

Adding Cross-training to Your Fitness Regimen



Think of it this way: Vegetables are good for you, but you would not want to eat them to the exclusion of other foods. Similarly, any one kind of exercise benefits your body—whether it is biking, jogging, lifting weights or dancing—but you are much better off including a variety of activities, called **cross-training**, in your fitness “diet.”

One benefit is that you are less likely to get bored with an assortment of workouts and, thus, are more likely to stick to your commitment to your fitness goals. If you need to lose weight, for instance, it can be a lot easier to face 20 minutes on the treadmill, followed by 20 minutes on a stationary bike, than 40 straight minutes on either one of them, especially when you

know the next day you will be swimming. **Engaging in cross-training means more muscle groups will get exercised, and the chance is less that any one group will be overstressed and more subject to injury.**

Ideally, your cross-training plan will include 3 types of activities every week:

- **flexibility movements**, to keep your muscles supple;
- **aerobic exercise**, to benefit your heart and cardiovascular system; and
- **strength training**, to build muscle mass and maintain bone health.

Your goal should be to exercise at least 30 minutes almost every day, with two of your workout sessions (not on consecutive days) devoted to strength training.

Cross-training can be a valuable tool, too, if you are gearing up for a particular sports competition. Because some muscles will be resting every day, not only will they be less subject to injury but the rejuvenation periods will make them more receptive to strengthening the next time they are exercised.

To accommodate both your personal exercise preferences and your fitness goals, we will be happy to design a cross-training schedule especially for you. This way you can avoid boredom, reduce the risk of injury and stick to your exercise goals with ease.