

[IMAGE]

Low-Intensity Exercises = More Weight Loss

Despite what those late-night infomercial gurus might tell you, there's no magic formula to losing weight; essentially, it comes down to burning more calories each day than you take in. One of the easiest ways to burn calories is to participate in regular exercise. What hasn't been entirely figured out, though, is the role the intensity of exercise plays in weight loss. If exercise for short (but intense) periods of time, will you lose more weight than people who work out longer, but not as hard?

To try and answer this question, researchers assigned 14 women to participate in a three-month exercise program. One group exercised on a treadmill four times per week at a moderate pace, while a second group also exercised on a treadmill four times per week, but at a more vigorous pace. The researchers set the duration of the workouts so that each woman would burn a total of 370 calories each exercise session, regardless of group assignment.

After three months, women in both groups had lost weight, but the women in the lower-intensity group lost more weight (about 7 pounds per person) compared to women in the high-intensity group (4 pounds per person). Another interesting finding was that while the amount of fat-free mass in the low-intensity exercise group decreased slightly (approximately 0.5 pounds per person), it increased by nearly 1 pound per person in the high-intensity group. According to the researchers, this indicates that while high-intensity exercise may not necessarily aid in weight loss, it may cause muscle fibers to grow.

The bottom line? If you want to receive the greatest benefits of health and fitness, you need to mix up your exercise routines - endurance exercises one day, cardiovascular exercises another day, and strength training the next. Talk to your chiropractor about creating an exercise plan that you're comfortable with; one that will help provide the health benefits you're looking for. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/sports/index.html.

Reference:

Mougios V, Kazaki M, Christoulas K, et al. Does the intensity of an exercise programme modulate body composition changes? *International Journal of Sports Medicine* March 2006;27(3):178-181.

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