

TOP 20 HEALTH AND FITNESS MYTHS OF 2014



When it comes to fitness it's often hard to sort the fact from fiction. It seems that everyone these days has an opinion and everyone is a self-appointed fitness expert. There is quite a bit of hype about health and wellness, a lot of which comes from marketing campaigns that aim to sell us something easy, the magic pill, or the latest and greatest product that will make us well.

The truth is that there is a lot of misinformation in the world of health, and since being armed with accurate information is half the battle, today we will count down the Top 20 Fitness Myths of 2014.

20. If I workout I can eat whatever I want

Wrong! Healthy weight management is all about calories in and calories out. You still have to make sure you burn more than you eat, period.

What is true is the fact that those who workout regularly can eat more than those who don't because they burn more during the workout and even when at rest because their metabolism is boosted.



But, you still have to consider that an apple has 95 calories, while a slice of apple pie has 277.

19. Crunches will burn belly fat

This is one of the biggest myths around. Crunches tone ab muscles, but, in order to burn the fat that covers those muscles you have to perform fat burning exercises along with a calorie deficit.

You can add ab exercises into a fat burning workout, like, Kettlebell training, HIIT or Tabata, with these workouts you burn fat, while at the same time sculpting the muscles underneath.



18. The more you sweat, the more fat you burn

Not true! Sweat is the body's acclamatory adjustment in response to heat, it occurs in an effort to cool you down, and it can just as well be the result of working out in a hot room than from a particular workout.

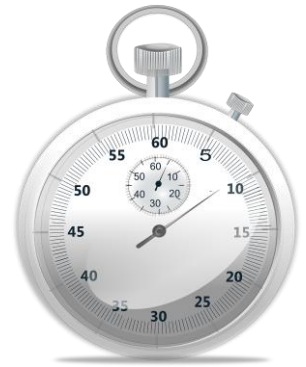
The true gauge of workout intensity and therefore optimal fat burning is target heart rate. Also, when you do workouts, like HIIT, Tabata or Kettlebell training you go into the anaerobic state, where you are literally gasping for air, and that is the best fat burning environment.



17. The longer the workout, the more effective it is

Wrong! Really wrong!

High Intensity Interval Training and Tabata are proof of that. Experts say and the science backs up the fact that doing short bursts of very intense movement, followed by short periods of rest, such as that seen in Tabata and HIIT for 15 minutes even once a week is more beneficial and yields better results than doing an hour of traditional cardio (fat burning zone) 3 days a week.



16. Sleep has nothing to do with weight management

Wrong again!

Sleep plays an important role in weight management for several reasons. A study of Women cited in the American Journal of Epidemiology showed that those who get less than seven hours of sleep per night gained weight. And other studies have shown that even minimal sleep deprivation increases the production of the hormone ghrelin in the body, which triggers feelings of hunger, even when one is not. This about it, how often have you eaten when you were really tired?

15. Fruit cocktail is the same as eating whole fruit

Big wrong on this one! Anything canned has preservatives and additives. Fruit cocktails typically have a ton of added sugar that ups the calorie count dramatically, besides the hazards of the refined sugar that is included (aka heavy syrup).



Whole fruit always wins!

14. Cardio should come before strength training

Not true, it is more effective to strength train first because doing cardio first will reduce glycogen levels in the body and can prevent an efficient strength workout. But, doing weight training first will actually increase the production of testosterone (in men) and cortisol (in women), both of which are beneficial to working out.

13. The scale determines your true fitness level

Did you know that muscle weighs more than fat? If you workout and strength train with weights the scale may not represent your true fitness level. Then there are inches, some people lose inches while the scale stands still.

And, the scale cannot assess a true amount of body fat, for that you can use a body fat calliper that offers an accurate reading.

Then there is the BMI, Body Mass Index Scale that can tell you where you place on the obesity scale, it takes into account parameters beyond weight.



12. If you don't eat a lot of fruit you are not healthy

The truth is that vegetables are a better choice overall. This is not to say that you should not eat fruit, but, vegetables have more nutrients and much less calories and sugar, plus, the sugar in fruit is known as fructose, which is stored in the liver instead of in the muscles.

Some people eat fruit all day without considering the amount of sugar they are ingesting. ALL vegetables, especially the green ones, should fill the largest part of your plate at every meal and snacks for that matter.



11. To lose fat and weight, you should not eat fat

Wrong! Healthy fats that play critical roles in our health and wellness because they play key roles in internal body functions and also help prevent chronic disease, like that of the heart because they help to control bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol.

Fat is also important to maintain healthy hormone levels and make use of vitamins. Fat is also necessary for muscle growth and it helps to regulate the appetite.

The key is to focus on healthy fats, like, olive oil, fish and fish oils, avocados, flaxseeds and raw nuts, A diet without fats that is mainly comprised of carbs and protein can make any fat-loss or muscle-building goals virtually impossible to reach.



10. You shouldn't eat food after 6pm

Your metabolism doesn't have a watch and suddenly stop burning at 6pm or any other time for that matter. When you workout regularly your metabolism is working even when it's at rest.



9. Lifting weights will make women bulky

Many come to this conclusion after seeing photos of female bodybuilders. But, it's not just lifting weights that have made these women bulky, it's also steroids, taking growth hormones and a very particular regimen that takes a ton of effort.



Ladies, lift weights, build strength, tone muscle, it's all good for you and you will not turn into a bodybuilder.

8. You can't lose weight without doing cardio

To lose weight all you need to do is expend more calories than you consume. How you do this is completely up to you. Many like to do cardio when trying to lose weight, but it is by no means required, though, it allows you to eat more and enjoy better heart health, stamina, and increased energy levels.

Older people benefit from aerobic activity even more because as we age our metabolism slows way down and exercise helps to boost it.

Also, cardio is old news, you are better off ditching the hour on the treadmill and doing 10 to 15 minutes of HIIT.



7. Cardio should only be done early morning on an empty stomach when trying to lose body fat

If you prefer to do your cardio first thing in the morning before breakfast that's perfectly fine, but it is certainly not essential for fat loss. You can do it in the afternoon, or late evening. Once again the most important ingredient for fat loss is expending more calories than you consume.

8. Carnitine is a potent fat burning supplement

The research has been done and this supplement is without doubt nothing but unsubstantiated hype. Carnitine won't help you lose fat and even in suggested doses can have some seriously unpleasant gastrointestinal side effects.

5. High protein diets are essential for fat loss

The best fat loss diet is one that you can stick to. Most dieters quickly find that all or nothing fad diets don't work for long term fat loss.

Try to eat smaller portions several times per day instead of 3 big meals and increase your physical activity when aiming for fat loss.



4. Lifting weights for high repetitions is necessary to tone muscles

There is no such thing as "toning muscles," they can only be built or maintained, the term toned is simply used as a description.

If you can lift a weight for more than 15 repetitions with ease it's time to increase the weight.



3. Creatine is a dangerous supplement

Not many supplements are backed by strong scientific research, but creatine has been proven to significantly increase muscle strength and shorten between set recoveries. It has also been shown to be perfectly safe for both of those purposes without any significant health consequences.

2. Carbohydrates make you fat

Poor old carbohydrates really have a bad reputation, but it really is undeserved, as they certainly don't make you fat unless eaten in quantities that increase your calorie intake well beyond your needs and you only eat simple carbs, like, sugar, cakes and cookies.

The key is to eat good carbs, and not simple sugar carbs.

Complex carbs including, whole grains and vegetables are your best sources, while simple carbs, like sugars and white starch, should be kept to a minimum because they are not nutrient rich and are therefore not quality calories.

Carbs are necessary components of an overall well-balanced diet. The more variety you have in your diet, the



more nutrients you consume and the better health you will enjoy.

Also, if you want to gain muscles then you need carbs. When you eliminate them you might burn more fat during workouts, but, you will not have the energy for long term effective workouts because it is carbs that fuel intense workouts.

1. Isolation exercises are more important than compound exercises

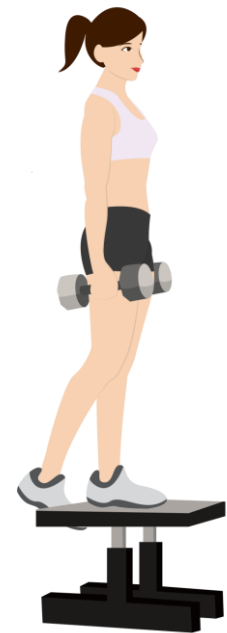
Not true! Compound exercises are actually vastly superior to isolation exercises when you want to build muscle and they are also important for functional fitness.

Isolation exercises only work one muscle group whereas compound movements work multiple muscle groups.

This helps with increasing an anaerobic response in the body, because you are engaging multiple muscle groups at the same time, which, means that strength training workouts can help to burn more fat.

Functional fitness is the use of exercise moves that mimic day to day life and train muscle groups to work together, and that is where compound exercises serve you best by improving performance in daily activities, and eliminating risk of injury, something especially important as we age.

Balance is something often overlooked by people when they design their fitness regimens. Balance training also allows for healthier aging, can go a long way to avoiding the typical falls seen in seniors, and is something that is a by-product of many compound exercises.



Summing It All Up

Well there we have it, the Top 20 Health and Fitness Myths of 2014.

Remember that when it comes to health and fitness everyone has an opinion, next time you hear something that just doesn't seem right be sure to do some research before diving in head first and believing the latest myth, something especially useful when it comes to expensive hype, such as, supplements.

Here's to 2015 being a great health fitness year!