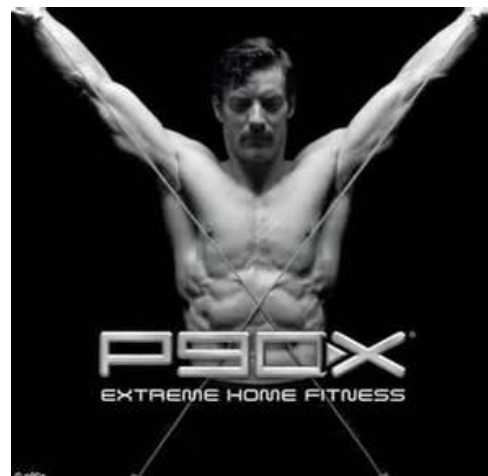


Fads: the Good and the Bad

Everyone has seen them. Those late night infomercials or ads starting January 2nd touting and selling the “greatest” exercise machine, program or diet to help you get into shape and look as if you could win a body building contest tomorrow. Some have merit, most don’t. Some are even dangerous. We took a look at some of the more popular programs and devices to see how they compare with researched and proven exercises that will benefit you for the long term.

The best way to lose weight!

Exercise! That may be over simplifying things a bit, but consensus among medical professionals is that one of the main keys to weight loss is physical activity. There are a lot of exercise programs on the market that claim to have the ability to help you become leaner and fit, and report being “The best way to lose weight!” Some of these products are specific pieces of equipment, others are programs that look to provide structure to your workouts.



Among the latter, you will find such programs as P90X, Boot Camps, and Tae Bo. Often the goal of programs such as these is to show considerable changes in weight and figure quickly. The designers of these programs know that people will likely only continue to use the program if they see results early. However, each of these programs has a different risk of injury depending on how intense the workouts are, and there is generally no prerequisite to participation in one of these programs. The combination of these two factors is what is concerning about sedentary individuals jumping into one of these programs without proper guidance.



On the other end of the fad exercise genre, there are specific pieces of equipment that sometimes claim to do it all. Examples of these are abundant. Some of the more recent creations are the Shake Weight and Ab Muscle Stimulator. However, this is not a new idea. For years there have been similar inventions from the Thigh Master all the way back to the vibrating belt. Often times these inventions are based on sound scientific theories, but the expected results are not as easily obtained as the promotions make it seem. Similar tools often are used in rehabilitation, but instead of it being the focus of the treatment, they are used as a part of the program.

What they got right

Despite some obvious flaws in perception of how they should be used, programs such as the P90X have good qualities, and there are safe ways to use them. One of the positive qualities that these programs instill is the ability to make exercise a part of your daily routine. People often use lack of time as an excuse for participation in exercise. One way to overcome this barrier is by scheduling your exercise into your week.

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For some of us, religious commitments occur on the same day of the week and we know not to schedule during that time. A similar mindset can be used to ensure you get regular exercise. Find a time in your weekly schedule and dedicate that to exercise (i.e. after church or after work instead of sitting in traffic). When doing this, make sure to stick to your schedule, and if you are feeling time pressures you may want to shorten the amount of exercise you do, but don't eliminate it fully. For example, instead of riding your bike for 10 minutes, do 30 minutes of strength training and walking for 10 minutes. You may decide to do 20 minutes of strength training and walk for five minutes.



If even that is not realistic because your schedule is “too busy,” then find ways during the day to incorporate exercise. You will be required to make small changes in your habits, but with a little effort it will lead to long term gains. One simple way to increase your activity level is to park your car a few spots further from your location. This will get you walking an extra 50- to 100-feet, and over the course of a day it could add up to larger cardiovascular gains.

One other positive concept that these programs try to engrain is the need for strength training along with cardiovascular training. Just running and/or walking may get you to your goal weight, but to be healthier overall it is important to increase your muscular strength as well. This will help to decrease stress on the body during daily activities (i.e. carrying laundry basket or groceries.) Parking further away to encourage walking may not be a new idea to most, but how about incorporating strengthening exercises into your day? For those that spend a lot of time on the phone or at a desk, try to start performing some basic exercises every hour or two throughout the day.

Manual laborers tend to find it hard to exercise at the end of a day because their job is “too physically demanding.” If that’s you, try occasionally performing a few simple exercises throughout the day to appropriately strengthen specific muscle groups outside of just job specific movements. The goal when getting started with exercise is to make these little things a part of your normal routine and build a foundation of physical activity.

In the end, remember that exercise should be fun! If you aren’t enjoying yourself, then the chances are that you won’t continue to do it. You should not perform any exercise that causes pain. If you are unsure whether you should exercise because of a medical condition, you should contact a physician. Also, if you have difficulty telling the difference between soreness after exercise and pain that may be damaging tissue in your body, then you should seek assistance from a professional (i.e. physical therapist, physician, certified personal trainer). Last, if you would like recommendations on specific exercises that may be useful for your individual goals and job demands, then reach out to a local medical professional.

OTRF's Alternate Exercise Program

Exercise		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Weeks 5-8 (Repeat weeks 1-4 & add below)
Day 1	Squats	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Add 10-15 lb. weights. Hold on shoulders
	Bridge	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Place feet on plastic furniture sliders/movers
	Jumping Jacks	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	
	Rest 1 minute after completing all three exercises above, then repeat as specified below					
		Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 3x	
	Pushups	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Do with straight legs, or put feet on sofa
	Shoulder Press	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Add 5-10 lb. weight or step closer to band handles
	Mountain Climbers	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Place feet on plastic furniture sliders/movers
Rest 1 minute after completing all three exercises above, then repeat as specified below						
	Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 3x		
Day 2	Seated Rows	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Use harder band
	Bentover Reverse Flys	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Use 5-10 lb. dumbbells
	Burpees	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	
	Rest 1 minute after completing all three exercises above, then repeat as specified below					
		Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 3x	
	Tricep Extension	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Use a harder band or step closer to band handle
	Arm Raises 45° with Weights	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	Increase by 5 lbs. or follow band instructions above
	Jog in Place	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	1 min.	
Rest 1 minute after completing all three exercises above, then repeat as specified below						
	Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 3x		
Day 3	Squat to Press	1 min. Rest 30 sec.	1 min. Rest 30 sec.	1 min. Rest 30 sec.	1 min. Rest 15 sec.	Add 10-15 lbs.
	Pushup and Row	30 sec. Rest 30 sec. Repeat 2x	45 sec. Rest 30 sec. Repeat 3x	1 min. Rest 30 sec. Repeat 4x	1 min. Rest 15 sec. Repeat 4x	Add 5-10 lbs.
	Plank	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 15 sec.	Alternate lifting feet
	Side Plank on Knees	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	Do on straight legs with feet stacked or lift top leg
		Rest 30 sec.	Rest 30 sec.	Rest 15 sec.	Rest 15 sec.	
		Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 4x	
	Dead Bug Alternating Arms and Legs	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 30 sec.	1 min.. Rest 15 sec.	Move arms and legs at the same time
	Russian Twist	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	30 sec.	Add 5-10 lb. dumbbell Move weight, don't rotate
		Rest 30 sec.	Rest 30 sec.	Rest 15 sec.	Rest 15 sec.	
		Repeat 2x	Repeat 3x	Repeat 4x	Repeat 4x	

Alternative Exercise Routine to Fad Programs is Safer, More Controlled

The table on the opposite page presents a four-week exercise routine that does not require costly equipment or devices like many of the fad and popular programs on the market today. This makes them flexible and convenient so they can be performed in most places—at home, in the gym, in the yard, and even in hotel rooms. Additionally, the exercises addressed in this table work muscle groups the fad programs attempt to target, but in a safer and more controlled method.

To extend the OTRF program to 12weeks:

Cut the rest times by 15 seconds only for Day 1 and Day 2 exercises and repeat the 5-8 week program. For Day 3 exercises, repeat the 5-8 week program, **BUT** rest after every other exercise for the specified time shown in bold type (i.e., perform the squat to press exercise then the pushup and row exercise before resting 15 seconds.)

Before starting this program or any other, consult your physician. Never exercise beyond the level at which you feel comfortable. If at any time you feel you are exercising beyond your current fitness abilities, or feel discomfort, discontinue the exercise immediately and reconsider your participation in this program.

Exercises for Excursions

Whether its vacation, a business trip, or a weekend adventure, it is essential to keep active when on the road. A non-consistent use of muscles may result in decreased strength, muscle mass, and overall fitness, and therefore you should develop an exercise routine designed specifically for travelling. Here are some great exercises to consider when you are on the go:



- Tighten your abs while sitting. Pull your belly button in and work up to five minutes.
- Swim or run laps at the hotel pool for at least ten minutes. Even though ten minutes is short, any exercise helps.
- If your vacation takes you to the ocean, rather than sitting on the beach all day, rent a bike, kayak, paddle board, or throw a Frisbee around. Trying a new activity can help burn some extra calories.
- Stay at a hotel that has a gym and go before and/or after meetings.
- Pack several resistance bands—they give you resistance so that you can work your arms and legs beyond the constraints of body weight.
- If your vacation destination is at a beach, go for a run. Try to run on firm sand, and avoid loose terrain. Firm ground is less stressful on your ankles and joints because of decreased leg twisting when you push off.
- While waiting in the security line of any type of station, make use of this time to stretch. Areas that are the easiest to stretch are your neck, thighs, and shoulders.