

Personal Health newsletter

PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR A HEALTHFUL LIFESTYLE

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*Helping
you make
your own
decisions
about your
personal
health . . .*



Treadmill vs. outdoor running . . .

With fall's arrival, many runners will soon be taking their workout indoors. Fortunately, researchers say there are only subtle biomechanical differences between treadmill running and outdoor running.

Running indoors on a treadmill may seem less challenging because of the lack of wind resistance. But that can be compensated by setting the machine at a very slight incline. And treadmill running offers more shock absorbency, giving less impact on joints than running on hard outdoor surfaces. This is a good thing, especially if you are recuperating from an injury, or suffer arthritic joints. However, avid treadmill runners won't be conditioned to run on harder surfaces. They need to prepare and build the muscular endurance needed for high impact.

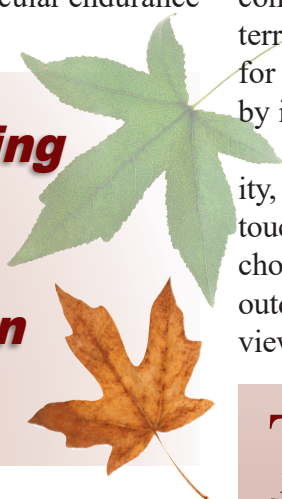
If you're a winter treadmill runner, be sure you gradually adjust to road running again in the spring. Better still, try to run outdoors in winter months whenever the weather allows, to keep your legs used to the impact. Also, spend a little more time stretching after your treadmill runs. Flexible muscles are much better as shock absorbers.

Treadmill running is convenient and you have complete control over your terrain and workout intensity. It's also more enjoyable for those who hate to exercise, because the time can fly by if you run while watching television.

However, outdoor running is an enjoyable activity, offering the opportunity for fresh air and being in touch with nature (depending, of course, on where you choose to run). Try for variety; do both treadmill and outdoor runs, especially if you live in an area where the view, as well as the effort, takes your breath away.



***Be cautious running
on wet, slippery
leaves in the fall.
It's like running on
banana peels!***



Inside this issue . . .

- Using a stair-climbing machine
- Protein needs
- Healthy eating tips



Treadmills are considered the best choice of exercise machines for calorie burning: they show greater calorie usage and cardiovascular fitness improvements than several other fitness machines. It's speculated exercisers can work at higher intensities because walking and running on a treadmill are familiar and natural movement patterns, more comfortable to do. Therefore, longer time is spent on a treadmill than other exercise machines.

Using a stair-climbing machine

A stair-climbing machine is an excellent challenge for your heart and lungs, burns calories, and gives the leg muscles a good workout. Here are a few basic

tips for your stair-climbing workout:

Avoid bending over at the waist. You'll put too much stress on your lower back. And avoid leaning on the machine. If you shift your weight off the pedals on some machines, your calorie expenditure calculation won't be accurate.

Stair climbing can cause a sudden rise in heart rate, so it's not a good exercise for those with medical problems or those who aren't physically fit. If you're not very fit, ease into the exercise gradually or get in shape first doing other activities such as brisk walking or bicycling.

Short, quick steps on the stair-climbing machine are easier on your knees. If you don't push the pedal all the way down, there's less bending (and therefore less stress) on your knee joints. Keep this in mind if you have knee problems or want to avoid getting them. *AKA*

Watch your protein intake when looking to bulk up or gain muscle weight. There is a

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general misconception that we need to eat lots of protein to achieve this. In reality, an Olympic weight-lifter only needs twice the protein of an average person. A typical weight-training regime lasting 15-30 minutes three to five times a week, does not come close to that intensity. Thus most people usually overestimate the amount of dietary protein needed in any given day. Increased protein intake can stress your kidneys and will add more calories to your diet – which may sabotage your efforts to achieve a leaner look. As a rule, take your weight in kilograms and multiply it by 0.8. This is how many grams of protein a moderately active person needs in a day. If you are looking to gain muscle weight or bulk up for a particular sport, it's best to visit a Registered Dietitian to determine your actual protein need – instead of reaching for another protein bar. *AKA*

HEALTH TIP

Avoid skipping breakfast

In the early morning your blood sugar level is down, because you've been in a semi starvation state during sleep. Unless you fuel your brain and your body, your blood sugar will continue to drop. You'll be very hungry by mid morning or mid day. The body slows its metabolism – or calorie burning – when a meal is missed as a survival instinct to conserve fuel and energy. When you do eat again (and you'll probably eat lots if you're really hungry!) you won't burn off the calories as efficiently with a slower metabolism. *AKA*

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
FITNESS NOTES

Did you know . . .

Regular, moderate exercise may protect us against many types of cancer. Researchers studying colon cancer speculate physical activity encourages bowel movements, thereby keeping the intestines and bowels regularly cleansed of toxic matter. Exercise is thought to lower the level of female sex hormones, thus providing less stimulation for malignant cells in female reproductive cancers and breast cancer.

It's never too late to start exercising. In as little as six weeks of training (two to three times per week) mature adults have increased their aerobic capacity from 11 to 76 percent. Active sixty-year-olds have the same aerobic capacity as moderately active adults and a much greater aerobic capacity than inactive twenty-year-olds. Age is not a problem in developing muscular strength and endurance, either. Improvements in muscular strength in older adults range from 6 to 50 percent after only six weeks of training. And (depending on genetics and diet) muscular definition is just as visible as it is in a younger person.

Exercise can make you smarter. The journal *Nature Neuroscience* reports that regularly exercised mice grew twice as many brain cells as inactive mice. The active mice also scored higher on learning tests. Neuroscientists say humans can also make new brain cells, therefore exercise should stimulate brain cell production in humans as well. Smarten up by getting off the couch!

Don't believe the myth that exercise is a waste of time if you're not going to work out really hard and often. This can keep you from continuing or even starting your exercise program. Any exercise is better than none. Research continues to show even low-intensity activities (like walking or gardening) can reduce the risk of heart disease and many other diseases and disorders. You don't need to join a health club to improve your fitness and health. Simply become more physically active. 


Patience necessary for weight loss

Are you exercising regularly and following a healthy, sensible diet – but the weight doesn't seem to be coming off?

To lose fat, the recommendation is usually very simple: Eat less and exercise more. However, for many individuals other factors are involved. Understanding what they are can help us be more patient and we won't sabotage our weight-loss attempts!

Lipase is an enzyme that releases fatty acids into the bloodstream for energy use when your body needs it (for example, when you exercise). Another enzyme called lipoprotein lipase (LPL) helps to move fatty acids into the cells for storage. A sedentary lifestyle trains the lipase enzymes into being lazy and inefficient, because they haven't really had much work to do. And if you've also been overeating a high-fat, high-sugar diet, the LPL enzymes have become very efficient at plucking fatty acids from the bloodstream and putting them into storage. Therefore, it may take some time for your good exercise and diet habits to retrain these enzymes.

Don't make the mistake of attacking your diet and exercise program with a vengeance. If you diet too severely or exercise too strenuously all at once, you'll scare your body into a famine-like state. The body will defend itself by slowing its metabolic rate so as to conserve energy by burning fewer calories.


If you've hit a plateau, be patient. Relax. Keep following your diet and exercise program regularly. In time, your body will register the changes you are working hard to make. 

Laughter

Hangover cure: Take the juice of two quarts of whisky. *Eddie Condon*

He had the sort of face that makes you realize God does have a sense of humour.
Bill Bryson

This is a free country, madam. We have a right to share your privacy in a public place.
Peter Ustinov

I hate advice unless I'm giving it.
Jack Nicholson 

Easy tips for healthy eating

Here are simple tips for healthy eating — and to boost energy levels.


- Maintain a stable blood sugar level by eating every 3-4 hours daily. This avoids the drastic ups and downs of unbalanced blood sugar levels, which can leave you feeling fatigued or overly hungry.

- Be sensible with the fat sources in your diet. Deep fried or greasy foods should be avoided. But we need fat for normal functioning, so choose nuts, seeds, and vegetable oils as your major sources of essential fatty acids.

- Stay hydrated. Our bodies are mostly made of water. We can't function without it. Try sipping a glass with each meal and perhaps one between meals. Get into a habit of carrying a water bottle with you (stainless steel and glass water bottles are available instead of plastic).

- Choose quality foods. This means fresh fruit and vegetables instead of chocolate bars, tomato juice vs. soda pop, or cooked cereals – not the sugar-coated brands. Also, foods rich in fibre (like grains, legumes, fruit, and vegetables) are filling, will keep you "regular," and contribute to stable blood sugar levels.

- Practice variety and experiment with new foods. An easy way to be assured you're getting all the nutrients vital for good health is choosing from a wide variety of foods. Don't always eat the same thing; buy something different each shopping trip.

- Practice moderation. This is where most of us fail when we're trying to control body weight. Don't be a glutton. Stop eating when you're full, not when you're stuffed! 

Limit alcohol for weight loss

Many of us consume alcohol regularly. Moderate consumption is suggested as no more than 14 drinks per week for men, and 7 weekly for women; with no more than two daily for men, one for women.

While moderate consumption of alcohol *may* perhaps reduce your risk of heart disease, it also contributes excess calories to your diet and may increase your risk of cancer and fatty or damaged liver over time. A typical drink (a 5 oz. glass of wine, a bottle of beer, or a drink with 1.5 oz. liquor) has a measure

of approximately 150 calories,

which is about the same as

a can of pop. That means

if you were to drink 15

drinks per week, you

would be consum-

ing 2250 calories per

week from alcohol,

translating to about an


extra pound of body

fat every 10 days or so

(there are 3500 calories

in a pound of body fat). 

Drink away cramps

If you suffer from leg cramping after exercise, it can be a sign of dehydration. Drink at least one cup of water prior to exercise and one cup afterward. If it's convenient, sip frequently during the activity too. 

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