



Weight Loss Myths

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MYTH 4 - Cardio is better than weights for weight loss

Much has been written about the benefits of weight training for bone density, strength and general well being; but did you know that weight training is a great way to lose weight?

While ‘**cardio**’ exercises such as running on the treadmill, cycling and rowing may be great to burn energy they have a distinct disadvantage in that they actually **can slow your metabolism**. How?

Doing cardio exercise for long periods or at high intensities can cause your body to release the hormone cortisol. While this stress hormone may facilitate fat burning, it also can cause muscle loss. The problem with losing muscle is that muscle is what makes up your metabolism. Having less muscle will mean that you will find it harder to control your weight as you will have a slower metabolism. In essence the more cardio you do, the harder long term weight control will become.

Weight training on the other hand also burns energy but has the advantage of speeding up your metabolism. The dominant hormone involved in the weight training adaptation process is growth hormone. The massive advantage of growth hormone is that not only does it burn fat, but it will also build muscle and fight ageing. This means that you will be able to eat more food in the future without gaining weight.

As mentioned in Myth 3, the key to long term weight control is not to be lighter on the scales or ‘skinny’, its to have a lower body fat percentage. This can be achieved by losing body fat or by gaining muscle mass, or both!

WON'T I GET BULKY?

This is a question I get frequently from ladies who are concerned that they will look overly bulky. The simple answer is no. While a very small percentage of women will find it easier to gain muscle, the degree to which muscle gain occurs will be dependant on the individual's nutrition. As women do not have as much testosterone as men they will find it far more difficult to gain muscle and are unlikely to ever be able to look bulky.