

# get fit fast

USE ALL OF THE TOOLS IN THE FITNESS TOOLKIT

**When it comes to our fitness - or should I say lack of fitness - most of us eventually reach a point when we say enough is enough, something has got to change. This turning point may come as a result of a frightening warning from the doctor, a belt that reaches its last notch or even a friend innocently exclaiming, "I didn't know you were pregnant!"**

Regardless of the stimulus, the same tools can help each of us take our fitness from pathetic to peak performance. When used properly, this fitness system will get results much more quickly than using any of the tools independently - and applied diligently and passionately, using the full array of fitness tools will deliver awesome results that will positively put a smile on your face.

So what easy, quick-fix gimmick am I trying to promote?

Actually, this can be a relatively quick fix, but it's no gimmick and it's definitely not easy. In fact, the faster you want to see results, the greater effort you will need to exert. This scientifically proven system combines good nutrition, strength training, cardiovascular training, personal assistance and quality supplementation. When combined in a structured program, these five tools work synergistically to deliver great fitness results.

Following a healthy meal plan is the first and possibly the most important tool. Eating several small meals per day rather than one or two larger meals is recommended. If you're trying to lose weight, you must pay strict attention to portion sizes by weighing and measuring everything that you consume. Planning ahead for each meal and keeping a daily diet log will pay huge dividends.

Strength training will help you gain strength and muscle size, look lean and toned, and feel more confident and energetic. If you're trying to lose weight, it will help burn fat while preventing the loss of muscle. For those seeking the "buff" look, lifting medium to heavy weights in sets of eight to 12 repetitions is the key. To gain strength and muscle quickly, strength train at least three days per week.

Cardiovascular training is continuous, rhythmic exercise such as walking, jogging and cycling that

increases the health and function of the heart, lungs and circulatory system. Cardiovascular (also called aerobic) exercise increases endurance, energy and mental well-being while burning calories and reducing excess body fat. Cardiovascular exercise can also help control blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, reducing the risk of heart disease and dangerous conditions which could lead to a heart attack.

Most cardiovascular programs begin with three, 20-minute workouts per week at light to medium intensity, and progress by gradually increasing the length of the workouts, the number of workouts per week and/or the intensity of the workouts. Those doing aerobic exercise to lose weight should do four to six sessions per week for 30 to 60 minutes per workout. Vary the type of aerobic exercise to keep your program interesting and prevent your body from adapting to one type of exercise.

The fourth tool in the fitness toolbox is personal assistance. This may come in the form of a spouse (usually not recommended), a workout partner, a personal trainer, a weight loss program, a physician, a fitness book or even an exercise and eating program downloaded from the Internet.

Enlist the help of a friend or health and fitness professional who can help you design an individualized, goal-specific fitness program, and who will keep you accountable to stay on track when things get tough.

The final tool is supplementation. The typical American diet, even a health conscious one, can lack ingredients important to sustaining and improving health and fitness. Supplements can make up for inadequacies in our diets. They can also simplify healthy eating through the use of shakes and bars, aid in achieving fitness goals and reduce the time needed to reach those goals. Begin with a quality multivitamin and a calcium supplement, and base any additional supplementation on the quality and composition of your diet, your fitness goals and your dietitian's recommendations.

Just as your mechanic would never repair your car using only a screwdriver, neither should you attempt to reach your fitness goals using just one tool. Set your goals, seek necessary help, make your plan and go for it! The results will be worth it. •

