

The Benefits of RESISTANCE TRAINING



What is resistance training?

Resistance training is a form of exercise intended to increase muscular strength and endurance. It involves exercising muscles using some form of resistance – which could be weights, bands, or even your own body weight.

Also sometimes called *strength training* or *weight training*, resistance training is a relatively accessible option – whether you plan to work out at home or add to your current gym routine. The benefits of resistance training are important, especially as you get older. While increased strength and mobility are certainly helpful to all ages, you want to be sure you are fighting muscle loss as you age.

What are the benefits of resistance training?

Boosts metabolism and reduces body fat –

If you have a goal to lose weight, resistance training could be very helpful. Studies have found that it can be more helpful in improving your metabolism than aerobic exercise. Just 9 months of consistent resistance training can significantly increase your resting metabolic rate. (This does not mean that cardio is ineffective! Try combining both forms of exercise for the best results.)

Increases bone density and improves balance –

Your bones can benefit from resistance training, too. In addition to maintaining and increasing bone mass and density, your balance and stability will improve as well, which is especially important as you age.

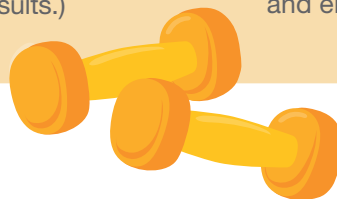
Improves mental health – A study based on the quality of life in older adults found that *resistance training improved mental, emotional and social function; not just physical function*. Resistance training has been shown to help alleviate depression and anxiety symptoms and relieve stress – even when the workout is relatively mild.

Builds muscle mass, strength and endurance –

Regardless of whether your goal is to build muscle mass or to minimize muscle loss (*known as muscle atrophy*), resistance training is an excellent choice. It also helps your muscles remain healthy and functional so you are able to stay active for longer periods of time.

Increases self esteem – Researchers have noted that engaging in resistance training can raise self-esteem – especially in women. Female participants in research studies reported feeling invigorated and empowered after resistance training workouts.

They also indicated they felt greater self-worth and enjoyed a healthy confidence boost!



Let's get started!

It's important to note that *you do not have to buy equipment to get started with resistance training, and it is not necessary to join a gym or hire a personal trainer.* Many people like to start with *just their own body weight providing resistance* as they do exercises like *push-ups, squats, planks, and more.* Later, you can add weight like gallon jugs of water, soup cans in a canvas bag, or an unopened bag of flour inside a backpack. Once you've achieved a certain level of expertise, you might want to invest in equipment like adjustable dumbbells.

If you have a medical condition or a disability – or if you are just getting started with an exercise routine – you should *talk to your health care provider.* He or she can provide advice and insight into what is best for you given your medical history.

IMPORTANT: Make sure you are using the *proper form* in your exercises. Not only will this ensure you will get the most from your workout, it will also *minimize your risk of injury.* Diagrams in exercise magazines, library books, or on reputable sites online can demonstrate the proper posture and body positioning of many exercises if you are unsure of the correct form to use.

In addition to using the proper form, the following are important workout safety tips:

Be smart about how much weight you use – Using weights that are too heavy can lead to improper form and injury. Never use more weight or resistance than you can handle at your fitness level.

Stay hydrated – Drinking water will help you avoid dehydration and fatigue.

Stop if you experience pain – If you feel any pain or discomfort, stop working out and talk to your medical provider. You should also seek medical attention if you injure yourself. For example, if you hit your head, *see a healthcare provider even if you think you are okay.* Concussions are dangerous and should not go untreated.

Find a workout buddy – In addition to being there to help if you injure yourself or need a spotter, exercising with a friend increases motivation and accountability.



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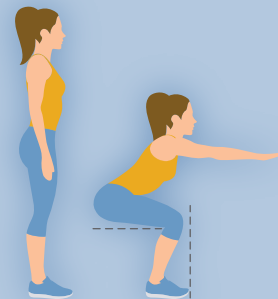
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The Body-Weight Squat

This exercise engages your *glutes, hamstrings, quadriceps, calves* and *core.*

- Begin with your feet slightly wider than your hips and toes slightly turned out.
- Engage your glutes and act as if you are sitting in a chair.
- Make sure your knees do not go past your toes.
- Stop at the bottom of the move with your hips slightly higher than your knees.
- Press through your heels as you come back to a standing position.

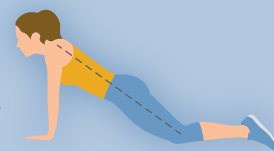


Do 2 to 3 sets, with 10 to 12 repetitions per set.

The Modified Push-Up

This exercise engages your *chest, triceps* and *core.*

- Start on your hands and knees and walk your hands forward.
- Stop when your abs engage, and a diagonal line forms from the back of your knees to your shoulders.
- Place your hands slightly wider than your shoulders.
- Lower your chest slowly toward the floor. At the bottom of the rep, your elbows should form a line with your wrists.



Do 2 to 3 sets, with 5 to 8 repetitions per set.

As you gain strength, you can increase the number of reps in each set and eventually work up to a traditional push-up without your knees on the floor.

The Sit-Up

This excellent core exercise engages your *abs, hip flexors* and *lower back.*

- Start by lying on your back with your knees bent.
- Put your fingertips on the back of your ears or cross your arms over your chest.
- Keeping your feet flat on the floor, lift your torso up toward your knees, and slowly lower back down.



Do 2 to 3 sets, starting with 8 to 10 repetitions per set.

EXERCISE SAFELY!

3 important things to remember:

1. Stay hydrated during your workout
2. Don't use more weight than you can handle
3. Stop if you experience any pain