

Beginning Strength Training

Lesson 7



Strengthening your muscles is an important part of improving fitness. Strong muscles help prevent injuries and some chronic problems such as lower back pain. With strength training your body uses stored fat and carbohydrates as fuel. Also, strength training can help you maintain your weight loss since muscle burns three times more calories than fat. Strength training can be as simple as lifting a can of tomatoes or can include working with weight machines.

Strength is increased when a muscle has to work harder than usual. Simple strengthening exercises include using your body as resistance, like lifting your arms and legs or pushing against a stationary object. This is a good technique for strengthening the main muscles of your body (stomach, legs, arms and chest). Weights can also be used for strength training. Hand and ankle weights are inexpensive and can be purchased at your local sporting goods store. But if you don't have weights handy, you can use household items such as canned goods or plastic bottles filled with water or sand.

When you first start strength training choose a weight that you can lift 15 times comfortably without feeling tired. When you can lift this weight 20 times increase the weight by 2 – 5 pounds. For the first month, lift these weights 8 – 12 times (repetitions) then rest. After a month, try to do an additional set (lift the weight 8 – 12 times, rest for 2 minutes, then lift them 8 – 12 times again). Finally, weight train no more than 3 times per week and rest between workouts. And, don't forget to warm up and cool down!

KITCHEN KAPERS

Many kitchen items, such as soup cans, can be used to change mundane chores into fun strength training exercises. These items are like using hand weights to build muscle strength. The following activities are examples of some strength training exercises. Read through and try each activity.

Soup Can Toners	Soup Can Openers	Dazzling Dish Legs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grasp a soup can in one hand ➤ Straighten arm and raise can directly above head palm facing inward ➤ Keep upper arm stationary, bend your elbow so forearm bends backward ➤ Then, exhale as you straighten arm and extend arm upward ➤ Repeat this arm extender 20 times, then switch arms ➤ This can be done while on the phone, cooking dinner or watching TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stand with feet shoulder width apart and parallel ➤ Extend arms forward at chest level, a soup can in each hand ➤ Open your arms to the sides. Then close them to the original position ➤ Repeat 12 times, exhaling as you open ➤ Add a variation of bending your legs when your arms are open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stand at sink. Raise one leg to the side ➤ Hold for 10 seconds Repeat ➤ After 10 repetitions, switch legs. ➤ Switch legs and repeat  

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ACTIVITY

For the next 3 days, do either the Soup Can Toner or the Soup Can Opener at least once a day. On day 4, add the one you haven't done yet to your routine. On day 5, add Dazzling Dish Legs to your daily routine. Your completed Kitchen Kapers routine will help you increase your daily activity level and promote muscle tone.

Increase your walking program to a 30 minute walk, 4 times per week. If you are already at this level, try a 35 minute walk, 4 times per week. Remember to warm up and down. On the days you don't plan to walk, do two stretching exercises and the bathroom exercises noted on previous lessons.

Be sure to take your heart rate before, during and after your walking routine. Continue to try to achieve a heart rate between the two numbers you calculated at the beginning of the program.