

Get Fit with an Exercise Bike

With cooler weather just around the corner, many people will be looking for alternative ways of exercising indoors. One effective method is riding a stationary, or exercise, bike. Here are several tips for using an exercise bike to stay fit:



- Use a bike that fits you. Make sure the seat height and your distance away from the handlebars is comfortable. If it's too high, you'll be straining to reach and might injure yourself.
- Learn about your exercise bike and how to use it safely. Make sure you understand how to adjust the intensity and change the program options.
- Begin your bike workout slowly and build up to longer, more intense workouts. Listen to your body and adjust the tension and speed accordingly. Don't be afraid to slow down or take a break when necessary.
- Avoid gripping the handlebars too tightly, as this will increase the tension in your neck and shoulders.
- Wear appropriate clothing. Opt for bike shorts, preferably padded ones like most outdoor cyclists wear, for comfort.
- Remember to drink plenty of water before, during, and after your workout.

Heads Up: Recognizing Concussions

With football and soccer season in high gear, parents, players, and coaches should all be aware of these warning signs and symptoms of concussion. **According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), here are symptoms to note:** • Nausea • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or fuzzy vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Headache • Feeling sluggish • Feeling foggy or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion.

For a fact sheet on concussions, visit the CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/CGToolKit/AthleteFactsheet.pdf>.

Reap the Benefits of Exercise

• Reduces the risk of diabetes. • Helps you maintain a healthy weight. • Reduces the risk of premature death. • Reduces the risk of heart disease. • Improves the health of muscles and bones. • Improves mental health. • Reduces the risk of high blood pressure. • Reduces the risk of colon cancer. • Helps older adults become stronger.

Source: Shape Up America!, www.shapeup.org

Don't Be Tricked by Fad Diets

I'm frequently asked what I think of certain diets. Is this one better than that one? How much red meat is really healthy in one day? Does this food really burn fat?

With 200 million overweight or obese adults in the U.S., it's easy to understand the appeal of most popular diets – quick and easy weight loss. It's also easy to be confused about diets. One person on a high-carbohydrate, low-fat vegetarian diet drops several dress sizes and 25 pounds in a few months. Another person tries a high-protein/high-fat, low-carbohydrate diet and loses the same. How can such differing approaches work equally well?



Without examining whether one approach is healthier than another, you need to understand that when it comes to simple weight loss, it's not about the nutrients being offered by a diet plan. It's about the calories being consumed. Nothing changes the fact that if you're burning more calories every day than you're taking in, you should lose weight. And vice versa. That's the bottom line, whether the calories come from protein, fat, or carbohydrates.

Don't get caught up in the marketing spin. While one marketer claims reduced carbohydrates and increased proteins as the success of their diet, another tells you that their diet plan works because you have eliminated sugars and refined carbohydrates. The reality is that through following their plan you have reduced your calorie intake and not even noticed. If following their diet means you take in between 1,200 and 1,800 calories a day, you'll lose weight. It's simple math.

Another factor to consider is that the lost weight oftentimes is not body fat. The scale may be going down, but pleasing numbers may only represent water and muscle that's being shed. While this is most often true of crash diets, it's a part of many popular diets as well.

Without the establishment of a balance of the proper nutrition and exercise, a diet can be far more detrimental in the long term than any temporary celebration through a change in wardrobes.



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