

WOMEN'S HEALTH MONTH

STRENGTH TRAINING MYTHS FACING WOMEN

1 IT'S A GUY THING

The idea that only men belong in the weight room is long outdated. Over 136,000 women participated in the 2016 CrossFit Games and about a quarter of them were over 40. Women are starting to get that what's really at stake is their health, and strength training is all about being healthy.



2 IT'LL BULK YOU UP

The majority of women are physiologically unable to build muscle to the degree where they would be considered "bulky". It is simply a function of estrogen and lack of testosterone; you will never build muscle like a man's, unless you are trying to achieve that result. Instead, you'll create firm, feminine curves- especially if you keep the rests between sets super short. The less you stop between exercises, the more calories you burn, creating that lean, sculpted look.

3 CARDIO IS BETTER

Many women think strength training burns less calories than cardio. Really boosting your resting metabolism (how many calories you burn all day, not just when your body is working) requires picking up the weights to increase your lean mass. The muscles of a strength trainer burn 50% more calories than the muscles of a runner or walker.

4 ONCE IT'S GONE

While it is true that preventing muscle loss before it starts is the best way to stay healthy and strong- keep your metabolism running like it did in your 20s- it's never too late to undo the muscle loss.

5 LIGHT WEIGHTS

The ultimate goal is not only to increase your lean mass, but also to make that muscle stronger and denser, with no harmful fat- which is why regularly increasing the weight you're lifting is very important. Once 12 reps are easy, it's time to move up. Increase in increments of 2.5 to 5 pounds for free weights, and about 5-10 pounds for machines.