

# Women and Fitness: Myth Busting

If you ever believed in the Tooth Fairy, Easter Bunny or Santa, have we got some news for you! After 22 years of training women, I'm going to bust some myths that I've been told. Let's have a look at three of the most common myths and the underlying truths to them.

## Should women lift weights?

Since most say "I don't want to bulk up," I am often asked by women whether they should use weights when they are trying to tone their bodies. This is probably the number one question I get asked. The answer is YES!

Women only have about one-third the testosterone a male has, therefore making it highly unlikely they will ever bulk up. You say; the first thing that comes to mind is all these women I see on TV are huge with bulky muscles. First of all, these women have a very unique gene set. Secondly, they are taking testosterone and growth hormone injections. Thirdly, they are training hours a day under the close scrutiny of a personal trainer and a nutritionist.

Strength training has so many advantages. It will make you stronger, it will prevent osteoporosis, and it will tone and sculpt your body helping you lose body fat. Women would have to lift some pretty heavy weights for many years to get "bulky."

## Can I turn fat into muscle?

No, fat is fat and muscle is muscle. They are two separate entities with their own structural and chemical composition. You can burn calories to take off fat and then by exercising increase lean muscle.

## Is cardiovascular exercise the best way to burn fat?

Are you a Cardio Queen? Do you



mostly use treadmills, elliptical trainers?

This is one of the biggest mistakes women make in not including weight training as the staple of their fitness programs. Weight training along with cardio exercise is the best way to burn fat and re-shape you body!

The best overall exercise plan is simply the one you will do day in and day out consistently.

Choose ones which you enjoy doing, and don't be afraid to mix up the exercises. Interval cardio and weight training work consists of moving from one exercise to another in set time intervals. Higher intensity weight training (this doesn't mean heavy weights, just working really hard with what you are using) is also what I recommend. For example; you could

do the elliptical trainer for 15 minutes, then switch to the stationary bike for another 15 minutes and finish off on the treadmill for the last 15 minutes. The same for weight training; do three or four sets in a row, mixing it up; and then take a 30 second to one minute break. Interval training is a great way to keep everything fresh!

1. The harder you are working, the more energy you use.
2. The more energy you use, the more calories you expend.
3. The more calories you expend, the more weight you lose as long as you are in a negative energy balance: Taking in less energy than you are expending.

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Activity	Calories Burned	Fat Percentage	Calories from Fat
Watching TV for 20 minutes	40 calories	60 percent	24 calories
Walking for 20 minutes	100 calories	65 percent	65 calories
Jogging and sprinting for 20 minutes	250 calories	40 percent	100 calories
Weight training (med) 20 minutes	180 calories	40 percent	72 calories