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Thread: [QOTD: Weightlifting vs Cardio For Weight Loss](#)

Kalvaxas - March 15, 2024, 4:02 pm

Question of the day for you.

Is weightlifting or cardio more effective for weight loss and overall health: Which should be prioritized in fitness routines?

In my personal opinion, it's not bad to incorporate both into your weekly workout schedule. That said, when it comes to weight loss, I very strongly lean towards weightlifting as the better means to lose weight. When it comes to weightlifting, you're losing fat and weight in the long term. This is because you're building lean muscle mass, and in turn, increasing your metabolic rate. When you weightlift, you continue to burn and burn and burn even when you're at rest. This includes while you're sleeping. This is why you always feel much hungrier throughout the day after weightlifting.

Now, cardio on the other hand.. The reason I say it should be incorporated into a weekly schedule is because it's great for your heart and endurance. This goes hand and hand with weightlifting, which only benefits you even more. That said, it's not necessary to lose weight in my opinion. If anything, psychologically, it's a deterrent. More than like if you ask someone who's overweight and looking to lose weight, the question of if they'd rather life weights or do cardio... They'll probably say weightlifting. This is because it seems less daunting and less stressful.

So, I'm curious. What is your take on weightlifting vs cardio for weight loss?

Kalvaxas - March 15, 2024, 4:12 pm

(Mar 15, 2024 04:05 PM)shatter Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) For weight loss, it's weight lifting. Countless numbers of studies have proven that to be the point. Resistance training and diet play a major part.

It's not "my take".

A definite yes on the diet part. You can be super active in the gym and build muscle, but if your diet sucks, then so will your weight loss results. You should still feel healthier either way, but with the right diet, you'll feel great all day.

Ultras - March 15, 2024, 4:31 pm

Weight loss or fat loss? Because the purpose of weightlifting is to gain (muscle) weight and the metabolic increase is minimal in the short term. I think those who aim to lose fat should keep it simple and focus on walking/cycling and eating fewer calories while maintaining a high protein intake to maintain muscle mass, then add some weightlifting later on for muscle gain. A mix is great if you're already somewhat fit, but for anyone carrying around too much fat it's best to get rid of most of that first, or they'll see slow progress in both fat loss and muscle gain and lose motivation. You can still lift of course, but your diet will realistically have to focus on either fat loss or muscle gain.

But almost anything will work if you follow a few basic principles, and it depends on your starting point, lifestyle, mindset etc. which approach is best for you.

Kalvaxas - March 15, 2024, 4:52 pm

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But almost anything will work if you follow a few basic principles, and it depends on your starting point, lifestyle, mindset etc. which approach is best for you.

Well, when you do cardio, yes - you're burning possibly a few hundred calories at most. The thing is, when you stop, so does your caloric burn. You're not burning more than your normal metabolic rate. Losing weight isn't a short term aspect to look at. Numbers wise, there's 3500 calories in 1 pound. If you only do cardio, you'd need to do cardio at least 10 days in a row to burn 1 pound (not counting your daily energy expenditure). Weightlifting, for example - You're not burning that much less than what you would be with cardio. Most people looking to lose weight are far from in shape, so asking them to do 30 minutes+ of cardio would more than likely make them give up. Whereas if you ask them to do an hour of weightlifting (with breaks between sets), they're actually burning more than what they would be during cardio, and the metabolic burn is continuous as well, over the course of days.

It's easy to say 60 minutes of cardio will burn more than 60 minutes of weightlifting. This is technically true, but it's not practical. Especially for someone super out of shape looking to lose weight. Both physically and mentally, they'd give up.

Ultras - March 15, 2024, 9:07 pm

(Mar 15, 2024 04:52 PM)Kalvaxas Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Well, when you do cardio, yes - you're burning possibly a few hundred calories at most. The thing is, when you stop, so does your caloric burn. You're not burning more than your normal metabolic rate. Losing weight isn't a short term aspect to look at. Numbers wise, there's 3500 calories in 1 pound. If you only do cardio, you'd need to do cardio at least 10 days in a row to burn 1 pound (not counting your daily energy expenditure). Weightlifting, for example - You're not burning that much less than what you would be with cardio. Most people looking to lose weight are far from in shape, so asking them to do 30 minutes+ of cardio would more than likely make them give up. Whereas if you ask them to do an hour of weightlifting (with breaks between sets), they're actually burning more than what they would be during cardio, and the metabolic burn is continuous as well, over the course of days.

It's easy to say 60 minutes of cardio will burn more than 60 minutes of weightlifting. This is technically true, but it's not practical. Especially for someone super out of shape looking to lose weight. Both physically and mentally, they'd give up.

I personally think you're vastly overestimating the calorie burn during weightlifting and the metabolic increase, at least given the context of a beginner looking to lose fat and see progress. Per kg of muscle you gain, you don't increase your BMR a whole lot as far as I know. If you compare a bodybuilder or gym bro to an average person, yes, there's a difference, but how much higher BMR can the average person get per month or even per year? I agree that adding muscle to increase your BMR long term is great if lifting is and will be a part of your life, but you have to be a pretty big dude for it to make a significant difference, and let's not forget the ladies, they may have to give up looking like a lady at all if they are to increase their BMR by building muscle. I don't think that's realistic or most people's goals when losing fat.

It's extremely easy to burn hundreds of calories from cardio throughout the day, certainly if you have a lot to carry around. Going for an hour long walk will be more efficient for the average Joe and

all but the extremely obese or old can do that. If you work from home or watch a lot of TV (like obese people often do), a small exercise bike will easily burn a couple thousand calories per workday at a low-moderate intensity and resistance, or upwards of a thousand during a 2 hour long movie. There's no need to put anyone on a high intensity program to see good results.

Even if we compare just an hour of low intensity cardio to an hour of weightlifting and accounting for the afterburn, I think cardio is better for beginners and average people looking to lose fat without making the gym or exercise in general their life.

Kalvaxas - March 15, 2024, 9:36 pm

(Mar 15, 2024 09:07 PM)Ultras Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I personally think you're vastly overestimating the calorie burn during weightlifting and the metabolic increase, at least given the context of a beginner looking to lose fat and see progress. Per kg of muscle you gain, you don't increase your BMR a whole lot as far as I know. If you compare a bodybuilder or gym bro to an average person, yes, there's a difference, but how much higher BMR can the average person get per month or even per year? I agree that adding muscle to increase your BMR long term is great if lifting is and will be a part of your life, but you have to be a pretty big dude for it to make a significant difference, and let's not forget the ladies, they may have to give up looking like a lady at all if they are to increase their BMR by building muscle. I don't think that's realistic or most people's goals when losing fat.

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You don't have to be super muscular to take advantage of a higher BMR. You're right though, it's not a whole lot. Someone who has never lifted before can put on 18-20 LBS of pure muscle mass in their first year of lifting. 1 LBS of fat burns around 2-3 calories per day. 1 LBS of lean muscle burns around 6-8. So, we'll meet in the middle and say 5 extra calories per pound of muscle. After the first year of lifting, you're burning an extra 100 calories a day, or 36500 calories a year. This equates to an extra 10 1/2 LBS lost per year. You don't have to lift to keep putting on more muscle. You can lift lighter weights and maintain your current muscle mass (I say this for the women out there that may be afraid of getting too muscular).

That said, I do agree with you on the cardio bit. Initially, steady state (which is what you were describing) is a good route to go, as to not overwork your body. Once you put on some muscle (after the first month or so), you can incorporate HIIT cardio. HIIT is super intense, but the thing is.. You can accomplish what you need to with HIIT in literally 60 seconds. You don't really need to go longer than that if you don't want to. The after burn of HIIT is about the same as LISS believe it or not. Weightlifters like to incorporate HIIT into their regime as HIIT won't diminish any muscle mass, whereas LISS will.

I definitely appreciate you input by the way!

Komodo - March 16, 2024, 5:42 am

(Mar 15, 2024 04:05 PM)shatter Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) For weight loss, it's weight lifting. Countless numbers of studies have proven that to be the point. Resistance training and diet play a major part.

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Kalvaxas - March 16, 2024, 8:57 am

(Mar 16, 2024 05:42 AM)Komodo Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Either works.

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This. Either will work. It mostly comes down to preference and what the individual feels is sustainable to them. Some may enjoy the idea of cardio because mentally they'll feel like it'll give them their youth back, or help them get close to it. Some may enjoy the idea of weightlifting because if they're already overweight, it's much easier to put on muscle before cutting. In the end it comes down to preference. My preference is weightlifting, but throwing in HIIT maybe a couple times a week.

HALx86 - March 17, 2024, 12:29 am

I think scientifically, weight lifting burns more.

In my experiences though, I eat a lot more when I lift. I'm just always hungry. So because I have no self control, I lose my weight quickly through cardio.

Eran - March 17, 2024, 3:07 am

I'd say diet plays the most important role, and next is weightlifting. I am cutting right now and trying to lose some belly fat and I am barely doing cardio - I only maybe walk fast 30-60 minutes a day - and I'm doing great with consuming around 2000-2300 calories a day.

Jamika - March 19, 2024, 1:04 am

The most important part you do the both, yeah i lean to weightlifting, but the best to compine both as u said