

16 Benefits of Your New Fitness Program

Everyone has their own reasons for making a decision to improve their life through a fitness program. And while most people are concerned with losing weight and looking better, here is a list of many of the other important potential benefits that your fitness program can provide:

[Loss of body fat](#)

Do you know that when you attempt to lose weight by dieting alone, you end up losing some fat, but also much lean muscle and water? Also, calorie restriction causes your body to slow down your metabolism, so as soon as you increase calorie intake again, the fat comes back on faster than ever. A strategy built around sound nutrition and exercise can help you maximize fat loss while maintaining or gaining valuable lean muscle.

[Weight control](#)

Unlike diets, a sound nutrition and exercise strategy can lead to a lifetime of stable weight, getting you off of the weight loss - weight gain roller coaster that comes with diets. A fad diet may get you back into those 32" pants again for a month, but a well thought out fitness lifestyle can keep you in them forever.

[Increased metabolism](#)

Contrary to popular perception, a fast or slow metabolism is not a gift or curse you are given at birth. It is easy to blame your metabolism for weight gain, but in reality, we are **NOT** the victims of our metabolism, rather we are the **CREATORS** of our metabolism. While calorie restricted diets literally destroy your metabolism, a properly designed exercise and nutrition plan can dramatically fire up your metabolism so you burn more calories all day, every day.

[Increased muscular strength and endurance](#)

Whether you participate in competitive sports, or just participate in activities of daily living such as carrying your child up and down the stairs or lifting the groceries out of the car trunk, increased strength will allow you to perform better. And for women, you do not need to worry about developing big, bulky muscles in order to see improvements in muscular strength and endurance.

[Increased cardiorespiratory efficiency and endurance](#)

Do you get winded just going up a flight of stairs? In less time than you think, a properly designed exercise regimen can deliver marked improvement in your endurance. Research has repeatedly shown that a regular exercise routine can improve the performance of the cardiorespiratory system. Do you realize that if you were able to reduce your resting heart rate by only 5 beats per minute, that translates into **7200** fewer times per day your heart needs to beat? That is more than **50,000** fewer beats per week! That is a lot less work that your heart will need to do.

[Increased bone, ligament, and tendon strength](#)

Resistance training and weight bearing exercise not only strengthen the muscles, but strengthen the skeletal system and connective tissues as well. This can greatly reduce your risk of injury.

[Increased muscle mass](#)

Along with an improved physical appearance, increased muscle mass causes you to burn more calories throughout the day. Muscle is metabolically active tissue and is the furnace in your body where fat is actually used for energy. More muscle means faster metabolism.

[Reduction in resting blood pressure](#)

Did you know that high blood pressure increases the risk for coronary heart disease, and

can cause heart attacks or strokes? According to the American Heart Association, one in four adult Americans has high blood pressure, and nearly a third of them do not realize it. Of the 50 million sufferers, nearly half are women. While medications are often warranted, lifestyle changes including improvements in nutrition and regular exercise are key elements in the control of blood pressure.

[Improvements in cholesterol levels](#)

Cholesterol, a fatty substance found in cells and blood, is necessary for many normal bodily functions. Unfortunately many people have cholesterol readings that are too high - 200 and above - putting them at increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease. If you are overweight, losing body fat can reduce your LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise your HDL (good) cholesterol, and as little as thirty minutes of exercise on most days can help improve overall cholesterol levels.

[Decreased risk of diabetes](#)

Type 1 Diabetes, where the body makes little or no insulin, is usually diagnosed in childhood. Currently there is no known way to prevent Type 1 Diabetes. Type 2 Diabetes, where the pancreas does not make enough insulin to keep blood glucose at normal levels, usually occurs in adulthood and is far more common, making up 90% of all cases of the disease. Maintaining an ideal body weight and an active lifestyle are two of the main factors in preventing the onset of Type 2 Diabetes.

[Decreased risk of osteoporosis](#)

Osteoporosis is a disease characterized by low bone mass and bone fragility, which leads to increased risk of fractures. Men as well as women may suffer from it. Studies have shown that resistance training and weight-bearing exercises are effective in increasing bone mineral density.

[Reduced risk of injury](#)

As noted above, stronger muscles, bones, and connective tissue all contribute to reducing injuries. But regular exercise can also bring on improvements in balance and muscle control that can help prevent slips and falls that could otherwise cause injuries.

[Improved self-esteem](#)

There is truth in the saying "When you look good, you feel good." The positive changes brought on by a structured exercise and supportive nutrition program are not only physical. Increased confidence, energy, and vitality are all benefits of a fitness lifestyle.

[Improved posture](#)

Whether it is behind a desk at work, behind the wheel of a car, or on the couch watching TV, we all spend a lot more time than we should on our butts. These positions can lead to lower back problems, weak and rounded shoulders, tight chest muscles, and a hunched over posture. A properly designed exercise program can address these issues, and help undo the damage we unintentionally do to our bodies all day long.

[Decreased stress](#)

Studies have shown that exercise can cause the brain to release endorphins and other neurotransmitters that actually help to improve your mood and leave you relaxed.

[Overall improved health](#)

The health benefits of exercise have been known for thousands of years, as evidenced by this quote:

"Speaking generally, all parts of the body which have a function, if used in moderation and exercised in labors to which each is accustomed, become healthy and well developed and age slowly. But, if unused and left idle, they come liable to disease, defective in growth and age quickly."

Hippocrates 370BC

Client Self Assessment

The following questions will help determine your level of readiness to make lifestyle changes, your motivation towards reaching your goals, and identifying obstacles to your success. There are no right or wrong answers as this information will be used in the development of the best possible fitness program for you.

- Are you at some sort of health risk because of your current behaviors or lifestyle? If so, please describe. (ex. smoking, drug use, sedentary, overweight, etc)
- Are you seeking to make lifetime changes or reach a short-term, temporary goal?
- Are you open to trying different approaches or do you have preferred methods, areas to avoid, etc?
- Are you willing to set realistic goals and prepared to deal with possible setbacks?
- Are you willing to make lifestyle changes or would you rather maintain your current lifestyle with slight modifications?
- Have you made previous attempts at lifestyle changes? If so, what were the results?
- Compared to previous attempts, how motivated are you at this time to try to change your lifestyle? (1-5 scale; 1=not at all motivated, 5= extremely motivated)
- Are there outside factors (work, family, travel, etc) that could impact your ability to make lifestyle changes? If so, list:
- How confident are you that you can work regular exercise into your daily schedule starting tomorrow? (use a 1-5 scale; 1=not at all confident, 5=extremely confident)
- Indicate your busiest day of the week and your easiest day of the week.
Busiest: _____ Easiest: _____
- List any challenges that are a result of your present situation (e.g., “none of my clothes fit”; “I have no energy”; “My blood pressure is too high”).
- Are you looking for improvements in:
 - weight____
 - appearance____
 - health____
 - energy____
 - injury recovery____
 - other_____