



HOW WORKING ON YOUR BALANCE CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT AND TONE UP!

So you want to drop those extra pounds? Think the only way to tighten and tone involves hours on a treadmill? Not true. Try some balance exercises for a complete, functional work-out.

Your balance is more important than you might think!

Simply put, incorporating balance exercises into your routine will help you to develop greater control over your body, reduce your risk of injury, and have you looking and feeling better than ever. The science behind all this isn't that complicated. Think about your normal exercise routine, your body has learned just how much muscle it needs to recruit to accomplish the activity. So, if you raise the stakes for your body and throw it off balance, it will have to adapt.

See, when your body is forced to find its balance a couple of things will happen. First off, in an attempt to maintain/regain balance the body will activate more muscle fibers than normally used. And the more muscles engaged--the bigger the boost to your metabolism.

Using all those extra muscle fibers will not only burn extra calories, it will also develop new neuromuscular connections in your brain; which is just a fancy way of saying that you will experience an increase in your ability to use your muscles. This increase happens because your body learns to utilize deeper muscle resources when moving.

The muscle groups that your body relies upon for balance are essential for your day to day activities.

Some of the primary muscle groups that benefit from balance training are muscles that you count on to get through the day. Balance exercises will strengthen the muscles that keep your pelvic tilt aligned, and open up the back muscles of your erector spine so that these smaller muscles known as your: "multifidus" muscles can work. Multifidus muscles are responsible in keeping your back properly aligned. Thus, strong multifidus muscles and: better posture, reduction of lower back pain, increased efficiency of movement.

Another benefit to balance training is that when you are improving your balance you are strengthening your core. Your center of gravity is a muscle set that can be thought of as a kind of internal girdle belt, it's called your transverse abdominus (or TVA). Certain core exercises focus on the TVA, such as Pilates. Since the TVA muscles are responsible for tightening up your core the result is that you become more stable and centered.

BALANCE MOVES



TVA Contraction: Practice keeping your belly button sucked in towards your spine. Think of it as trying to protect yourself if something is going to fall on your stomach.



Single Leg Point: Standing on one leg, bring your other leg up so that your knee is at the same height as your hips. And then bring the leg that is up down and back. Repeat with other leg after all repetitions are done on first.



Single Leg Squat: Standing on one leg, bring your other leg up so that your knee is at the same height as your hips. Squat down as far as you can and then back up. Repeat with other leg after all repetitions are done on first.



Single Leg Medicine Ball Lift: Standing on one leg, and holding a medicine ball. Start with the ball down by your knee, and then raise it above your head by rotating your shoulders. Repeat with other leg after all repetitions are done on first.



Single Leg Lunge To Balance: Start in a lunge position. Sweep your back leg up to a balance pose, and back down. Repeat with other leg after all repetitions are done on first.



So if you're interested in toning up and dropping those extra pounds, try incorporating balance exercises into your routines. The results will far exceed just jumping on the treadmill.