

Burn Calories While Sitting On The Couch (kind of)

There are no shortcuts to achieving goals, especially goals regarding our health and fitness. Hard work, dedication and being disciplined pays off. With the arrival of a new year also comes new "resolutions" usually pertaining to weight loss, strength gains or overall improvements in physical fitness.

The common problem that we've all faced is that these "resolutions" become something of the past. The issue at hand is not due to laziness or even lack of desire (who doesn't want to be healthier?), but often times, we get discouraged because the results that we imagined didn't yield at a quicker rate. Essentially, we do not see change at the pace we desire, thus we drift back into our old habits.

We need to beware of any fitness program that promises instant results with minimal effort and sweat, but it is possible to gain strength, lose weight and become overall healthier sooner than you think.

A key approach is applying a high-intensity interval style of training within a group setting. Rather than spending hours at a local gym trying to decide which machine to use next, high intensity interval training (HIIT) suggests that it is much more productive to work up to maximum effort for a shorter duration. Not only does this burn higher level of calories during the exercise but also after training as you settle back into your daily routine. This physiological effect is known as Excess Post-Exercise Oxygen Consumption (EPOC). After a high-intensity workout, your body may continue to burn fat up to 48 hours later due to the increased metabolism.

A recent study from the journal of Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise showed that 14 hours after a HIIT workout, many will burn an additional 37 percent in calories. The American Council on Exercise (ACE) puts it this way: (EPOC) is "similar to how a car's engine remains warm after being turned off". Essentially, your body is burning calories as it recovers to its resting state, which can take up to 48 hours. Results from HIIT can be immediate since you can be burning calories during your workout and after as you sit on your couch.

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