

[IMAGE]

Just Do It!

There's no getting around the benefits of consistent exercise, especially when it comes to disease prevention. The risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, or one of a number of types of cancer goes down as your physical activity goes up.

But how much exercise is enough? According to several studies, the latest of which was published in the Sept. 10, 2003 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, it's not necessarily how intensely or how long you work out, but that - to borrow a line from Nike's famous commercials - you "just do it."

In the study, 201 sedentary women (reporting exercising less than 20 minutes per day for fewer than three days per week in the previous six months) were assigned to one of four exercise groups: vigorous intensity/high duration; moderate intensity/high duration; moderate intensity/moderate duration; or vigorous intensity/moderate duration. All women were instructed to reduce daily energy intake to 1,200-1,500 calories and limit dietary fat to 20-30 percent of total energy intake.

Results: After 12 months, significant weight loss and cardiorespiratory fitness were achieved by women in all four groups, with no significant differences between groups. In other words, longer and more strenuous workouts weren't particularly more effective than shorter workouts of moderate intensity.

As these results show, you may not need to slave away in the gym for hours to lose weight. What's most important is that you (and your chiropractor) develop a sensible, consistent exercise program. And of course, the hardest part is up to you: sticking to it!

Reference:

Jakicic JM, Marcus BH, Gallagher KI, et al. Effect of exercise duration and intensity on weight loss in overweight, sedentary women: a randomized trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Sept. 10, 2003:290(10), pp1323-30.

For more information on the many benefits of exercise and fitness, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/sports/exercise/index.html.

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