

The Importance of Fitness

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Humans, we were born to run and to jump, to be predators. We now live in a technology filled world that has completely grounded us to the point we have become so out of shape that we can't even walk a kilometer without losing our breath. I know it sounds extreme, but it is the truth. More than half of Canada is considered overweight/ obese or underweight, including children. If we continue down this path we will become so out of shape that we will not be able to function properly. This brings me to the importance of fitness and why we need to incorporate exercise or some form of activity into our lives.

First things first, what is fitness? I'll start off by saying there are things that lead up to fitness: physical activity and exercise. Physical activity is our body's movement due to our muscles contracting (i.e. walking, running, picking up objects and everything else that our body does to make us move). Exercise is planned physical activity structured to help improve overall fitness. This brings me to what fitness



is. Fitness is our body's ability to perform physical activity. The more fit we are, the better we are at performing certain movements. For example, if we train our body to do deadlifts, the better our body will become when executing this lifting movement at work or at home.



The amount we use technology, has dropped our fitness level significantly. Due to lack of physical activity, we are no longer able to perform daily tasks as well as we should be able to. As a result of this inactivity, we have developed many morbidities (diseases) that affect our health negatively. Things like Type-2-Diabetes and hypertension are major

unhealthy outcomes on account of inactivity. People will continue to develop these conditions if we continue to be sedentary.

Fitness is not all about looking good, having big muscles or the "ideal" body. Fitness is and should continue to be more about an individual's ability to perform daily tasks with a certain level of physical stress being put on their body. What I mean by this is, we should be able to handle a certain amount of physical activity without a lot of effort. I say this because now in today's sedentary lifestyle most of us can't handle a little amount of physical activity without a lot of effort. This is because most of us are overweight/obese or underweight. Our bodies have so much weight or so little weight on it that it requires more energy just to move. Therefore, people who are out of shape are not able to last as long doing any sort of physical activity than people who are in shape.

There is a happy median of weight that we need to be within, for our bodies to perform daily physical activity with little effort and less energy. This scale is based on age and height. If we are within that weight range, we will be able to perform at our best. To achieve this certain weight, we need to exercise. When we exercise there needs to be a certain combination of strength training and cardio involved.

This combination all depends on the level of fitness an individual has. Typically, people who are overweight are stronger than people who are underweight. The opposite happens with cardio. People who



are underweight typically can last longer than people who are overweight. To achieve the weight that best suits your age and height, people who are overweight need to do more cardio than strength training and people who are underweight need to do more strength training than cardio. When people exercise with the right combination of cardio and strength training for their individual requirements, they will reach the weight that best suits them, allowing them to perform their best in life.

As you have read, Fitness is not all about being really "fit". It's about being the healthiest that you can be. It's about training your body and giving your body the right nutrients to the point where you can perform to your best. Hence why it is important for all of us to incorporate fitness into our lives. So, we can live our life to the fullest. Giving us the opportunity to run, jump and be the predators we were meant to be.

