



## **Most Common Fitness Mistakes**

1. **Not including functional strength exercises.** Many fitness participants ONLY use strength training machines to build strength. A good fitness program must include more bodyweight and free weight exercises to train the body to meet the demands of daily function- not just push a weight around while sitting at a machine. Functional training exercises are necessary to enhance core strength and insure back health during the movements of work and play. They are absolutely essential for athletes at any level.
2. **Executing exercise with poor posture and form.** A major cause of injury- and lack of good result! Education, attention and practice are the key to knowing whether your posture and form are appropriate. A personal trainer is the best person to keep you focused on posture and form as you exercise. But, if you do not have a trainer, mirrors are a must! Most people need visual feedback to insure proper posture and form.
3. **Exercising without watching nutrition.** If your goal is weight loss or increased muscle mass, proper nutrition must be adhered to. You cannot build muscle if you are on a calorie restrictive diet, and you cannot lose body fat if you take in too many calories at the wrong time. Poor nutrition will hold you back from getting good results.
4. **Dieting without exercise.** It is IMPOSSIBLE to achieve **permanent** weight loss and good health without exercise. Note the word permanent. Yes- diets cause weight loss- but much of the weight loss is muscle tissue- resulting in a lowering of the metabolism. AND- exercise is the key to keeping weight off once you have reached your goal. There is no EASY way!!
5. **Ignoring chronic injuries and pain.** If you have joint pain from or during exercise- don't ignore it. See your Doctor and get it checked out. It might be minor- but too many people ignore minor pains which then become major. If you do have joint pain, a good trainer can help you choose what exercises to avoid as well as what exercise to include to help the injury. Note: it takes twice as long to heal an injury as the length of time that you have had the injury- so- act right away to decrease time away from your fitness program.
6. **Not progressing or changing your program as it becomes easy or once you have hit a plateau.** Variety is key to keeping your body from hitting a plateau and to keep boredom from setting in. Staying at the same weight, doing the same exercises, decreases the likelihood that you will continue to make progress in your fitness. So- when something is easy, you must change it to make it harder!
7. **Not performing a balanced exercise program.** A balanced program should include all three components of Fitness - cardio, strength and flexibility. If one is missing from your regimen, injury or lack of progress can result.
8. **Setting unrealistic goals based on a lack of education about how exercise changes the physical body.** Losing weight is a challenging task- it takes frequent heavy exercise and superb nutrition to be successful. Adding muscle mass and seeing muscle shape occurs with strength training. Fitness takes time. Losing more than 2 pounds a week of body fat, or expecting to see muscle shape in a few weeks is unrealistic. A lack of education leads to doing some things that never work and losing patience because you aren't getting good results. A good trainer can help you set realistic goals AND help you achieve them!!