

S U M M E R 2 0 2 4

the

Bench Press

Range Community Gym & Fitness Centre (Mapleton), Inc.



January 2024

New Years Resolutions!

Welcome back! We hope you had a rejuvenating holiday season. As we kick off the New Year, it's time to recommit to your health and wellness goals. Whether you're a seasoned gym-goer or a newcomer, we're thrilled to have you back at the gym. The start of a new year brings a sense of renewal and the opportunity to set new resolutions.

Reflecting on the achievements of 2023, we celebrate the incredible strides made in improving our collective health and wellbeing. Many of you surpassed personal milestones, cultivated healthier habits, and witnessed the positive impact on both body and mind. As we stride into 2024, let's build on that success. Consider exploring new workout routines, challenging yourself with diverse exercises, and maintaining a balanced approach to nutrition. Don't forget the importance of recovery and self-care—listening to your body is key.

Let's embrace the challenges ahead, push our limits, and support each other on our fitness journeys. Together, we'll make 2024 a year of strength, perseverance, and achievement.

Here's to a healthier and happier you! Welcome back to the gym – let's crush those resolutions!



2024 Membership Fees Due

Don't forget 2024 Annual Memberships are due this month.

Regular Membership: \$50
Student Membership: \$30



Gym Christmas Raffle

Congratulations to Shirley & Brendon McLaren and Phillip & Nita Lester who were the lucky winners of our two Christmas Hampers kindly donated by the Mapleton IGA. Congratulations to all who won other prizes in the raffle and a HUGE thank you to everyone who kindly donated goodies.



Australia Day Gym Closure

The gym will be closed on Friday 26 January!



New Recumbent Bike

Our Christmas raffle raised in excess of \$2500 for the gym. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets. Money raised allowed us to purchase a brand new Vision R60 Commercial Recumbent Bike replacing our oldest treadmill. Congratulations to Nicole Burke who was the lucky winner of our Treadmill Giveaway!

Recumbent Bike Benefits:

Reduces Strain on Joints: The reclined position reduces stress on joints, making it a suitable option for individuals with joint issues or those recovering from injuries

Enhances Cardiovascular Workouts: Recumbent bikes offer effective cardiovascular exercise, helping to improve heart health and endurance

Lower Back Support: The backrest on recumbent bikes provides lumbar support, reducing strain on the lower back during workouts

Safety and Stability: The low centre of gravity and a wide, stable base make recumbent bikes a safer option for those who have balance concerns.

Assists Rehabilitation: Recumbent bikes are often recommended for individuals undergoing rehabilitation due to their low-impact nature and support for controlled, gradual movement.

Engages Different Muscle Groups: While primarily targeting the legs, recumbent bikes also engage the glutes, hamstrings, and lower abdominal muscles, providing a comprehensive lower-body workout.

Enhance your gym workout with the new Vision R60 Recumbent Bike located next to the treadmills!



How long does it actually take to see results from exercise?

Written by Harry Beresford, Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) Accredited Exercise Physiologist

As an ESSA Accredited Exercise Physiologist, my clients always ask me “how long will it take to see results?”. And it’s a good question!

Whether they want to build muscle or increase aerobic endurance to run 10K in a set time, everyone is looking for RESULTS. If you’re curious about how your body responds to exercise (and how long it takes to see changes), then read on...

Just remember that to get results, you need to do ‘regular physical activity’. This means doing at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. If you can’t, then try to be as physically active as you can in your current state of health. Any activity is a good activity and something is always better than nothing.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO SEE RESULTS?

HEART RATE – CHANGES WITHIN A COUPLE OF WEEKS

The heart is a muscle, and as you get fitter, it will become stronger. This leads to an increased stroke volume, which means your heart will pump more blood per beat than before. This can, in turn, decrease your resting heart rate.

Resting heart rate can decrease by up to 1 beat/min in sedentary individuals with each week of aerobic training, at least for a few weeks. Other studies have shown smaller reductions with fewer than 5 beats following up to 20 weeks of aerobic training.

Your maximum heart rate typically stays unchanged with regular training and is more likely to decrease over time as part of the normal ageing process.

People who are fitter also tend to have a heart rate that recovers faster after exercise.

BLOOD PRESSURE – CHANGES IN A FEW WEEKS

Exercise causes modest reductions in blood pressure in those who have borderline or moderate levels of high blood pressure. The average reduction in systolic and diastolic blood pressure for those who have high blood pressure and perform a regular aerobic activity is 7 and 6 mmHg respectively.

One study showed that simply increasing your step count can lead to a reduction in systolic blood pressure of 4 mmHg. This may seem small, but a 5 mmHg drop reduces the chance of death by stroke by 14%!

Individuals with blood pressure in a ‘normal’ range experience little long-term change in their BP at rest or with exercise.

AEROBIC FITNESS (aka VO2MAX) – CHANGES IN A MONTH OR TWO

VO2max, which is the highest rate of oxygen consumption possible during maximal or exhaustive exercise, is a great indicator of someone’s physical fitness.

With endurance training, our body can deliver more oxygen to the working muscles allowing it to do more for longer and with reduced effort.

Improvements range from 5-30% with a regular, sustained program. Untrained individuals can see improvements of 15-20% in their VO₂ max following a 20-week aerobic training program. This allows them to perform an activity (e.g. running) at a higher intensity.

MUSCLE FITNESS – EXPECT TO SEE SMALL CHANGES IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

Within three to six months, an individual can see a 25 to 100% improvement in their muscular fitness – provided a regular resistance program is followed.

Most of the early gains in strength are the result of the neuromuscular connections learning how to produce movement. Sometimes accounting for up to 50% of strength improvements in the early stages of a strength-based program.

Changes in muscle size from resistance training are highly variable – from no change at all up to roughly 60% increases with a long-term resistance program.

WEIGHT LOSS – RESULTS WITHIN WEEKS

Exercise can be used as an effective tool for weight loss and also preventing weight gain. People wanting to lose weight should aim to be physically active for 60+ minutes per day to notice any significant changes. It also needs to be at a moderate intensity.

One study with 52 obese males reported a body weight decrease of 7.5kg over 3 months using only exercise. Participants did 60 minutes of exercise per day with a goal of 700 calories (2940kJ) expended.

Another study with 52 overweight males and females reported a weight loss of 7% over 16.8 weeks with exercise alone. The amount of activity completed was 7.4 (+/- 0.5) hours per week.

MENTAL HEALTH – CHANGES IN AS LITTLE AS 10 MINUTES!

While there are numerous physical benefits from regular physical activity, it also benefits our psychological health too. Even brief walks, at a low intensity, can improve our mood and energy levels. You can start to notice positive effects after as little as 10 minutes of aerobic training.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- It's important to focus on enjoying the physical activity you do. Exercise isn't just a way to lose weight or reduce high blood pressure!
- Try to look at physical activity as a lifelong journey rather than a short-term project. For example, think about how weight loss will improve your long-term health, rather than just help you fit into that dress!
- Find something that you're excited by and motivated to do. That might be social netball or a class at your local gym. If you're looking forward to it then there's a greater chance you will stick to it over the long term.
- Make a plan
- Get friends and family involved – it'll help you to achieve your goals.

Cold Cucumber Soup

Recipe reference: www.loveandlemons.com/cold-cucumber-soup

Ingredients:

6 cucumbers, thinly sliced, reserve a few slices for garnish
 1½ cups plain whole milk Greek yogurt
 ¾ cup fresh basil
 ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, more for drizzling
 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 2 tablespoons fresh dill
 1 clove garlic
 ¾ teaspoon sea salt
 ½ teaspoon honey
 Freshly ground black pepper
 Fresh mint, dill, or chives, for garnish



Instructions:

1. In a blender, combine the cucumbers, yogurt, basil, olive oil, lemon juice, dill, garlic, salt, honey, and several grinds of pepper and blend until smooth. Chill for at least 4 hours.
2. Serve in bowls and garnish with the reserved cucumber slices, fresh herbs, drizzles of olive oil, and freshly ground black pepper. Serve with crusty bread.

A special thank you to Russell MacKenzie for his endless contribution to all things 'maintenance' and to all who helped get the gym sparkling and clean prior to re-opening after the Christmas closure.

The gym committee meets on the first Monday of every month. If you have something you would like the committee to discuss, please send an email to mapletongym@gmail.com.

Gym Air Conditioning

A very generous donation has been offered to the gym to cover the installation of air-conditioning throughout the premises plus a contribution toward operational costs. This would allow more comfortable workouts on those hot summer days. The committee would like your feedback. If you would like to share your thoughts, please email mapletongym@gmail.com or chat with Paul, Tina or a committee member. Your opinion matters!



Realistic, No-Nonsense New Years Resolution Tips

JAN 09, 2024 | BY AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF FITNESS

The New Year seems, psychologically, like a great opportunity to kick start some good new habits and ditch some old bad ones – but the fact is many of us fail to stick with these resolutions for even a new week, let alone the new year. So why do so many of us fall short of these goals we set ourselves? Short answer, it all lies in your brain. Here, we take a look at how habits are formed, and share our top five tips for setting New Year goals.

How the human brain creates habits

The human brain is wired to pay attention to formally tried and tested, ‘pleasing’ stimuli. Studies have found that when people see something associated with a past reward, their brain flushes itself with dopamine. This is the reason why old habits are hard to break, and new habits are hard to establish.

Let’s explain a little further: neural pathways are like freeways of nerve cells that transmit messages. When you travel over the freeway many times, the path becomes more and more well worn, to the point of carving out a rut that it’s difficult to get out of. All, however, is not lost, because with the right approach you can establish a new path. By practicing a new habit under the right conditions, you can change hundreds of millions of the connections between the nerve cells in your neural pathways.

Neural pathways can be strengthened into new habits through the repetition and practice of thinking, feeling and acting. However, changing a way of thinking and doing does require willpower; like a bicep, it can only exert itself so long before it gives out. It is an extremely limited mental resource. Bad habits are hard to break, and they’re impossible to break if we try to take a sledgehammer to too many of them at the same time. To fix ‘willpower weaknesses’ we need to know what they are – only then can the relevant mental muscles get strengthened.

How to strengthen your willpower

The brain area principally responsible for willpower is called the prefrontal cortex, and is located just behind the forehead. One of the reasons that a lot of us struggle with our own willpower is that the prefrontal cortex is responsible for a number of things in addition to our New Year’s resolutions! A substantial portion of the cortex, for example, is in charge of keeping us focused, handling short-term memory, decision making, regulating behaviour and solving abstract problems. Asking it to guide you in losing weight, giving up smoking or starting jogging 5km every day can be asking it to do one thing too many. So, let’s look at some hacks to help you strengthen that willpower and stick with your good intentions.

5 tips for New Year's Resolution success

1. Learn how to manage stress

Our prefrontal cortex loses out in the battle for our energy when high stress is involved. That's why so many of us indulge in undesirable behaviours when the stress levels are high. Whether it's yoga, a swim, a walk or a nap, find out what activity helps you reduce your stress levels.

2. Stick to your plan using self-affirmation

In times of struggle or temptation, remind yourself that you CAN do this! Even if you feel self-conscious doing so at first, it can help you to have more self-control. Taking back control of the situation will keep your mind focused on the goal at hand.

3. Get more sleep to help your brain better manage energy

Getting enough sleep makes a big difference to how efficiently the prefrontal cortex works. Sleep deprivation is a form of chronic stress that impairs how the body and brain uses energy. Sleep deprivation hits the prefrontal cortex hard, causing it to lose control over the regions of the brain that create cravings. When you're trying to stick with a health or fitness related resolution, this is most definitely not something you want! So, do yourself a favour and hit the hay early.

4. Try meditation

It's not everyone's cup of tea, but meditation can positively influence our available reserves of willpower. In addition, it can improve attention, focus, stress management and self-awareness. Give it a try, you may surprise yourself by slipping into a zen-like state of calm control.

5. Eat better and move more!

Whether your New Year's resolutions are health related or not, a healthy diet and regular physical exercise will make energy more available to the brain and boost your willpower.

There are no secrets and no short cuts. It's simple, just train the body and the mind. If you look after your brain, your brain will look after you.

