

etc

FITNESS? NO PROBLEM

You ask, she answers



nawaz modi singhania
perfect fit

My boyfriend and I recently embarked on an exercise programme. We do the same exercises and eat the same food, but he's losing more fat and inches than I am. I'm confused! What's going wrong?

Frustrated

However unfair this seems, your boyfriend has both genetics, and the fact that he's male on his side.

Men have more muscle tissue, which gives them the added advantage of burning more calories even at rest. To add to your plight, women are designed to store more fat than men.

Don't get discouraged, and don't keep comparing yourself to him. Just enjoy the time you share together, and focus on yourself and your progress. Make sure your workout includes aerobic activity, strength training and stretching, targeting all the major muscle groups of the body. Hang in there! Patience pays.

My friends and I desperately want to lose weight, and regularly drink a glass of warm water before and after each meal. In fact my friends are so obsessive about it that they even ask for their glass of warm water at parties and dinners. They say this breaks down the fat, and helps in weight loss. Is this true?

Paranoid

In a word, nope!

There is zero connection between warm water and 'breaking down fat'!

The warm water may act as a laxative for those who are constipated, and therefore the person may temporarily feel lighter, but this had nothing to do with the fat bit of it. It's intact!

In fact, the water interferes with the digestion process, and actually slows it down! If you want to lose fat so desperately, you girls ought to get onto a sensible diet and combine it with an exercise programme.

the time for exercise. Any useful suggestions?

Busy Bee

Make small adjustments in your schedule to fit in exercise wherever you can, like climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator. Carry your own bags and books, or walk small distances instead of taking the car. Also, wearing more comfortable shoes and clothes enables you to be more active during the day.

I am overweight and have been controlling my diet and doing low impact aerobic classes for a couple of years now. I initially saw great results, but over the last 12-14 months I have noted no progress at all. My conclusion is that aerobics doesn't work!! Any inputs?

Non-believer

It is a well documented and a well-proven fact that aerobics does work. Millions of cases prove this repeatedly. Where you're going wrong is by sticking to the same agenda of low impact aerobic classes only.

In order to see continuous results (and not just initial results), one has to take on different aerobic and anaerobic activities from time to time. These may include other aerobic classes (Step, Boxercise, Slide, etc), jogging, cycling, a racket game, walking, strength training, rope jumping, hiking, skiing, and many more.

Basically, if you stick to the same routine, the body gets immune to the workout. It needs to be challenged differently, in new ways, in order for you to see regular progress. Keep the faith!

I feel disgusted with my body, and it's affecting my relationship. I am very self-conscious and inhibited by physical intimacy. Will it help to start exercising?

Low self-esteem

Of course it will!

Exercise will help you get rid of unwanted fat, to reshape areas you're unhappy with, and to tone

up. Naturally this will give your self-confidence a boost. You'll feel more comfortable with your body, and this in turn will reflect on your relationship.

My husband and I are trying for a baby. Is it safe to exercise until I am identified as actually being pregnant?

Wannabe Mom

If you're healthy and have not had trouble conceiving, it's perfectly alright to continue with your exercise programme.

It's a good idea to get your gynaec's clearance on the same. Good luck!

I go to an exercise studio right after work. Recently I've found that I have trouble getting to sleep. Is there a connection? I was under the impression that improved sleep was one of the benefits of exercise.

Insomniac

Your impression is correct. However, if you workout too close to your bedtime, it can interfere with getting to sleep. This is because the body and all it's systems are still very alert and activated.

I want to lose weight and stay fit, but every time I join an aerobic class, I drop out feeling really discouraged as I'm terribly uncoordinated. I invariably end up making a fool out of myself. Getting involved with more basic activities like walking or cycling doesn't cut it for me, as I find them very boring. What do you suggest I do?

Two left feet

As you seem to enjoy activities which are a little more fast-paced and after variety, you may want to try one of two things.

You could rejoin an aerobic class, and focus on only one task at a time. Being terribly uncoordinated is typical when one tries to take on more than they're ready for. Try just the footwork first and leave the arms loose. Once you've managed to piece that in, you can add the arm work, and perhaps later take on light weights. Give it a shot. You'll be pleasantly surprised. Another option could be taking up a racket game like tennis or badminton.

Due to a health problem, my doctor has started me off on steroids. I understand that putting on weight is a side effect of this, and I'm panic-stricken about it. I have



Taking a stance: the fitness guru in a boxercise position

been exercising three times a week for the past two years and am currently in pretty good shape. What can I do to keep it that way?

Anxious

Marginally increase the frequency of your workouts. Start by working out four times a week. If your weight/inches remain in control, well and good. If not, you'll need to step it up to five or six times a week. Good luck!

I delivered two months ago. I've received my gynaec's clearance to get started on an exercise programme. I exercise three-four times a week. However, I've found that my milk flow has reduced, which is naturally causing a problem. I'm told that this is normal when exercising. I don't want to discontinue exercising as I want to lose all my fat and get back in shape as quickly as possible. What can I do?

New Mom

Due to the water lost through

sweat during exercise, milk flow reduces.

However, this problem can easily be eliminated by ensuring that you drink a lot more water before, during and after the workout. Stay active.

How many calories do you have to burn to lose one pound of fat? Is it true that the body cannot metabolise more than two pounds of fat a week?

Calorie conscious

It takes 3,500 calories to burn one pound of fat. You have to be careful not to go below your BMR or basal metabolic rate, which is the basic nutritional need of your body. If you reduce your calories to much, you will put your body into a caloric deficit, which causes it to deplete your muscles to get carbohydrates, an important source of fuel. That's why you don't want to lose more than two pounds a week.