

Headline: The Health And Fitness Benefits Of Lifting Weights

Meta: You don't have to be a gym rat in order to benefit from lifting weights. Most people don't know that there are dozens of benefits from lifting weights.

H1: The Health And Fitness Benefits Of Lifting Weights



If you've ever been to a gym, you know the guy I'm about to talk about. The guy that wears that weird tank top. He screams every time he lifts a weight, and you're sure that vein in his head is eventually going to pop. Between sets, he spends an uncomfortable amount of time looking at himself in the mirror, posing and flexing for the world to see. Yeah, you know at least one guy like that.

Even though he might be a little obnoxious, he's using weight lifting to enhance his health and fitness. For that guy, though, he might be lifting weights strictly for the aesthetics. That doesn't change the result, however. He's still healthier because of his weight lifting routine.

Now, you're probably thinking that you don't want to be as big and bulky as that guy. Don't worry; you won't. That guy lives in the gym, and you don't need to adopt his routine or his caloric intake.

All you need to do is adopt a simple weight training routine, and your body will thank you.

In this article, we will explore the many reasons why you should lift weights and the benefits that come along with it.

Weight Training Is For More Than Muscles



Everyone knows that weight training builds muscles. But did you also know it can strengthen your bones and even help rebuild bones? This is especially helpful for people older in age with the risk of developing osteoporosis, and bones that are more brittle to begin with.

After age 40, a combination of age-related changes, inactivity, and inadequate nutrition causes us to lose 1% of our bone mass every year. Weight training can help counteract that.

Studies have shown that lifting weights plays a role in slowing bone loss, and even building bone. Activities that put stress on bones can nudge your bone-forming cells into action. The stress from weight lifting comes from the pushing and tugging on your bones during training. That results in stronger, denser bones.

The Benefits No One Tells You About



Along with helping your body regrow bone, there are several more benefits of weight lifting that no one talks about. We all know lifting weights will give you big arms and a toned chest, but what are the benefits we don't know about?

Lower Abdominal Fat. In a 2014 study Harvard researchers followed 10,500 men over the course of 12 years and found that strength training is more effective at preventing increases in abdominal fat than cardiovascular exercise.

Better Cardiovascular Health. Visceral fat sits in and around the vital organs, including the heart. Lifting weights reduces your amount of visceral fat, improving heart health.

Controlled Blood Sugar. A 2013 review published in the journal *BioMed Research International* shows that strength training also improves the muscle's ability to take in and use glucose, or blood sugar.

Reduced Risk Of Cancer. Visceral fat not only increases the risk of heart disease and diabetes, but it can also promote cancer development — another reason to lift weights to remove your visceral fat.

Injury Prevention. Having a good muscle base is important for all movement, balance, coordination and injury prevention. If your muscles are weak, it puts more stress on its connecting tendon and can result in injury.

Improved Mental Health. Similar to “runners high” strength training also improves symptoms of clinical depression and anxiety. Along with endorphins, strength training provides an opportunity to overcome obstacles and increase your mental resiliency.

Improved Flexibility And Mobility. When people think of flexibility, they think of yoga. It's time to rethink your stretching routine. However, strength training has been proven to improve flexibility in both men and women. Eccentric strength exercises that emphasize muscle lengthening may provide the biggest benefit, improving hamstring flexibility twice as well as static stretching.

Positive Body Image. Consistent strength training improves body image and perceived physical appearance – no matter the actual aesthetic results. Improvements in mental health and energy levels, as well as feelings of accomplishment, are the likely causes of improved body image.

Better Brain Health. Strength training can improve brain power across a lifetime, with the effects strongest in older adults suffering from cognitive decline.

The Reduced Risk Of Heart Attack And Stroke



If you still need a little more motivation to start lifting weights, this should do it. One of the most significant benefits of weight lifting is the effect it has on your overall health. Lifting weights makes you a healthier person overall. Recently, however, strength training has been proven to reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke.

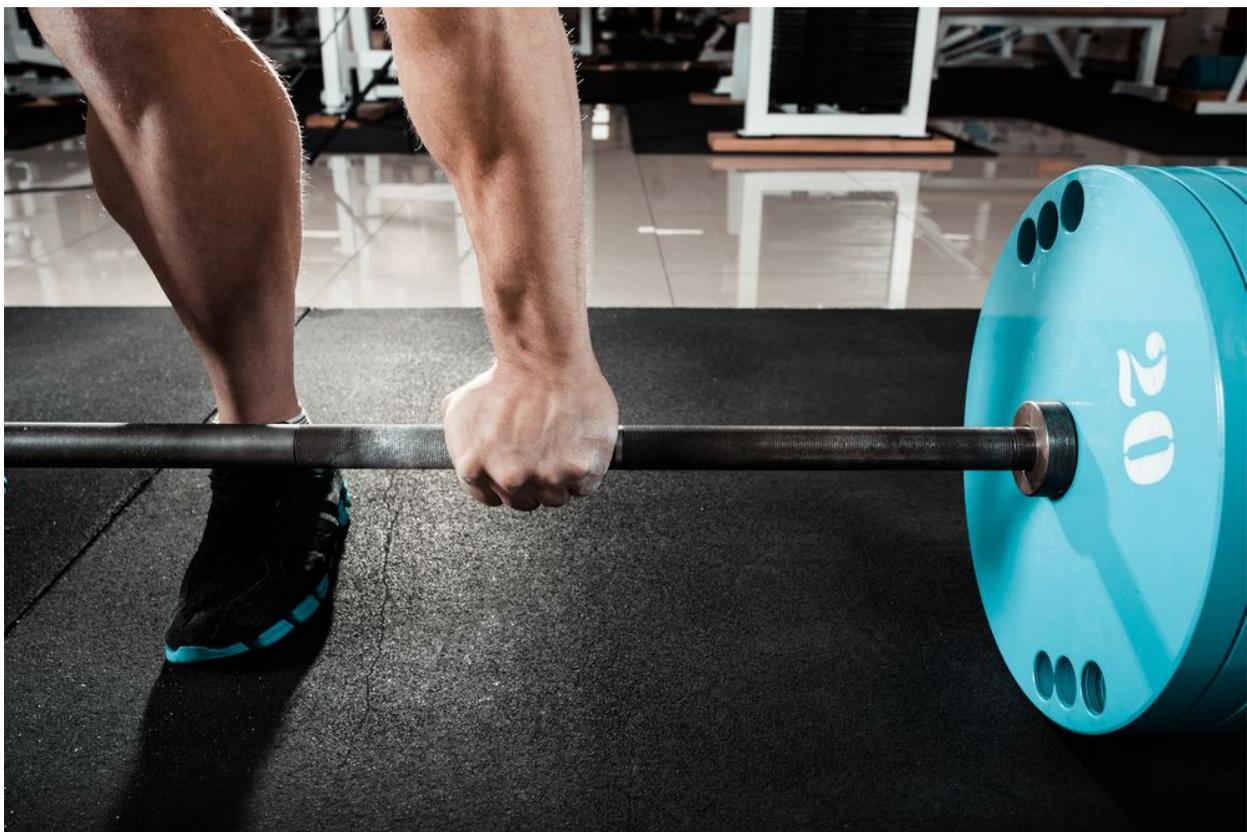
The study was undertaken at the Cooper Clinic in Dallas. More than 12,500 patient records were anonymized for men and women, most of them middle-aged, who had visited the clinic at least twice between 1987 and 2006. The subjects were categorized according to their reported resistance exercise routines, ranging from those who never lifted to those who completed one, two, three or more weekly sessions.

Another category was aerobic exercise and whether subjects met the standard recommendation of 150 minutes per week of brisk workouts. This exercise data was then cross-checked against heart attacks, strokes and deaths during the 11 years or so after each participant's last clinic visit.

What they found was pretty dramatic. The risk of experiencing a heart attack or stroke was about 50% lower for people who occasionally lifted weights compared to those who never lifted. The people who lifted twice a week for nearly an hour total had the most significant declines in risk.

This is great news for weight lifters because it finally proves that there are heart benefits even with a very small amount of resistance exercises.

Weight Lifting For Beginners



If you've never done any type of weight lifting before, it can be pretty intimidating to get started. Just mustering up enough courage to walk into the gym is a huge accomplishment for many people. Hiring a personal trainer is always an option. They can teach you the ins and outs of everything, and help you design a workout that's suited to your needs.

If you don't want to hire a personal trainer, here are some rules of etiquette and common mistakes you should avoid when you're first starting out.

Etiquette:

- Always bring a towel so you can wipe off the machines, benches, and equipment you use.
- Rerack all the weight and replace all the dumbbells or barbells that are used.
- Don't rest on machines, especially one that someone is waiting for. Most people are more than willing to share machines when asked nicely.
- Leave your cell phone in your locker or car. Nothing is more distracting than listening to another person's conversation when you're trying to work out.

Mistakes To Avoid:

- When first starting out, always start with weights lower than your expected ability and work your way up that first workout. If your form suffers, you may be using too much weight. Greater momentum increases the potential for injury and reduces effectiveness.
- You could also not use enough weight. You want always to play it safe, but if you can perform 30 reps with a certain weight, it's likely time to increase it a bit. A good rule of thumb is to increase the weight by 5% at a time.
- Don't move through repetitions too quickly or move too fast. Some of the perks of lifting weight in a slow and controlled manner include total muscle tension, more muscle-fiber activation, and less tissue trauma.
- Not enough, or too much, rest. Either one can be a workout killer. The recommended rest period is between 30-90 seconds for overall fitness.

It's As Simple As Up And Down

Did you ever imagine that picking something up and then putting it down could be so beneficial to your health? That's what weight lifting is, and it can work wonders for your mind and your body.

There are no magic pills, no complicated moves, and no expensive superfood shakes involved. All you have to do is lift weights, even just a little bit, and you will be better off because of it. You will look better, feel better, and you will likely live longer because of your weight training.

You don't have to be "that guy" in the gym. No one expects you to squat 500lbs or do pull-ups for 30 minutes straight. Even the most straightforward routine will pack fantastic health benefits.

Don't want to buy a gym membership? No problem. Amazon.com is your best friend because you can buy a weight bench, dumbbells, resistance bands, or anything else you need so you don't have to leave the comfort of your own home but still get in a great workout.

So, what are you waiting for? Go grab a set of weights and start lifting.

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