

Fat Loss

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Most people need to use up 1800-2400 calories in exercise a week to dump fat, which necessitates working out 5 or 6 times per week. Someone performing one of the *Full Circuit* routines like the one we use in class could use up as many as 450 calories per workout. However, most performers aren't vigorous or fit enough to do that. They are more likely to use up between 200 to 300 calories per workout.

You can build up your ability to work hard. After performing *Full Circuit* for a couple weeks, begin building by running during the track portion. Once you can run moderately for the whole time, start trying to run as hard as you can for 30 seconds. See if you can run hard a little longer each week until you can run hard for the whole four or five minutes. Intensity is the key to forcing your body to dump fat. Make sure you are out-of-breath.

You may prefer to approach weight loss with caloric cutbacks or diets. However, if you loose weight by that method, you will become metabolically smaller and the body will use up less calories, which eventually requires you to cut calories even more in order to maintain any fat loss. It may be necessary for some people to train themselves to eat less and allow their stomachs to shrink, but permanent weight loss still requires an increase in metabolism. That can only be accomplished by fairly intense exercise.

There are some reasons why some people fail to lose weight.

1. Their exercise is not continuous and doesn't use the large muscle groups.
2. Their performance is staying the same and not improving, so that the body is not forced to make changes.
3. Their exercise doesn't involve much intensity, or it starts and stops too much. You can break up your exercise into chunks and do as little as 10 minutes at a time (perhaps even working harder and using up more calories in total), but less than that may not be effective.
4. Their exercise program emphasizes strength-training as opposed to high oxygen consumption. Although it is good to maintain our muscles, workouts such as Pilates and weight-lifting do not use up enough calories or raise metabolism near as much.
5. They are in the very small percentage of people who are not very sensitive to exercise.
6. They are hyper cellular (more fat cells) and need a number of months to begin dumping fat. (Some people with excess fat have fewer fat cells (hypo cellular, but the cells they do have simply contain more fat. They tend to lose fat incrementally and not plateau.)

There are other things you should know.

It is a good idea to push hard only once or twice a week depending on your age. Pushing too often can result in injury or an inability to build your performance level. On your "non-push" days just work out moderately hard but don't try and set a personal record.

It is also a good idea to do another form of aerobic exercise every other day. Pick one exercise in which you plan to excel, and use the other exercise for your moderate days. Sometimes this is referred to as practicing "light days-heavy days."

Avoid water sports for weight loss. When you exercise your body temperature goes up and stays up for several hours after exercising, which causes your body to burn more calories. The water conducts heat away from the body and thwarts temperature elevation.