

# Aerobic (Cardio) Exercise

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Moving your body burns calories, we all know that. The faster you move your body, the more calories you burn. 10 minutes of jogging burns more calories than 10 minutes of walking. The more you move your body the more calories you burn. This isn't astronomy. Pretty simple and easy stuff to wrap your brain around but there is a best and easiest way.

Here are some common mistakes that people make with doing cardio that I want to share with you so you can avoid them!

## **Mistake #1: Using cardio to replace poor eating habits.**

The less fit you are, the less capacity you have to burn calories with aerobic exercise. Meaning if you can only walk, a person who can jog or run or bike or row faster than you will burn more calories than you. For most regular folks, walking for one hour burns about 300 calories and jogging or hard biking burns 600 calories in an hour. So for most beginners who are not yet physically fit; they may only burn 50-200 calories per workout! Just one extra cookie, slice of pizza or a few spoons of food cleaning up the dishes can easily wipe out the calories you burned exercising. It's very common to see folks start an exercise program, walk 20 minutes 3 days a week and then think they can eat an extra dessert now and end up GAINING weight! What they don't realize is their 20 minute walk only burns about 75 calories x 3 day = 225 calories, but their extra eating during the week = 1 slice of pie (400 calories) x 3 days = 1,200 calories!



I've also seen very experienced exercisers use exercise as a way to "cover" their poor eating habits and food addictions. I've seen people do 2 or even 3 hours of exercise a day to try to stay the same weight from their binge eating habits.

Aerobic exercise when combined with healthy eating creates weight loss. Healthy eating is required and wanted. You WANT to feed your body right rather than be addicted to junk food and overeating.

## **Mistake #2: Doing cardio before strength training**

Your muscles use glycogen to fuel their movements. Glycogen is just stored carbohydrates. When glycogen is low, more fat is burned. Also when glycogen is low, you feel weaker—that's the last thing you want when you're going to be doing strength training. So for a good strength training workout, you want your glycogen "tanks" to be full so you feel strong and can push yourself to make improvements.

Strength training greatly depletes your glycogen (faster than cardio), so when you do your cardio training after your strength training, you will be tapping into more fat. The key to really depleting your glycogen is to really push yourself during strength training by using challenging weights.

Sure you can warm up for a few minutes, but doing any aerobic training for more than 10 minutes before strength training will drain your strength ability and hinder your strength training progress. Always do cardio after strength training to burn more fat rather than glycogen.

## **Mistake #3: Only doing cardio training a few days a week**

You may think you don't have time to do aerobic exercise every day, but it's really like saying you don't have time to brush your teeth every day. To prevent cavities, you need to brush every day. To prevent weight-loss failure, you need to do aerobics every day. Everyone who is thin and healthy does aerobics every day. Sure there are thin people that do no cardio, but they probably smoke cigarettes or eat very light. Everybody I know who is healthy and fit, exercises daily. I ride the exercise bike every morning for 10-12 minutes. I also do 10 minutes after my strength training at around noon and go for a 20 minute bike ride or walk in the evening after dinner. Total time = 40min per day. I've just gotten into this routine. It's an easy no-brainer that I enjoy doing---especially my outside bike rides where I listen to my books on mp3 or visit with my wife and daughter when they come along.

Don't believe for a second that your life is "busier" or "different" than mine in that you can't develop your own similar daily enjoyable aerobics routine (habit). You absolutely can and you absolutely must if you want to live in a healthy body!

## **Mistake #4: Not making exercise fun and easy**

When riding the exercise bike in the morning, I watch the news or read motivational stuff so getting my butt out of bed at 4:25 isn't hard for me. I WANT to go burn some fat on the bike because I know my glycogen is low after sleeping 7 hours and going to bed on an empty

stomach. It's an awesome feeling knowing that my efforts are going directly to kill my fat cells! And I distract myself from my tiredness by watching the news or reading while I pedal. Pictured is the exact bike I have in my basement: the Cybex Cyclone 530.



After my strength training I hop on the recumbent bike at the gym and read the paper. After strength training I know I am low on glycogen so I'm also burning fat during this 10 minutes. This time goes by easily because I'm either reading the paper or chatting to the person on the bike next to me or watching the TV's on the wall.

In the evening I am biking off the carbs I ate from dinner so I can go to bed in a low glycogen state and burn fat all night long while sleeping. My evening bike rides are enjoyable for several reasons. First, I know it allows me to set my body up for burning fat all night long and staying the weight I want to be. Second, outside fresh air and nature is totally healing to one's mind. Third, I can visit with my wife and daughter when they come along. Fourth, I can also get some reading in by listening to my books on mp3 if I go alone. Fifth, I know that getting my blood pumping and my heart beating is good for my cardio system and will help me live a long life free of heart problems that so many people are blindsided by.

Notice too that I don't go for 45 or 60 minutes. That would NOT be fun for me. Fun to me is EASY. Make exercise easy and fun and you'll quickly establish it as a habit! Because my routine is easy and fun, my brain has no problem doing this every day. The power of routine is so strong that I have to remind myself it's Sunday so I skip my am bike ride and sleep in a little more! You can have this too if you make exercise easy and enjoyable!

### **Mistake #5: Doing the same thing**

We humans tend to stick with things we get used to. I like to call it the "Security Blanket Cancer" phenomenon because it makes you feel safe but it kills any progress in your life by keeping you stuck! Your body quickly adapts to doing the same thing. My wife is a runner and she's run several marathons. She complains that she can't lose weight unless she runs 45-60 minutes per day! Because she's been running so much over the past several years, her body has become highly adapted to running. If she



biked, rowed or did the elliptical at the gym for 20 or 30 minutes, she'd get better results for her time.

I've heard the same from people who only walk. They walk 5 miles every day and can't lose a darn pound! This is likely mostly an eating issue, but partially because their body is so used to walking, it doesn't provide a good stimulus to the body to adapt to burn more calories and change. This is also where a gym membership comes in very handy. There's a lot of cardio variety in your gym! Use it!

### Your Assignment

Develop a plan to start enjoying exercise every morning, during the day and in the evening. It can be just 5 or 10 minutes. Make it EASY so you want to do it again! Get on the treadmill or bike in the morning and read the paper or watch the news. Go for a BRISK walk or go to the gym at lunch. Buy an affordable bike at Wal-Mart and go for bike rides in the evening—you'll love the fresh air and feeling of being on a bike again!

If you want to purchase a home exercise machine, I prefer a bike because it's easier to read while using and they are virtually maintenance free. Treadmills need maintenance and costly belt replacements after a few years. I also recommend spending a couple hundred more and getting a good used commercial-grade machine. First ask your gym owner if he's looking to upgrade and would sell you an old machine. If that is not available check e-bay. There is a place in the Chicago area where I buy used equipment and they sell and ship to anyone and anywhere. <http://stores.ebay.com/Direct-Fitness-Solutions>

Call and talk to Brian Swanson. Ask for his best price on the machine you are interested in.

