

Strength Training and Muscle Conditioning Principles

Benefits of Strength Training:

- Improves bone health
- Lowers the risk of injury and low back pain
- Improves the ability to carry out daily tasks
- Increases body's glucose tolerance, which may help to control Type 2 Diabetes
- Increases or maintains muscle mass, aiding in body weight control

General Guidelines for Muscle Conditioning Workouts:

- Always perform a sound aerobic warm-up before a muscle conditioning workout. When performing both workouts on the same day, perform the aerobic workout first.
- Perform all exercises in a slow and controlled manner – do not use momentum
- Keep your back in its normal alignment for most exercises (crunches are an example of an exception)
- Breathe normally, exhaling during the work phase of your exercise, and inhaling during the relax phase of the exercise
- Do not lock or hyperextend your joints – always keep a slight bend in the joints, particularly the knees
- Rest between sets of exercises, alternating types of exercises for recovery when needed
- Always work opposing muscle groups to maintain balance – for example, a bicep curl could be balanced with a tricep extension, etc.
- Work larger muscle groups first, progressing to smaller muscle groups
- Include core strengthening exercises in each muscle conditioning program
- An aerobic cool-down after a muscle conditioning workout, followed by stretching the muscles worked can help alleviate soreness and maintain flexibility