

The Houston Hot Sheet_{vol3-2005}

What's New This Month? The Club Industry show was the first week of November, we were there! Look at the next newsletter and check out our website for info on the newest products and trends, and how Houston Fitness is going to continue to lead the way towards healthy, balanced training.

Ask the Trainer- What am I doing wrong? I am working with a trainer, I am getting my cardio in (when I can), and I am eating what the trainer recommended. I am working out more than an hour a day, but I feel like I am not making any progress. Is it my trainer?

Before we go looking for blame, let's try to remove some of the common obstacles.

First thing to consider, when we evaluate people's training and eating programs, we usually find that they are not paying as much attention to their food as they think. For active people (even someone NOT on a rigid training regimen), the food is THE key to weight management, not the volume of exercise! We ALWAYS recommend people track their eating honestly and objectively. Being dishonest or unsure about what they are eating only affects THEM; they usually find the surplus (or deficit) in calories when they write down WHAT they eat, WHEN they eat it. We have seen variances of over 600 calories per day from some clients and gym members when they were guessing what they ate. And it was not that they were eating "bad" foods, they were eating clean, but MUCH more than they needed to eat for their goals. And, as much as we hate to say, alcohol can REALLY throw off the numbers...the calories are not always planned, and between the extra calories, the reduction in inhibition can lead to more eating, and it slows the metabolism and can also interrupt normal sleep...)

Keep this in mind: It is ALWAYS easier to eat 200 calories **less** food (if overeating) than it is to fit in an extra 200 calories of exercise: Easier on the body (less physical stress), easier on the pocketbook (less food) and easier on the recovery (lower volume of exercise). Less wear and tear on the system, more free time. Easy choice!

That being said, we usually see the opposite take place: people who claim to be too busy to eat consistently try to "punish" themselves for overeating by doing more cardio or longer weight training workouts. They end up spending more time (which they usually have precious little to spare) trying to **break even**. If you are too busy to plan your meals (which takes about 4-5 minutes), then you are probably too busy to fit in an extra half hour of exercise! It makes a lot more sense to know you are eating the right amount for what you want to accomplish...a small calorie deficit for weight loss (preferably fat loss), a small surplus for enhancing muscle development, or a balance between the two.

The second thing we tend to see is the "More is better" approach to exercise. If some exercise is good, and if a lot is REALLY good, then an excessive amount of exercise must be GREAT...but this is rarely the case. Higher volumes of work DO burn more calories, but a large percentage of the calories comes from lean mass (try to think about where all the sweat is coming from...water is stored in the blood and in the muscles primarily...the more water you lose, the greater the loss of volume in those tissues), not fat as was commonly assumed.

Third, if the resistance work is not sufficient to stimulate a change in muscle energy, then your body may not have a significant reason to change anything! Recent studies have shown most gym-goers work at too low an intensity and with too little resistance to stimulate an adaptive response. What this means is that their body has gotten used to the amount of work being applied, and is able to work within its current abilities to perform the work. It is in its "comfort zone". The exercises are still burning calories, but there is not enough stress applied to the muscle/joint action to tell the muscles that they have to get stronger! If your workouts are stopping short of that fatigue point, you are doing yourself a disservice by not giving your body a reason to change anything.

Try to remember what you are going to the gym for: to give your body a REAL reason to think it has to be stronger or to have better endurance. Not to beat it senseless, not to wear it out, but to give it ENOUGH stimulus. Then once you have given your body the correct stimulus, let it go to work and repair what your exercise did to it!

To completely answer the question, ask yourself these four questions:

Am I committed to doing this, and am I serious about my goal?

Am I being honest with myself about how hard I am working on this?

Am I doing what I need to do with my eating? Not overeating or under eating (even a little)?

Are my workouts giving my body a reason to change something, or am I just going through the motions?

If you are answering the questions honestly, you'll probably find your answers.

Exercise Tip of the Month- Try training in the dark! This does not necessarily mean turning off all the lights, but blocking out all visual and audible stimuli. I have found this tip to really help people get a feel for what their muscles are doing during an exercise. By temporarily shutting down the other senses, you can feel everything the muscle is trying to tell the brain about how hard it is working. This can be very effective when doing isolateral work; you may be surprised by how much more of the target muscle you can feel when you focus only on the movement. Keep it slow, close your eyes, and try to imagine compressing the target muscle as if "squeezing" the blood out of it. Precontract the muscle to start the exercise. No momentum, and keep the muscle under tension on the negative (eccentric) phase to complete the rep.

Recipe of the Month- This recipe goes back a ways (April 1995, Linda Eckhart for Cooking Light Magazine), but it makes a delicious light alternative to the traditional Thanksgiving turkey dinner. *The biscuits are a breeze to make in the food processor; or you can make them by hand.*

2 cups bread flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons vegetable shortening
3 tablespoons sugar
1 package dry yeast
2/3 cup warm nonfat buttermilk (105° to 115°)
2 tablespoons warm water (105° to 115°)
1/2 cup dried cranberries
Vegetable cooking spray
1 pound thinly sliced smoked turkey breast
Spicy Mustard (optional)

Combine first 3 ingredients in food processor, and pulse 2 times or until blended. Add shortening, and process for 10 seconds or until blended.

Dissolve sugar and yeast in warm buttermilk and water in a small bowl; let stand 5 minutes. With processor on, slowly add yeast mixture through food chute; process until dough leaves sides of bowl and forms a ball. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface, and knead in cranberries. Roll dough to 1/2-inch thickness; cut with a 2-inch biscuit cutter into 20 biscuits. Place on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Let rise, uncovered, in a warm place (85°), free from drafts, 20 minutes or until puffy. Bake at 425° for 8 minutes or until golden. Split biscuits, and fill each with 3/4 ounce turkey. Serve with Spicy Mustard, if desired.

Yield: 10 servings (serving size: 2 biscuits)

NUTRITION PER SERVING

CALORIES 201(17% from fat); FAT 3.7g (sat 0.9g,mono 1.5g,poly 1g); PROTEIN 12.7g;
CHOLESTEROL 1mg; CALCIUM 53mg; SODIUM 452mg; FIBER 0.7g; IRON 1.5mg; CARBOHYDRATE
27.8 g

Worth a look: -We have had an enormous amount of success recently with Ebay and Pearl Izumi! Pearl Izumi is a high end running shoe/cycling shoe company. We first discovered these shoes thru one of our trainers who liked to run. She felt these were THE best shoes she had ever run in, but they were pricey at 110.00 a pair! Cherie recently ran in her first 10K (Way to Go, Cherie!) and we realized that we should really start looking into higher quality running shoes. We found these online, and loved the look (very distinctive), and we were very impressed with the feedback we received from runners we knew. We took a chance on Ebay that they may be for sale, and found them thru a dealer called ediscountbike.com. The deal? As low as **\$14.77** a pair for brand new, 2005 model shoes! This is a savings of 75-80%!! Check them out online, go to Ebay, and enter your search as "pearl izumi" and your size on the search line. Good luck, over **30** of our clients and trainers have purchased these just on looks alone, they were blown away by the performance!

Look for Book Updates next month...lots to tell everybody (three books pending!!!) **Happy Thanksgiving!**

