

The health benefits of different types of exercise



GUEST CORNER

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Physical exercise plays a crucial role in maintaining a balanced, healthy lifestyle. Understanding the differences and health benefits of each type of exercise would help you make an informed choice to suit your specific fitness goals and preferences.

ISOMETRIC EXERCISES: Entail a low impact, static muscle contraction with no change in the muscle length or joint angle during the exercise. Examples are a) full body isometric - planks on your elbows hold up to one minute; b) shoulder isometric - pushing a soft ball into a wall and hold the contraction 10-15 seconds; and c) knee isometric; doing a wall squat and hold at 80 degrees angle for up to 1 minute.

Health benefits: Muscle strengthening and joint stability. Because the joint stays in one position, the muscles around the joint can get stronger to improve joint stability and strengthening the muscles without compromising the joint. This is especially beneficial for painful arthritic joints, post-surgery, or injury to activate the muscle belly without straining the tendons or ligaments.

ISOTONIC EXERCISES: Involve dynamic muscle contractions where the muscle length changes during the exercise. It can be both concentric (muscle shortens against gravity) and eccentric (muscle lengthens with gravity) muscle contractions. Examples are: 1) arms: weightlifting like bicep curls and body weight exercises like push-ups; 2) legs: deep squats, leg presses on a machine; and 3) core: sit-ups using your body weight as resistance.

Health benefits: Promote muscle hypertrophy (growth) and muscle flexibility by improving joint range of motion and overall functional movement, and aid to increase your metabolic rate (number of calories burnt) and help to improve bone mass and bone density.

ISOKINETIC EXERCISES: Involve muscle contractions at a constant speed throughout the exercise and require mostly specialized equipment to perform. Used to improve the speed in a specific range of motion. Examples are rowing machines and leg extension for thigh strengthening.

Health benefits: They ensure equal, balanced muscle strength to reduce the risk of injury and maximize strength and speed during a performance.

AEROBIC/CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISES: Are fueled by oxygen you breathe and are performed for long period of time doing rhythmic, endurance movements that elevate the heart rate and increase oxygen to the lungs, heart and circulatory system. Examples are brisk walking, jogging, dancing, elliptical, biking.

Health benefits: They improve cardiovascular health by increasing the oxygen levels to the main organs, increase endurance and help to release endorphins that reduce stress and anxiety levels and could assist in weight management if combined with a healthy diet.

ANAEROBIC EXERCISES: Do not require oxygen for energy production and are fueled by energy already stored in your muscles. They involve short durations of high intensity, quick burst of energy like sprinting, weightlifting for 10-15 seconds at maximum effort or HIIT (high intensity Interval training).

Health benefits: They focus on developing muscle tone and definition and require a muscle to perform high-intensity activities for longer duration and aid in fat burning and promote lean muscle mass development.

AQUATIC EXERCISES: They are performed in water and are low impact resistance exercise with buoyancy giving muscles and joints support and resistance.

Health benefits: They are gentle on the joints and provide a total body workout that is safe for individuals with arthritis, injuries, and joint pain and they promote circulation to big muscle groups and organs.

DYNAMIC EXERCISES — DIVIDED INTO PLYOMETRICS AND BALLISTIC TRAINING:

1) Plyometric exercises: Involve explosive high velocity movements with lower loads that focus on speed, power, and typically incorporate jumping and rapid muscle contractions like box jumps.

Health benefits: They enhance agility, speed, and explosive power, and are popular with athletes who participate in explosive sports. Plyometrics also improve coordination, proprioception and overall balance and stability.

2) Ballistic training: Entail high velocity power training where the muscles are pushed close to maximum output. Examples are medicine ball throws, jump squats, and kettle ball swings.

Health benefits: They focus on building muscle strength-speed.

BARRE: Are inspired by the traditional ballet barre training and focus on isolating smaller muscle groups with repetitive movements.

Health benefits: They improve your core stability to help with posture, balance, flexibility and tone your body.

PILATES: Low-impact exercises that focus on working the whole body at once. It emphasizes controlled movement with breath awareness and proper alignment. Pilates often incorporate equipment such as reformers, mats, and resistance bands to promote overall body awareness.

Health benefits: It improves the mind-body connection that helps to improve posture, muscle balance and core stability.

YOGA: It combines physical posture, breathing techniques, meditation, and mindfulness to promote holistic well-being.

Health benefits: It improves muscle flexibility, strength, balance, stability, and proprioception that assist your posture and mind-body connection. Yoga also helps with relaxation and improve respiratory health.

ZUMBA: Entail high-energy aerobic fun classes that focus on rhythmic movements that include bouncing and jumping.

Health benefits: It builds endurance and cardiovascular fitness, decreases stress by releasing endorphins, and improves coordination.

SOMATIC EXERCISES: Entail movement with full-body awareness. The focus is on how to connect your emotions with your body and how to release certain stress and tension with gentle movements and breathing techniques.

Health benefits: They help to release stress and tension and improve the mind-body connection.

Enjoy moving your body to benefit your physical and mental wellbeing. Contact your physical therapist to learn more about an individualized exercise program that is beneficial to your goals.

Lize Lubbe is the owner of Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy with its main practice located at 892 Route 35 in Cross River and a PT Studio in the premises of Apex Fitness (where her team focus on the rehabilitation of sports-related injuries). Learn more by calling 914-875-9430, emailing contact@lizelubbept.com or visiting www.lizelubbept.com.



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