

The Importance of Strength Training

Strength training effectively fortifies the muscles and connective tissues that hold your entire body together. It literally strengthens your body from the inside out, allowing you to train harder, recover faster and reduce your overall risk of injury. Building muscle strength will assist you in your daily activities while building muscle endurance will allow you to carry-out those activities for longer periods of time.

Incorporating strength training into your regular exercise routines will allow you to achieve the following benefits:

- Achieve balanced fitness by improving strength and endurance while toning muscles and increasing the rate at which calories (including those from fat) are burned;
- Repetitive motion injuries (eg. runner's knee, heel spurs, plantar fasciitis) and overuse injuries (eg. bursitis, tendonitis, strains/sprains, muscle pulls/tears, shin splints, stress fractures) can be greatly reduced. Strength training also allows you to maintain fitness levels while injured or while warding-off an injury
- Adds variety to your exercise regimen, thereby preventing boredom and burnout and also allows you to target specific areas not otherwise worked in daily activities
- Improved appearance and self-confidence, which positively impacts all facets of your personal and professional life and allows you to participate in group and social athletic opportunities
- Strength gains and increased endurance levels can build capabilities in other sports, activities and other types of cross-training, providing a window into more exciting or demanding activities such as skiing, windsurfing or kayaking

The strengthening of the body has been shown to be crucial to increasing bone density and to achieving and maintaining proper weight control. The American Heart Association actively promotes strength training as a way to reduce the risk of heart disease and as a therapy for cardiac rehabilitation programs.

While the numerous benefits of training—which include improved sleep patterns—cannot be denied, it is the fulfilment of perhaps the most elusive benefit of all—a healthy state of mind—that makes it indispensable to any healthy lifestyle.