

Weightlifting — The Myths

The days are getting longer, the allergies are starting to show their seasonal faces, and the temperature is getting warmer. The winter clothes are starting to make their way back towards the harder-to-reach places in your closet. Major League Baseball's regular season is back in full swing. All these pieces of evidence could only mean one thing... Summer is coming up.

Keeping in shape during the winter is tough. We featured a blog on this topic several months ago. Cold weather, crowded gyms, decreased metabolism due to decreased physical activity can make anyone pack on a few extra unwanted pounds. With warmer weather comes the desire to show a little more skin, and the desire to look awesome doing it!

Getting back in shape can be an ordeal. For most, simple cardiovascular exercise is the go-to for pound-shredding. Treadmill, Stair Master, the Stationary Bike... all good options. But what about that other area of the gym that you rarely venture to? The area with all the dumbbells, kettle bells, bench presses and stacks of intimidating weights? If you are thinking about adding weight training to your workout regimen, here are a few myths that may get in the way of making the right decision.

Weightlifting = The Most You Can Lift, All the Time

Wrong, wrong, wrong! If you want to tone up your arms, legs and core, you are among the majority of those who lift — most people who weight train typically do not want to get as big as a house, so lifting your maximum constantly will not only fail to tone your muscles, but can also lead to serious injury. A starting point is picking a weight that you can use for 3-4 sets of 10 to 12 reps. If you can barely muster 6 reps, go down in weight. If you barely break a sweat, go up.

I Can Get As Big As I Want

Short version: you may not be able to, and that's completely ok. Bottom line is, people's bodies, genetics and bone structures are all different. While we can train our muscles to get bigger, our bones, tendons and ligaments do not change. At some point, they simply reach the limit of how much weight they can support without damage. Keep your goals reasonable, and don't get disappointed if your hard work does not make you look like the local gym rat with 20" biceps. After all, it is possible that they are achieving their immense size with *unnatural* means.

I Will Never Have the Cut, Lean Bodies of Celebrities I See in Movies

A few things to keep in mind: 1. Famous actors get paid to look their absolute best, and have the time and resources to put into it. 2. They undergo intense workout routines designed and monitored by professional trainers for months to achieve their peak shape. 3. Their workout routines typically involve radical, closely-monitored diets. 4. Actors typically "pump up" by doing a few reps right before filming. With all that being said, yes, it is possible to achieve the cut, lean look of celebrities,

but it takes a *lot* of work, time, commitment and resources.

As is true with any “get-in-shape” plan, avoid going on any self-invented radical diets or lifting routines... you may do yourself more harm than good. Consult a nutritionist to create a proper diet, and grab a personal trainer for the weight lifting.

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