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Health & Safety

Weight Training for Overall Fitness

Pumping iron isn't necessarily about building the muscle mass of Charles Atlas, and weight training has a range of benefits for ordinary men and women. It can increase bone density, help maintain flexible joints, and help keep weight under control. In fact, you may experience significant health benefits from lifting weights just two to three times per week, spending 20-30 minutes per session.



Proper technique is vital to help avoid injury and maximize results, and you may want to work with a trainer during your first few sessions. Slow, steady movements at the proper weight can produce efficient results. What is the "proper weight?" It's the amount that will tire your muscles after 12 to 15 repetitions, and according to the *Mayo Clinic*, studies suggest that a single set at the right weight can be just as effective as three sets. In other words, there's no need to overdo it! Start small and rest your muscles at least one full day between workouts.

Combining weight training with 150 minutes per week of a moderate aerobic workout can provide noticeable results. Of course, you'll want to check with your healthcare provider before beginning a new exercise routine.

Helpful Hints

Streamline Your Mornings

Does preparing for the day seem overwhelming at times? If so, the following tips may help you streamline the process.

Pack Lunch the Previous Night: Scrambling to pack your lunch in the morning not only cuts into dream time, but it takes up mental energy as well! Don't waste your precious energy trying to decide between peanut butter and tuna.

Plan Your Outfits: Struggling to decide what to wear is another decision that will encroach on your time and energy. Laying out your clothes before you go to bed—and doing the same for your children—will expedite everything.

Empower Your Kids: If you have a child over the age of 5, *Babble.com* offers an excellent tip. Take them through each step in their morning routine and have them write down a schedule so they know where they should be, at various times, during their preparation process. This will teach them time-management skills, help prevent dawdling, and allow you to get them out the door on time!



- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- 1 Tbsp. cold water**
- ½ cup white sugar**
- ½ cup soy sauce**
- ¼ cup cider vinegar**
- 1 clove garlic, minced**
- ½ tsp. ground ginger**
- ¼ tsp. ground black pepper**
- 12 skinless chicken thighs**

In a small saucepan over low heat, combine cornstarch, cold water, sugar, soy sauce, vinegar, garlic, ginger, and ground black pepper. Let simmer, stirring frequently, until sauce thickens and bubbles.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Place chicken pieces in a lightly greased 9x13 inch baking dish. Brush chicken with sauce. Turn pieces over, and brush again.

Bake for 30 minutes. Turn pieces over, and bake for another 30 minutes, until no longer pink and juices run clear. Brush with sauce every 10 minutes during cooking.



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Household Tips Freezing Foods

Freezing foods may seem like a no brainer—place in freezer and thaw when ready, right? Surprisingly, it's not so simple. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), some foods, such as mayonnaise, lettuce, and cream sauce, lose their quality when frozen. Also, raw meats freeze better than cooked meats because cooked meat loses moisture during the cooking process.

Freezing foods does not actually kill the microbes present, but it inactivates them while they remain frozen. Thaw foods safely in the refrigerator, the microwave, or in cold water. Slow thawing is best for safety, and most foods require a day or two to thaw in the refrigerator. Large turkeys take roughly one day per five pounds to thaw.

Freezer burn is caused by air coming into contact with frozen food. It does not pose any health risks, but freezer burn can affect food taste and texture, so you may want to remove damaged portions after cooking. To prevent freezer burn, wrap foods in wax paper or aluminum foil, and store them in an airtight container.

