

[IMAGE]

Are Weights Better Than Aerobic Exercise for Heart Health?

By Editorial Staff

Weight training and aerobic exercise are two important components of a well-rounded fitness plan, and evidence suggests both can help facilitate weight loss: one by burning calories (aerobic exercise) and the other by increasing lean muscle. But which is better for heart health? While exercise in general reduces cardiovascular disease risk, weights appear to be superior when it comes to reducing a specific type of heart fat.

Pericardial adipose tissue can be a particularly dangerous type of visceral fat because of its location. However, research in *JAMA Cardiology* concludes that obese patients who lift weights reduce this type of fat, while patients who perform aerobic exercise do not. Both types of exercise appear to reduce another type of heart fat (epicardial adipose tissue) that is also associated with cardiovascular disease.

weights - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark In the study, researchers assigned obese, sedentary adults to one of two programs: aerobic exercise or weight training. A third group served as controls and had no change in activity. All adults were deemed free of heart disease, diabetes or atrial fibrillation at the start of the study, and each received an MRI scan of the heart before and after the three-month program to assess heart fat.

While both types of training reduced epicardial adipose fat compared to not exercising, weight training reduced pericardial adipose fat by 31 percent compared to not exercise.

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