

7 Weight-Loss Myths

Fitness expert Lisa Corsello's first step to achieving optimal results from her workouts? Forgetting these common misconceptions.

1 WEIGHTS ADD WEIGHT

It's a matter of sex. Men are more equipped to gain muscle mass because they have higher levels of testosterone. Unless you're using very heavy weights and spending hours strength training each day, it's unlikely you'll bulk up from lifting weights.

Use light to medium weights—to the point where you're not straining—with high repetitions, and incorporate a variety of exercises and cardio work to achieve a lean, toned body.

2 HOURS GET RESULTS

There's no need to spend all of your free time at the gym. Circuit training is an effective and efficient way to work out in less time.

Include a mixture of cardio, weights and ab exercises in your circuit to challenge your body in different ways, and remember to keep moving to keep your heart rate up and burn calories.

3 SKIPPING LEADS TO SHEDDING

You've no doubt heard the news that forgoing meals is not the best way to drop extra weight.

Not only does it slow your metabolism, skipping meals can destroy your willpower, making it impossible to say no to a binge-fest later in the day.

Avoid a late-night eating marathon by spreading out your calories. And think of it in terms of changing your mind-set rather than restricting yourself. Restriction can lead to overeating in the long-run.



Did You Know?

You can raise your resting metabolism by adding strength training to your routine. Lean body mass (muscle) burns more calories than fat throughout the day. A workout that includes weights will burn more calories both during and after your workout.



4 CARBS WILL SABOTAGE MY EFFORTS

Our bodies require carbs, plain and simple, especially if we're active.

But all carbs are not created equal, and understanding the difference is crucial to maintaining a healthy weight and effective workout plan.

Complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains and high-fiber fruits and veggies, give us energy and serve a vital function in the digestion of nutrients. Simple carbohydrates, i.e., white bread and white rice, are high in refined sugar, creating a "sugar high" and a subsequent crash that leads to more sugar cravings.

Choose complex carbohydrates, and pair them with lean protein and a small amount of fat (avocado, low-fat cheese, peanut butter) for extended satiety and reduced sugar cravings.

5 SPOT REDUCTION WORKS

While focusing on a "trouble" area with specific exercises is important, it won't suddenly transform one body part.

In order to lose fat and tone up, cardio and nutrition are key. Keep focusing on your less-than-perfect parts, but be sure to work your entire body with a well-balanced and diverse workout routine.

6 CARDIO: ALL AT ONCE OR NOT AT ALL

Getting your heart rate up for a significant amount of time is essential, but if your schedule doesn't allow for it, break it up.

Recent research suggests that a cumulative exercise effort (i.e., three 10-minute

workouts) is comparable to one workout of the same duration.

7 MACHINES WORK BETTER THAN FREE WEIGHTS

Free weights are really great because they don't provide as much "help" with form as machines. When using free weights, smaller muscles work to help stabilize the movement.

Machines are important when trying out a new exercise or movement with heavier weights, but once you have the motion down, free weights get the job done well.

San Francisco-based fitness expert Lisa Corsello developed a new fitness technique called Burn, a blend of cardio, Pilates and weights (burnsf.com).

