



February 3rd, 2012

Maintaining Your New Year Resolutions around Exercise

Like other Canadians, your New Year's Resolution probably involves creating and maintaining a regular exercise program. If your interest in already starting to fade, recent research indicates that it's an important part of maintaining your health.

In my experience, a fun but challenging workout may help you stick to and actually attain your resolution this year.

Strength and Resistance Training for Health

Strength, or resistance training, may well top the list of beneficial exercises – especially as we age. It is helpful for weight management, maintaining muscle mass and strength and combating osteoporosis. Resistance exercises tend to target and strengthen those bones most susceptible to breakage and, when combined with balance and power moves, can help you stay active and avoid fractures.

Avoid Sit-Ups – Do A Plank Instead

Are you still doing sit-ups? The current literature indicates they are particularly hard on the back. "Crunches" are an improvement but the new standard in core strengthening is now "planking." Planking recruits more than just the abdominal muscles – it uses all of the core muscles to improve balance and strength through motions that are more relevant to everyday activities. Planks are the new power move.

Burning Fat

Exercise benefits extend beyond burning calories & improving muscle. There are 2 types of fat cells in the body, white and brown. White fat is the storage form that we typically think of, but brown fat is a metabolic tissue that actually burns energy.

Exercise causes the body to generate a hormone called irisin which transforms white fat to brown and helps prevent the cellular changes that lead to type 2 diabetes.

Discoveries, such as irisin, can lead to some amazing new therapies after much study and time, but you can enjoy some benefits now, for free, by making the lifestyle choices that support your body and health.