

How to Get the Most from Strength-training Exercises



Beginning a strength-training program can be confusing. Once you have figured out how many pounds of weight to use in your exercise, you must decide how many different exercises to do, how many repetitions of each exercise set is best and how many sets to perform each time.

Of course, the number of pounds of weight you will use in each exercise should be carefully considered. If your goal is pure

muscular strength, start with a weight you can lift about eight times (not more), rest for a couple of minutes, then lift eight more times. On the other hand, if your goal is **muscular endurance**, pick a weight you can manage for about 12 to 15 repetitions per set.

After you do one set of repetitions, the muscles you are working should feel thoroughly tired. After a few sessions, if you feel you can do at least several more reps with no problem, it is time to increase the weight you lift.

The number of sets and repetitions you perform is equally important. For a beginner, the general recommendation is to do two sets of about 10 exercises, with eight to 10 repetitions of each exercise per set, two to three times a week. **The goal is to safely work all the major muscle groups in your arms, legs and trunk, including the shoulders, biceps, triceps, back muscles, abdominals, quadriceps, hamstrings and calves.** In addition, a good beginner's program usually includes work with both machines and free weights.

To gain the most strength, the order in which you perform the exercises is important, too. Usually, you will exercise the larger muscle groups before the smaller ones.

No matter what your fitness goals or initial fitness level, we will be happy to design a structured strength-training program to meet your individual needs. Thus, you will get the most benefits from your exercise regimen.