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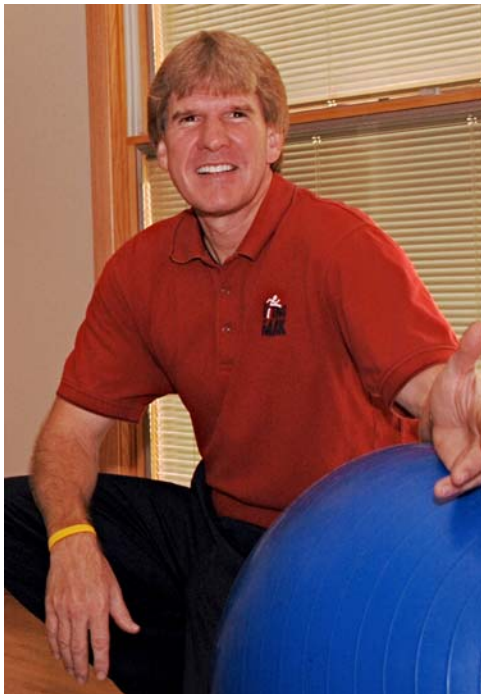
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MYTHS, CONCERNS AND THE TRUE FACTS ABOUT PERSONAL FITNESS – PART 1

By Mark Trimble, MA, NASM



Hello, I am Mark Trimble, founder of Fitness by Mark™. I have had the great fortune to work with people of all ages with a wide variety of fitness levels, needs and concerns. I've kept track of the typical questions I'm often asked and this article is a reflection of the questions many people, maybe someone like you, may have about general health and fitness.

For years I have worked with people of all ages—from kids who want to improve and avoid injury for summer league sports; to busy working professionals or stay-at-home parents from 20 to 60 who struggle to balance work demands, family life and staying in some kind of reasonable shape; to people in their 70's and 80's who want to retain good balance; to people of all ages with health issues such as Diabetes or who are working to recover from past injuries.

I hope you find this information useful and feel free to contact me with questions or to learn more about the benefits of working with a personal trainer.

MYTHS, CONCERNS and FACTS

“My muscles will turn to fat if I quit training...”

That is a myth - With decreased training, muscles will atrophy. If eating habits stay the same, you will begin to gain non-lean weight. This is because of decreased caloric burning due to decreased activity and over time a decrease in muscle which is what metabolized calories during activity.

“I don't want to gain weight and I heard that muscle weighs more than fat...”

That is a myth - A pound of muscle weighs as much as a pound of fat. One pound of muscle takes up less space than a pound of fat. This can be discouraging for a person starting a fitness program. If they put on a pound of muscle and loose a pound of fat, the scale reads the same



weight where instead you lost 1 pound of freeloading fat and gained a pound of muscle which improves and speeds metabolism and increases strength.

“I heard that low intensity aerobics (walking) is the best for burning fat...”

That is a myth - Low intensity aerobics zone will show an increased percentage of fat being used as the fuel source. This is because the energy demand is low enough that the body has time to break the fats down to get the energy. By speeding up to a high intensity aerobic zone, energy demands increase and must be taken from other sources (carbohydrates and fats). More energy is spent (more calories used). It's not a story of which fuel is used, it's how many calories are burned.

“If I do tons of ab crunches, will I lose abdominal fat?”

That is a myth - This myth is called spot reduction and does not exist. Non-lean mass is lost from all over. If a muscle group is more active it doesn't draw energy from its nearby neighborhood fat store.

“Women who lift will get bulky muscles.”

That is a myth - This is an often-voiced concern by women who do not want to end up looking like a body builder. The truth is that women lack the hormone necessary to build massive amounts of muscle plus it takes very hard and specialized work for a long period of time. Even men must work very hard to achieve a large increase in muscle mass. Female body builders will bulk up beyond normal ranges with long term and specialized hard work combined, in some cases, with injected hormones.

Women who start a strength training program often become alarmed on noticing an initial increase in the diameter of their arms or legs. This is due to some initial muscle increase along with body fat yet to leave. As you continue to train, the rate of muscle growth will level off while the fat surrounding these muscles will decrease. The diameter of the arms and legs will become significantly less than measurements taken on day one of the exercise program. In short, you have become stronger and less bulky, your arms and legs are becoming more toned and shapely (remember, a pound of muscle takes up less space than a pound of fat).

“Exercise is a waste of time unless you can exercise a minimum of 1 hour/day and 5 days a week.”

That is a myth - This is the all or none mindset. All time spent exercising is of value. If all you have time for is a 20-minute walk or 25 minutes in the morning to do some selected flexibility and core exercises, this *will* help and make a positive difference. You can reduce your risks of stroke, heart attack; reduce stress and blood pressure with a 30-minute walk three times a week. Exercise has to be thought of as a lifestyle. Some days or weeks, you can do more, other times less. A little something is always better than nothing.



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“Dieting is a way to lose weight.”

That is a myth - Dieting is defined as food deprivation and if calories are cut too drastically, the body will tend to conserve fat while breaking down muscle tissue (which is why fad diets show big initial weight loss since muscle outweighs fat). When the dieter finally gets sick and tired of the diet and returns to normal eating patterns, the body overcompensates and actually absorbs more calories than normal.

The weight is put back on in the form of fat (not the muscle tissue which was broken down). Nearly 90% of dieters will gain back the weight they lost (and then some). Establishing healthy eating habits with appropriate portion sizes, not allowing yourself to become hungry and not skipping meals is part of developing a new lifestyle and mental outlook and differs greatly from dieting. Weight management is the combination of healthy eating habits and a well-designed moderate exercise program.

“I’m too old to start an exercise program”

That is a myth - You are never too old to start an exercise program. The best time to start a program is today (yesterday, last year even better but we can’t go back in time). Even people in their seventies, eighties, and nineties can benefit from an appropriate fitness program. Exercise improves balance and coordination, mobility, mental attitude and outlook just to name a few of the many positive benefits.

“The only thing you need to do to lose weight is lots of aerobic work and running is the best.”

That is a myth - First of all, running is a good choice if you like to run. If you don’t like running, this will become a great way to hate working out. Biking, swimming, fast walking, or any number of sustained activities keeping your heart rate at your targeted aerobic zone through a specified period of time are excellent aerobic activities.



Want to learn more? Curious if you can get out of a rut with your fitness routine? Call or email for a no-obligation consultation. Thank you for taking the time to read this information – I hope it was useful!

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