

# HOW TO EVOLVE A SMART FITNESS ROUTINE

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**E**xercising hard? That's not smart. Exercising smart? Then that's not hard. Strange? Yes - but true.

Today's article offers various suggestions, which will help take you from here to there by actually putting in less effort!

### Exercise less hard

A very common mistake people make during exercise is to exercise too hard. When you feel totally out of breath, not only does exercise become too laborious to continue with, but chances are that you're working beyond your fat burning zone or target heart range.

Here, other sources of energy are burnt, like glycogen and quick energy (but not fat)! You'll sweat a lot, feel great (due to the endorphin release - that is the "feel-good" hormone) and feel really worked out, but you won't have burnt any fat or inches.

And that's what most people want out of exercise! Instead, if you work less hard and stay in your fat burning zone, you'll burn fat and inches off.

While there are standardized methods of checking what exactly your training zone is and how exactly to check on it, it is best worked out for each individual taking into account their age, fitness level, health problems (if any) and goals. Speak to a fitness professional about it and work it out.

### Keep it continuous

During a cardio session, it is not okay to take breaks in between and stop every now and then. Firstly, if at all you find the need

to stop, then chances are that your workout is too intense and therefore you are not burning fat anyway.

Secondly, if your workout has breaks in between, then once again the body does not use fat for fuel. It is okay to slow down to a bare minimum during a workout, but not to completely stop.

Thirdly, when you keep stopping and starting you can easily injure yourself. It's not a safe or smart thing to do.

### Exercise longer, less often

Here's another very common error people make. They go for half-an-hour walks five or six days a week and wonder why they're not able to reduce. That is because the body does not burn fat for the first 20 minutes into a cardio workout.

It's only what happens post the first 20 minutes that is important. Therefore, if a cardio session is kept up for about 40-45 minutes, then fat and inches are knocked off. But in a half-an-hour walk, if the first 5 minutes are counted as a warm-up, the next 20 to begin burning fat, then 25 minutes later when the body is just about ready to start burning fat and inches, you are beginning to cool down!

So, instead, exercise longer, but less often. If you go for a walk 3-4 days a week, but sustain each session for 45 minutes, you'll get much further.

### The right activity

What does cardio activity include? A brisk walk, rope jumping, stair climbing, cycling, elliptical training, cardio classes like step, box-aerobics, hi-lo fusion classes, slide



Nawaz Modi Singhania demonstrates an aerobic routine at her class

training, trampoline training, etc.

Basically, any whole body workout, which gets the heart-rate up to a certain level and keeps it there for a sustained period is a cardio activity, which knocks off fat and inches.

Cross train Rotate your cardio activities or cross train. You'll see continuous results, which doesn't happen when you stick to the same activity as the body gets immune to the routine over a period of time. - You'll also feel much better as boredom does not set

in and you feel challenged. In addition, the risk of over-use injuries will be dramatically reduced.

Various cardio activities could you rotate might be aerobics, cycling, walking, a racket game, stair climbing, rope skipping, dancing and swimming. **Get weights in** Weight and resistance training helps you get rid of unwanted fat. This is because as you tighten and

tone, muscles require more energy to sustain them than fat. Simply put, the more muscle you have, the more calories you will burn.

You can actually raise your metabolism by as much as 15-18 percent. To get this job done you could weight train, do calisthenics or floor exercises, pilates, the power plate/vibro gym or partner workouts.

### Be flexible

If you can't make it to your cardio/aerobic class one day, maybe you can walk back home from work or head out for a jog.

Take your walkman or a friend along for company.

### Keep company

Get fit with a friend or relative with a nice, admirable figure that you can use as a role model. Don't choose a leggy supermodel. You'll end up with low self-esteem and depression.

On the other hand, don't consistently choose friends who're much bigger than you so you feel alright about yourself. Sometimes this can happen on a subconscious level.

### Eat smart

Eat simple, sensible food. It'll keep you from feeling sleepy, lazy and sluggish all day. Keep your mind on the business at hand. Stay focused.

### Check on inch-loss

Though you might have been working out diligently, your weight just might stay the same. This is because you've probably built up on muscle tissue, which weighs more than fat.

That's great. Therefore go by the measure tape, how your clothes fit and how you look in the mirror - not by the weighing scale alone.

### Sensible approach

There are many fad diets around. None of them will get you to get fat and inches off, and more importantly keep the same off. Aside from that, crash diets can adversely affect our health.

In addition, they lower our metabolism, deplete muscle mass, increase fat levels in the body and all this actually sets the stage for further fat gain in the future.

The only thing that works, both in the short and long run, is a sensible, balanced approach towards food.

### Support system

Steer clear of those who undermine your weight-loss programme. Whatever their motivation, you don't want people forcing you to have another slice of chocolate cake or some more mithai.

If they genuinely care about you, they'll want you to be happy, healthy and in great shape.

For more info visit [www.bodyart.in](http://www.bodyart.in)