

# THE BENEFITS OF THE TV WORKOUT

In any modern gym, you'll see people exercising on treadmills and stationary bikes while watching TV. The reason, of course, is to provide entertainment during these cardio exercises. The TV Workout starts with this idea, but goes much further. While including a cardio workout, the TV Workout adds a full range of strength and flexibility exercises that can easily be done while you watch TV. In addition to improving your cardiovascular fitness, the TV Workout will strengthen and stretch every major muscle in your body. It will make you stronger, toned and more flexible. Every exercise in the TV Workout is easy to learn and simple to do. Amazingly, you can do all of the exercises while watching your favorite TV shows.

## **Why Exercise while Watching TV?**

First, to make exercising fun. Lifting weights or jogging gets tedious. Watching sports or a good show while exercising offsets the tedium. You'll be surprised at how easy and enjoyable it becomes to work out while watching TV. After a while, the exercises will become second nature.

Second, to make exercising a regular part of your life. Muscles need to be exercised regularly to stay in good condition. Working out regularly also helps to prevent weight fluctuations—which are unhealthy. Regular exercise is a key to reducing fat, getting toned and staying lean. If you have a TV show that you like to watch daily, such as the morning news, you can schedule your workout at that time and automatically exercise on a regular basis. You'll be able to use your TV habit to build an exercise habit.

Third, to save you time. You won't spend time driving to a gym, dealing with traffic, waiting for machines, and driving home. If you're like most people, you spend many hours per week watching TV. Why not use a little of that viewing time to get fit and stay in shape.

Fourth, for comfort and convenience. Whether it is raining or snowing, or hot and humid outside, you'll be able to exercise in the comfort of your home.

Fifth, to save you money. You'll save on gasoline and gym membership fees. If you

don't have a gym membership, you won't have to pay initiation and monthly fees in order to get and stay fit. If you're tired of the gym or don't feel like your getting your money's worth, you can cancel without feeling that you'll get out of shape. If you have a gym membership and decide to keep it, you'll save money on gas by driving to the gym less often—maybe just on the weekend for a heavier workout.

Sixth, to avoid the hazards of being sedentary. Watching TV while sedentary for prolonged periods increases the risk of disease and premature death. According to a study by Professor Frank Hu of the Harvard School of Public Health and Anders Grontved of the University of Southern Denmark (published in the June 15, 2011 edition of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*), for every two hours per day spent watching TV while sedentary, the risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases by 20% and the risk of developing cardiovascular disease increases by 15%.

### **Exercise to Look and Feel Younger**

As part of the aging process, joints become stiffer, muscles shrink, bones lose density, waistlines and derrieres expand, and the heart gets weaker. Fortunately, a combination of strength, aerobic and flexibility workouts will slow or even reverse these effects of aging. By exercising regularly, you will look and feel much younger than your chronological age.

### **Exercise to Reduce Your Risk of Disease**

Most importantly, exercising regularly reduces the risk of suffering heart disease, stroke, colon cancer, breast cancer, type 2 diabetes and Alzheimer's disease.

Exercising helps control your weight and blood sugar (glucose) levels. Excess body fat, particularly around the waist, usually means that too much body fat has also accumulated in the internal organs, which can lead to disease. High levels of fat in the liver, for example, can result in inflammation, scarring and permanent liver damage.

Excess body fat is also linked to diabetes. The more body fat you have, the greater your risk of type 2 diabetes. The reason is that excess fatty tissue, especially around the waist, makes the body more resistant to its own insulin. The increased insulin resistance makes it harder to regulate blood sugar (glucose) levels, which increases the risk of diabetes. Fortunately, a little exercise goes a long way. Burning an extra 100 calories per day could help you lose about 10 lbs. per year.

Exercising regularly will keep your blood vessels pliable, which reduces the risk of high blood pressure.

Working out regularly will also improve your blood cholesterol levels. Exercising tends to lower the level of bad (LDL) cholesterol and raise the level of good (HDL) cholesterol.

The lower your LDL level, the lower your risk of heart disease. The higher your HDL level, the lower your risk of heart disease. So, you want your LDL to be low and your HDL to be high. Regular exercise will help you achieve both.

Exercising may even save your eyesight! Recent research at the University of Wisconsin suggests that regular exercise may reduce the risk of macular degeneration by up to 70%.

### **Exercise to Improve Your Mind**

Research suggests that exercising makes you smarter! Aerobic exercise increases blood flow to the brain. This helps create new brain cells—a process known as “neurogenesis.” Resistance exercises may also improve brain functioning. Researchers at the Brain Research Center at the University of British Columbia found that women who lifted weights performed considerably better on tests of cognitive functioning.

Working out reduces stress and anxiety. It also enhances mood. In addition, regular exercise improves sleep. Sleeping better has protective effects on the brain.

Regular exercise also relieves chronic depression in many cases. Research suggests that exercise alleviates depression by increasing serotonin levels. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter in the brain that profoundly affects behavior. Research has linked depression

to low levels of serotonin. As a result of exercising, the body produces more serotonin—in some cases for several days after the exercise activity.

### **The “Fit Feeling”—an End in Itself**

As you get stronger and more flexible and as your blood circulation improves, you will simply feel better—physically as well as mentally. That pleasurable feeling—the “Fit Feeling”—is one of the greatest benefits of exercising. It is an end in itself.

### **The Three Main Groups of Exercise—Think “FAR”**

There are three main groups or types of exercise: **F**lexibility, **A**erobic and **R**esistance. To remember them, think “**FAR**”. They are the three tools that are used to build “fitness”, which has three main components. To be fit, you need (1) flexible joints, (2) a well-functioning cardiovascular system and (3) strong muscles. (Some would add good body composition—a low ratio of fat to lean muscle mass—which results from exercising more without increasing calorie consumption.) Each exercise group leads to one of these three components. Flexibility exercises lead to flexible joints, aerobic exercises lead to a healthy cardiovascular system, and resistance exercises lead to strong, well-toned muscles.

**Flexibility** exercises (also known as stretching) will enable your joints to move more

easily through their full natural range of motion. As they become more flexible, your joints will feel less stiff and your motions will be more fluid. Doing almost any physical activity will be more comfortable. You'll be less likely to "pull a muscle", especially if your joints or muscles were tight. By relaxing tense muscles, stretching also helps relieve stress.

**Aerobic** exercises (also known as cardio or cardiovascular exercise) strengthen the heart (which boosts pumping efficiency and lowers the resting heart rate), improve blood circulation, lower blood pressure, help control weight and blood sugar levels, lower bad (LDL) cholesterol, raise good (HDL) cholesterol and increase endurance.

**Resistance** exercises (also known as strength training or weight training) strengthen, build and tone muscles. And because muscle tissue burns more calories than fat tissue does, building muscle promotes weight loss.

Resistance training is recommended for women as well as for men. Women sometimes worry that lifting dumbbells (or doing other resistance exercises training) will cause their bodies to become too muscular. This is an unnecessary concern. Women's testosterone levels are not high enough for excessive muscularity to develop. Instead, by doing resistance exercises, women achieve a toned, fit look.

Resistance exercises are about more than just having a well-toned body. Adding muscle will improve your health. Regular strength training lowers resting blood pressure. It helps control your blood sugar (glucose) levels because muscles absorb glucose and burn it for energy. By controlling your blood sugar levels, you'll reduce your risk of getting type 2 diabetes. Recent studies suggest that preventing diabetes may also lower your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

If done regularly, resistance training will keep you strong as you get older. After age 30, people who are physically inactive lose about 3-5% of their muscle mass and strength per decade. The rate of loss increases with age. This loss (technically known as "sarcopenia") gradually weakens the body. It may eventually lead to frailty. Bones also weaken and lose density with age. Fortunately, by doing strength exercises, you can build muscle tissue and keep your bones strong, even as you get older. This added strength will help preserve for decades your ability to perform your favorite activities.

The TV Workout includes all of the resistance exercises needed to strengthen and tone every major muscle in your body (and a lot of minor ones). It also includes the other two groups of exercises—stretching and aerobics—so that you can attain all of the components and benefits of fitness.

## **The TV Workout Overcomes the Obstacles to Exercising**

Despite the great benefits of exercising, 40% of American adults do not exercise at all, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Only about 1/3 engages in the recommended amount of physical activity, according to the Office of the Surgeon General. Not surprisingly, the CDC found that over 2/3 of American adults over nineteen are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is also a national epidemic.

The health dangers of being overweight or obese are serious. As stated by the Office of the Surgeon General—“overweight and obesity are associated with heart disease,

certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, stroke, arthritis, breathing problems, and psychological disorders, such as depression.” Obesity has also been found to accelerate the aging process by about nine years, according to a large study of human telomeres—the protective strips of DNA at the end of chromosomes. Regular exercise helps reduce weight.

Given the benefits of exercising and the hazards of being out of shape, why aren't more people working out regularly? Boredom, lack of time, financial concerns and the difficulty of making lifestyle changes. By adding entertainment, convenience and savings to exercise, the TV Workout overcomes these obstacles.