

SPRINTING TARGETS

Sprinting or short bursts of maximal effort are hugely beneficial for your health, strength and weight loss.

That feel good factor of striding out and pushing your body to work as fast as possible gives you a really positive energy especially if you are outside in the fresh air.

Sprints can also be performed on a bike, stationary bike or a treadmill, if you choose. Traditional sprints may not work for everyone due to things like equipment availability, space availability and injury issues.

Sprinting and burning calories

Sprint's target fast-twitch muscle fibers which are used for shorter, more explosive movements like sprinting. Fast-twitch movements burn significantly more calories than slow-twitch movements. This is not a surprise, as sprinting is much tougher than an activity like jogging. The good news is your metabolism rate continues to burn calories long after your workout has concluded and largely in the form of fat.

Research shows four 30 second sprints can ultimately produce the same number of calories burned as 30 minutes of non-stop moderate aerobic exercise.

Sprinting and fat around your major organs

Sprint intervals also burn visceral fat, the more dangerous fat stored around your major organs. A study from the University of New South Wales found that a 20 minute cycling sprint interval program performed three times a week for 12 weeks led participants to burn 17 percent of their visceral fat. Researchers estimated that it would take seven hours of jogging a week, for 14 straight weeks, to produce a similar result, which equates to over eight times as many total minutes spent exercising. These studies are just a small part of existing research which has found sprint intervals to be a more efficient method of burning calories and fat, than moderate aerobic exercise.



David Fairlamb

Sprinting and building muscle

Sprinting helps you build muscle. Slow-twitch muscle fibers do not get larger the more you exercise them, fast-twitch muscle fibers do. If you want to increase your muscle mass and improve your definition, train fast-twitch fibers via sprinting. There's a reason world class marathon runners look very different from Olympic sprinters.

Sprinting and mental health

Sprint intervals may also have a more positive impact on your mental health than traditional cardio. It's long been known that regular exercise improves brain function and combats anxiety and depression related symptoms, but new research is finding this effect may be even greater with sprint interval training.

DAVID'S SUMMING UP

If you are looking to burn more calories, target the visceral fat around your major organs and build muscle, add sprinting in to your weekly fitness routine.