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NEWSLETTER

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Bust out of your Fitness Rut

Got results? You've been exercising on a regular basis for awhile. So, how's it working for you? Are you noticing a change in your body? Or have you reached a plateau?

Take an inventory of your fitness results. See if your program is still working for you. And if it is not, then it may be time to bust out of your fitness rut. Here are a few common fitness ruts and some suggestions for breaking out of them.

- **Monotonous weight routines.** If you've been doing the exact same weight-training routine or watching 1980s Jazzercise videos on your old VHS player, then it's time to mix it up! Your muscles adapt to any given exercise, which is why it's important to consistently change your weight-training routine. Increase your weight size, add more reps, or try new exercises altogether to break through your muscle-building plateau.
- **Over-crunching.** You do 500 sit-ups every night, and you wonder why your abs still aren't flat. It's probably because crunches strictly tend to work your rectus abdominus, just one of your abdominal muscles. In order to truly trim your waistline, you also need to work your external and internal obliques, and your transverse abdominus. Try a variety of abdominal exercises, including Pilates-based moves, to help whittle away your middle.
- **Cardio queen.** Aerobic exercise is important. You need it to burn calories and maximize heart health. But, cardio is just one part of a well-rounded fitness routine. You also need strength training and stretching. And don't forget that good nutrition is a big part of your overall health too.
- **Rushing.** When you race through your weight-training reps, you're allowing momentum to take over, instead of using actual muscle. If you want to see more definition in your muscles, then you must stress the muscles to the point of fatigue. Focus on lifting and lowering your weights with steady control. Take your time, and think about the muscle behind every movement that you perform.
- **Relying on your workout only.** If you are sedentary all day long, and rely solely on your workout to burn calories, then you are missing a wealth of opportunities to improve your overall fitness and well-being. Make just a couple of small changes to incorporate fitness all day long. Park in the farthest parking space when going to the grocery store. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. You'll burn more overall calories throughout the day.

Did you know?

Drinking Cold Water Can Speed Up Your Metabolism

According to a researcher at the University of Pittsburgh, your body may burn a few calories heating cold water to your core temperature. Though the extra calories you burn drinking a single glass doesn't amount to much, making it a habit can add up to pounds lost with essentially zero additional effort.

Technique Tip of the Month ----> Standing Pec Press

1. Start in a standing position with your feet shoulder width apart with weights in your hands. Upper arms are raised out to the side and parallel to the floor. Elbows are bent 90 degrees so your hand and wrist are directly over your elbows. Palms face front.
2. Contract your pectoralis major (chest muscles) to move your elbows forward towards each other.
3. Stop the movement when your elbows are directly in front of your shoulders.
4. Release your chest muscles and contract your rhomboids (back muscles) to move your elbows back to the starting position.

Performing this exercise on a regular basis will help tighten and tone your chest and back muscles.