminar: Heart Smarts. 5:30 pm in the Landmark IV Conference Room 1. Registration is required. Our lifestyle sessions are complimentary to you, your family, colleagues and friends.

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