

## **Starting a Fitness Program**

So you are thinking about starting a fitness program huh? This could well be something that you have thought over time and time again with nothing to show for your thoughts. If this is so, you are certainly not alone, as there are literally tens and hundreds of thousands of people who seem to have these re-occurring thoughts of doing something to feel better, even a fitness program. To many of you the word fitness is enough to send dismal thoughts down your spine. The truth of the matter is that a fitness program does not have to be that bad, in fact it can be quite enjoyable if done the right way. Before we even get into any sort of explanation as to what a fitness program requires let us first take a look at what fitness means.

### **fit·ness (f t n s)**

*n.*

1. The state or condition of being fit; suitability or appropriateness.
2. Good health or physical condition, especially as the result of exercise and proper nutrition.
3. Biology. The extent to which an organism is adapted to or able to produce offspring in a particular environment.

Amazing, there is nothing about grueling, smelly, taxing and demanding painful exercise sessions. Although some of you may actually enjoy this kind of training fitness does not have to be difficult. The level of perceived difficulty that many people hold as a pre-conceived notion as to what fitness means simply does not exist. Your imagination can act as a wonderful mechanism used to rationalize its way out of something that your mind may perceive as difficult, or not enjoyable.

For those of you who believe fitness to be a task to which you derive no enjoyment maybe you should take a look at the series of events that led you to that point. Unfortunately there are many people who happen to have bad experiences with an exercise program. For some of you it could be that you purchased a product that did not work like you thought it should have. For others maybe it was a bad gym experience, like not knowing what you are doing and pushing to the point where you hurt yourself. It is sad but true that most people would love to get in better shape, feel better, perform better but do not know how they are going to get there.

For some of you these articles may be a great starting point. I am going to be laying down the foundation for you to be able to achieve great things with the principals that are going to be discussed in this column, ranging from thought processes, to complicated exercise and nutritional programs. It would make more sense to talk about the beginning stages of an exercise program rather than advanced nutrition right now, so I am going to keep it relatively simple.

The pressing issue here is that you would like to look better, feel better, have more energy, perform better, and all that good stuff, but you do not want to exercise. As I mentioned before a lot of you may have a pre-conceived idea of what exercise is. What I am going to tell you here is that exercise does not have to be what your pre-conceived notion tells you it is. Your exercise

program could well start right here right now! For those of you who do want to get started I am going to take you through a series of simple exercises, and we will be on the road to success.

For this exercise all that you need is a sheet of paper and something to write with, and no I am not going to have you visualize what you want your body to look like. Simply write down what comes to mind with the word fitness. Your receptiveness towards any sort of fitness program is going to be evident with what you wrote. If you used adjectives like, painful, boring, nazi like, no fun, rabbit food, or any other negative connotation to describe your feelings to fitness chances are that you have a picture of something that you tried before that did not work, and was not fun. On the other hand if your description went something to the tune of, challenging, high energy, a great stress buster, time to feel good, chances are you already exercise, or are looking forward to starting up again.

If you had some not too nice thoughts associated with fitness, but you do not like the way you feel or look right now it could well be time to re-think your outlook about fitness. For starters there are thousands of possibilities to look at when it comes time to select something that you are going to do on a regular basis as a fitness program. Exercise does not have to mean going to a public gym and weightlifting. Yoga, roller blading, biking, walking, hiking, martial arts, spinning, plyometric exercises, and intensive stretching are all alternatives to weight lifting. If you like weight lifting that is great too! The point being is that you do not have to just do one form of exercise for your exercise regimen.

Before you actually do get started with any kind of exercise there are some important preparation that you should take so that you can avoid an injury, or any bad feelings that you may associate with exercise. First step is to make an appointment with your doctor and get a physical. It is dangerous to go from sedentary to active without knowing the present condition of your body. It is bad enough to not do any form of exercise but it is far worse to going from nothing to a whole lot in a matter of a couple of days. By doing this you risk getting seriously injured, or even experiencing a heart attack.

After getting clearance from your doctor you know what you are going to be capable of, and what to steer clear of. Now that you know what you are capable of actually doing it is time to actually select what kind of exercise you find interesting, or you are willing to try. You may want to try several different kinds of exercises before you decide what you like and are going to be doing.

This opens a whole new issue of where to get information about exercise. The best places to look for information about the different forms of exercise and how to do them are rather abundant. Magazines on almost any topic of exercise can be found at your local bookstore, and if the internet is your thing there are more fitness sites online than you could possibly view in a ten year period! Consulting a professional is another great way to get ideas of directions to take your fitness program. It really is not difficult.

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