

The Truth about Exercise

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A new study published on the National Institutes of Health Web site pulls together a body of previous studies and makes it clear that middle-age and older adults should be doing anaerobic exercise – high-intensity wind sprints rather than, or in addition to standard, long, slow cardio like walking.

Anaerobic sprinting types of exercise – running, cycling, swimming, cross country skiing – are shown by medical researchers to make the body produce significant amounts of anti-aging, growth hormone.

It's no secret that several well-known entertainers take growth hormone (GH) injections for its bodyfat cutting, muscle toning, youth rejuvenating properties, but there can be serious side effects from GH injections.

Unquestionably "natural"

Natural is always best. And producing growth hormone from high-intensity exercise is unquestionably "natural."

Growth hormone injections are given to children with clinical stature growth problems to help them grow normally. Growth hormone does not make adults grow taller. For middle-aged adults, GH can reverse several measurable clinical factors of the middle-age bulge – officially named "the somatopause" by researchers.

The middle-aged somatopause is signified by energy decline, weight gain (around the middle and hips), loss of muscle and wrinkled skin after age 30.

Researchers report "aging is often associated with a progressive decrease in the volume and, especially, the intensity of exercise." A growing body of evidence suggests that higher intensity exercise is effective in eliciting beneficial health, well-being and training outcomes. In a great many cases, the impact of some of the deleterious effects of aging could be reduced if exercise focused on promoting exercise-produced growth hormone."

("The exercise-induced growth hormone response in athletes," Godfrey, Sports Med. 2003;33(8):599-613.2003)

Can you handle the truth about fitness? Here's the truth.

Being overweight causes cancer. The

researchers aren't talking just about obesity, they mean obesity and being "overweight."

Being overweight, which is far less than obesity, now accounts for 14 to 20% of deaths by cancer, report researchers in a major new study. ("Overweight, obesity and mortality from cancer in a prospectively studied cohort of US adults," 2003, Calle).

This wasn't a small, out-of-context study conducted over a few months. Over 900,000 adults were studied for 16 years. Researchers estimate that more than 90,000 cancer deaths each year could be avoided if every American maintained a healthy weight.

"We estimate that current patterns of overweight and obesity in the U.S. could account for 14 percent of all deaths from cancer in men and 20 percent of those in women."

The study also shows that the risk of dying from cancer – caused from being overweight – is 52% greater than men of normal weight. And it's 62% higher for women, and all the more reason to start and maintain a lifestyle that makes fitness training a priority.

Is low-intensity exercise enough?

Long and slow forms of cardio - like walking are great ways to begin for someone who is inactive. But don't be misled. The research is clear. This form of exercise doesn't compare to the benefits of anaerobic exercise. We're talking about the difference between kindergarten and college.

Low-intensity exercise is absolutely necessary as a starting point, but it needs to be the starting point and a stepping stone that leads to moderate-intensity exercise, which in turn, needs to be a stepping stone for high-intensity anaerobic exercise.

Low-intensity does not prevent death from heart disease

For years, the gold standard for exercise was 30 minutes of activity a day. And walking for 30 minutes a day was said to be adequate enough to delay heart disease

and premature death. Not true, report researchers.

A new study of 2,000 men over 10 years destroys the low-intensity, walking standard. Researchers show that low-intensity does nothing to prevent death from heart disease.

Nearly 2,000 men, ages 45 to 59, were tracked for 10 years. Initially, none of the men had any evidence of heart disease. Exercise was performed and measured by three levels of intensity: low, moderate and high.

Low-intensity included walking and bowling. Golf and dancing qualified as moderate-intensity. Running and swimming were placed in the high-intensity category.

Of the 252 deaths that occurred during the 10-year study, 75% were linked to heart disease and stroke. And cancer accounted for 25%.

Conclusion: Walking 30 minutes five times a week is not enough to prevent early death from heart disease. Moderate-intensity also failed to reduce premature deaths.

Only the highest levels of exercise intensity lowered death rates.

Solution: add anaerobic exercise...wisely

Be wise. Don't read this and go run a 200-meter sprint full speed. Pulling a hamstring or killing yourself to improve fitness misses the point.

Anaerobic exercise is the most productive form of exercise, and it should be a part of every fitness routine. However, anaerobic exercise is also the most dangerous form of exercise. Physician clearance is a must.

A progressive build-up program – from low, to moderate, to high-intensity – is necessary. The progressive build-up will help prevent injury, and it will condition and develop the body so you can receive all the benefits from increasing exercise-induced growth hormone.

Have a great day!