

Why Your Workout Could Be Making You Fat

You probably have a friend who spends an hour on the elliptical machine three or four times a week, steadily huffing along as she half-watches "The View" and flips through "People" magazine. She also religiously attends twice-weekly aerobics classes.

I bet she also complains to you and anyone who listens that despite her herculean exercise efforts, she can't reach her goal weight.

Here's the deal. Just like the wrong "healthy" foods will make you fat, treadmills and aerobics classes can stall fat loss.



Why People Get Hooked on the Wrong Exercise

I've had clients who, when I tell them they're wasting time at that Tuesday night aerobics class or treadmill sweat session, initially respond with denial.

"Seriously?" they say exasperatedly. "You have no idea how breathless I get on that treadmill." They give me stats about how many calories the machine tells them they burned.

Then, they get angry.

Let's get real: the scales don't lie, and if something isn't working for fat loss, you've got to own up to it.

Here's what I think: your friend's hooked. She gets an enormous adrenaline boost from that class. No way will she give that up.

Unfortunately, that addictive adrenaline boost might be the very reason exercise damages her metabolism, creates more oxidative stress, and actually makes her fat.

Here's the deal. You don't need to spend hours on gym elliptical machines, in crowded gym classes, or on your outdated home workout equipment to get fit.

In fact, you can schedule quality fitness in just minutes - yes, *minutes* - a day that dramatically impacts your metabolism, your physique, and your health.

The Right Exercise Makes You a Fat-Burning Machine All Day

Let's define endurance exercise as anything over 20 minutes you do at a steady, moderate to moderately high intensity. As I'll explain, you can't do high intensity exercise for more than a few minutes.

Sometimes I hear trainers claim that longer, moderate-intensity exercise burns more fat for fuel. Let's discuss a few reasons that theory doesn't hold up if you want all-day fat burning as well as maintaining fast fat loss:

- 1. Endurance training raises stress hormones.** Cortisol is your stress hormone that stores fat and breaks down lean muscle tissue. Muscle, which I call your body's "natural Spanx," helps boost your metabolism all day.
- 2. Endurance exercise doesn't require post-workout repair.** Lower- and moderate-intensity don't require any metabolic post-exercise repair. In other words, fat burning and metabolism are not enhanced post-workout, so you get limited overall metabolic benefits.

3. Endurance exercise burns fewer calories. Because of its high intensity, burst training demands more calories.

Burst Training for Fast Fat Loss

Burst training involves short, intense 30 - 60 second bursts with active recovery of one-to-two minutes. Active recovery means you're moving at a low intensity, so you can catch your breath and get your heart rate back down.

You want to shoot for 4 to 12 total minutes of high intensity bursts. You're looking, then, at a total 20 - 30 minute workout. It's intense, and you should be breathless by the end. Otherwise, you're not working out hard enough.

Among its benefits:

- 1. Burst training raises your anabolic hormones.** Exercise raises your stress hormones, period. But with burst training, you're also raising anabolic (building) hormones that counteract the stress hormones' negative effects.
- 2. Burst training helps your body handle stress and recover more efficiently.**
- 3. Burst training raises lactic acid.** Increased amounts of lactic acid spike growth hormone and support fat burning.
- 4. Burst training creates a bigger metabolic cost.** In other words, metabolic recovery burns more calories (particularly fat calories) after you exercise. That's why I say burst to blast fat: burst training makes you an all-day fat-burning machine.

Why Don't People Exercise More?

Honestly, I don't think people are lazy. Rather, the two big reasons people don't exercise are time and feeling inadequate when compared with other patrons working out at the gym. (Trust me: no matter how out-of-shape you think you are, there will always be someone in worse shape than you at the gym.)

Burst training solves both problems. You can do it anywhere with a limited amount of time.

When I stay at a hotel (which is often these days promoting my book "The Virgin Diet"), I'll scout out the gym. But some days I'm so busy, I can't even schedule an hour workout. That's when I look for the hotel stairs to do some burst training. You can do the same thing with your mall stairs. People will think you're racing to the Macy's one-day sale!

I have friends who find the nearest park for burst training. All you need is a hill and the fearlessness to tread up that hill at maximum capacity.

If I'm at home, I'll do burst training with the [Xiser](#), a portable little machine I insist that all my VIPs own. The Xiser provides 4 core exercises that you can do in just 4 minutes. Talk about efficient!

Ditch The Overheated Aerobics Class for Burst Training

Ready to give burst training a try? It's simple but hardly easy. If it doesn't leave you breathless, you're not doing it hard enough. Bump up the intensity.

Here's the plan in a nutshell:

1. Warm up for a few minutes.
2. Go all out with your workout of choice for 30 - 60 seconds. Burst some hotel or mall stairs, find a hill at your neighborhood park, or use the Xiser within the comfort of your own home. You are going *all out* here. If you can go past 60 seconds, you aren't doing it hard enough.

3. Take twice as much time to recover by doing a lower intensity version of the same move or walk around, and then repeat.

Remember, you want 4 to 12 minutes total of high intensity interval bursts, though honestly, if you're getting 8 minutes I'll be really impressed. Anything past 12 and you probably aren't doing it hard enough.

Do burst training every other day. You'll soon find you're leaner, stronger, and more energetic.

The 2 Most Effective Forms of Exercise in Just 15 Minutes

If you're not ready to commit to burst training, you can get a fabulously effective workout in just 15 minutes with my 4 x 4 Workout. Besides burst training, weight resistance provides an effective way to build muscle, boost metabolism, and burn fat. Ladies, you will *not* get Madonna's arms lifting weights 15 minutes a few times at the gym every week. But you will get lean and toned for sleeveless season (which, where I live, is nearly year-round).

I've combined burst training and weight resistance in my 4 x 4 Workout, which you can do in your home with minimal equipment. Whether you're a fitness newbie or seasoned athlete, I provide step-by-step instructions to get started. You can grab a free workout at www.jjsfitclub.com.

Burst Training + The Virgin Diet: A Win-Win

The perfect exercise will only take you so far. When you combine The Virgin Diet with burst training, you've got the perfect combination for fast fat loss.

As the saying goes, you can't out-exercise a bad diet. I would add that you can't out-exercise food intolerances. Even if you're doing my 4 x 4 Workouts three times a week, food sensitivities will stall fat loss and fast metabolism.

On The Virgin Diet, you eliminate the top 7 food intolerances and eat the right foods that help optimize your fat-burning hormones. Combined with the right exercise, you've got the perfect formula for fast and lasting fat loss.