



Lady of America Newsletter – August 2010 – Work & Exercise Fitness: The Benefits of Circuit Training

Activity is just one factor to living a healthy lifestyle. To get results your regimen must include resistance training, cardio training and good, healthy eating habits. One way to get the maximum results is performing a fat-burning circuit workout two to three times a week.

Circuit training involves alternating the muscle groups, allowing for adequate recovery. For example, you start with the chest then move to the legs then to the shoulders and then to the arms. The benefits of circuit training include increased strength, lean body mass, improved posture, enhanced muscle balance and increased bone density. In addition, there are cardiovascular benefits – improved energy levels, lower blood pressure, increased HDL levels, reduced risk of heart disease and improved endurance.

“Circuit training is a total body workout that involves performing a series of high-intensity aerobics and resistance training,” said Lady of America’s official fitness trainer, Natalie Brabner. “When you do circuit training you are performing one set of each exercise for a set period of time then you immediately move to the next exercise with only a short rest in between.”

According to research conducted by J.H. Wilmore, circuit training programs burn more calories when compared to traditional strength-training programs due to the maintenance of an elevated heart rate and performing more work in less time. Research conducted by Pratley, Nicklas and Rubin in 1994 shows that the addition of cardiovascular exercise between strength exercises also increases lean body mass, which results in a higher resting metabolism. This means more calories are burned throughout the day.

“It’s a great way to spice it up,” added exercise physiologist Michelle Kennedy. “Not only does circuit training condense the amount of time you spend in the gym, it avoids getting into the exercise rut. A lot of my clients love it because it is challenging and exciting.”

Here are some guidelines to follow when doing a circuit training program:

- Always warm up at least 5 minutes
- Wear a heart rate monitor and keep your heart rate in its fat-burning zone during your program
- Have a stop watch or clock in view so you can time your exercises
- Have a variety of dumbbells on hand
- Pay attention to your form and body – if something doesn’t feel right, don’t push it

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