

WILL EXERCISE HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT?

Exercise may not help you lose weight. However, it will help you lose fat. That is much better. Think of it this way: if by some miracle you knew that you could have a body like a swimsuit model and live an active, healthy life until you were 120, would you care what you weighed?

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First, let's reach an understanding. Your primary goal isn't losing weight. Your primary goals are to get healthier and to look better. Think of it this way: if by some miracle you knew that you could have a body like a swimsuit model and live an active, healthy life until you were 120, would you care what you weighed? Of course not. This is why you should exercise regularly. You will look better permanently, you will feel better permanently, and you will probably live longer.

Exercise builds muscles, and muscles are heavy. They are also dense, so that a pound of muscle takes up less space than a pound of fat. This is why a dieter who exercises may not lose pounds as fast as a dieter who sits on the couch, but the person exercising will look better. Sexier! Long-time exercisers have less trouble maintaining a weight loss, and better, they stay sharper –mentally alert. The reason is easy to understand – exercise is great for the circulation. It strengthens your heart and your arteries - and your brain.

Perhaps the best part of regular exercise is that it helps you burn more calories 24 hours a day. Your new muscle tissue will need lots of fuel to stay healthy, so you will actually burn more calories while you sleep.

Everyone – no matter their age - should exercise regularly. People in their *eighties* who begin supervised exercise programs benefit dramatically. The good news is that every type of exercise will help you burn calories as long as you follow some basic rules:

Work out regularly. For most people 3 – 5 days each week is best, for 30 – 60 minutes. Don't start at full blast; work up to it. Think that you don't have the time? Nonsense. You can exercise before you go to work, on your lunch hour, before dinner, etc. Exercise on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. That's just one workday and the benefits will be overwhelming.

Exercise your entire body, not just your legs. Perform strength training exercises to build your upper body. Perform core exercises to build your stomach and back. After a few months, the difference in your appearance will be astonishing, regardless of your age. And believe it or not, the older you are, the more important it becomes to exercise your upper body. Walking is important but it is NOT enough.

Don't take it easy. One common rule is to exercise hard enough so that it is difficult to whistle while you walk. Another is to work out hard enough that you are mildly out of breathe and sweating slightly. And don't listen to your friend's opinion unless she can show you her degree. Ask your doctor or certified trainer.

Don't get into a rut. Mix things up. Try to perform several different types of exercise each month. This way, you will use different muscles in different ways. You will look better and have fewer injuries.

Almost every exercise will help you lose weight – except swimming. Swimming is wonderful for your entire body, but it may not have much affect on your weight. The reasons aren't well understood but they are well documented.

If you are serious about losing weight, get serious about exercise.

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