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THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

If you spend most of your gym time on cardio or simply focus on walking or running, you may not be getting the best overall workout. A shift is often necessary, whether you're walking the dog or regularly hitting the gym, adding resistance training can transform your health and wellbeing.

FITNESS TIP

Create a balanced resistance training program and gradually increase your weights or resistance. This can be done at any age and can have tremendous benefits for your overall health.

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THERE is now strong and growing evidence that strength training not only supports bone health but is also highly beneficial for heart health.

While many of us view activities such as running, walking, or other forms of cardiovascular exercise as the primary way to boost heart health, you may be missing out if you don't include resistance exercises in your routine. Research shows that strength training can be just as crucial, if not more so, for overall wellbeing.

A large-scale study in the U.S. involving more than 13,000 participants found that lifting weights for less than an hour per week is associated with a reduced risk of heart attack or stroke.

What's particularly notable is that these benefits were seen regardless of whether they engaged in traditional cardio activities. In other words, even without running or cycling, strength training alone provided significant heart health benefits. Other studies have echoed these findings, suggesting that strength training helps lower blood

pressure, improves cholesterol levels, and reduces visceral fat, which is linked to cardiovascular disease.

Incorporating strength work into your weekly routine is now widely recommended. Strength exercises can take many forms such as:

- Lifting free weights
- Using resistance bands
- Bodyweight exercises such as push-ups, pull-ups, crunches, squats, or wall push-ups
- Utilising weight machines at the gym

The advantages of resistance training go far beyond just muscle building. These exercises provide benefits such as:

- Increased lean muscle mass, or preventing muscle loss, which naturally occurs with age
- Improved bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis, particularly in older adults
- A faster metabolism, which can aid in both weight loss and weight maintenance
- Increased muscle strength, which makes daily activities easier to perform
- A lower risk of injury, as stronger

muscles support joints more effectively

It's important to remember that strength training isn't just about bulking up or lifting heavy weights, it's about maintaining a strong and functional body that can support you through everyday tasks, regardless of your age.

Walking or other cardiovascular activities are excellent, but adding resistance training, especially when your body is warmed up, can greatly improve your health and well-being.

If you go to the gym, consider consulting with a trainer who can guide you through a strength program tailored to your individual needs and goals. You'll soon notice physical and mental improvements such as:

- Better posture
- Increased strength in daily activities
- Enhanced confidence from feeling stronger and more capable
- A more positive mindset, driven by your physical progress

We offer specialised strength and conditioning sessions for all ages, and our group and personal training



> Adding strength work into your routine is a way to boost heart health

programs cover every aspect of fitness and well-being. Our outdoor workouts run year-round and are designed to elevate your strength

and endurance to new levels.

Look at your lifestyle and try to incorporate some form of strength work into your weekly routine.