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America's Healthiest Couple

Is Your Fitness Program Stalled Out? Jumpstart It With Weight Lifting

By Dan & Jennifer Polimino



Much too often we get phone calls from women frustrated with a lack of progress in their workout programs. Their stories usually go something like this, "I'm doing cardiovascular training faithfully every day. I'm even up to an hour at a time. And I eat pretty well. But I'm not losing any weight. After eight months with no results, I'm ready to throw in the towel!"

First of all, we totally understand the frustration. We'd be sending up flares, too. If you've been doing any workout longer than three months with no results ... find a different program! But before you do, identify the problems. There are two issues here: (1) We don't know what "eating well" actually means, and (2) There's a whole lot of cardio going on (e.g., walking, jogging, biking, swimming) but no weight lifting.

We'll address the food component in another column, but let's talk about weight lifting now. Many women don't even consider weight training as part of their fitness plan. Why?

Reasons range from not knowing what to do, to being put off by the stereotype of muscle head gyms. But consider this: More muscle means you'll burn more fat all day—not just while you're exercising. Some estimates are that for every pound added in lean muscle mass, your resting metabolism will burn 30 to 50 more calories per day. That's resting (as in while you're planted in front of the TV or computer) metabolism. Adding 5 pounds of lean muscle could translate to burning off an extra 25 to 30 pounds in a year! Not a bad return on your investment.



Now this doesn't mean you should forget the treadmill. Cardiovascular exercise does burn calories and it's terrific for your heart and lungs. Just don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Remember, the best way to make your workouts work for you long after they're over is to pump some iron.

Join Dan and Jennifer Polimino, America's Healthiest Couple, right here every Monday for fitness and nutritional advice. Dan and Jennifer are ACSM/ACE certified trainers, authors, and founders of Paradigm Fitness, Inc. and The Great Shape-Up Program. To ask them a question or to find out more about lasting weight loss, visit GreatShapeUp.com

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