



Healthy Eating Initiative: The Benefits of Resistance Training

The New Year is here, a time when many pledge to improve their physical health. Resistance training, which is sometimes called strength or weight training, improves muscle strength, and tones and protects your joints from injury. It is an accessible option that can be done in the gym or at home using weights, dumbbells, bands, or simply your body weight. Resistance training can help you reach your weight management goals while maintaining your flexibility and balance.

Resistance training increases muscular strength and endurance, along with these other health benefits:

- 1. A boost in metabolism and a reduction in body fat.**
 - The benefits are even greater if you **combine consistent resistance training with regular aerobic exercises**.
- 2. An increase in bone density and improvement in balance.**
- 3. An improvement in mental health.**
 - Studies show that resistance training can help **alleviate depression and feelings of anxiety and worry**, even if the exercise is mild.
- 4. An increase in self-esteem and confidence.**
- 5. Management of chronic conditions** such as arthritis, back pain, heart disease, and diabetes.
- 6. A sharpening of your thinking skills.** Some research shows that regular resistance training and cardio may improve cognitive functions in older adults.

When training, it is important to learn the proper form to optimize a workout and protect the body from injury. Consult with a medical provider or physical trainer before beginning a new routine.

Lean muscle mass naturally decreases with age and body fat percentage will increase as a result if steps are not taken to replace the lean muscle that is lost over time. Resistance training is key. Remember that if you don't use it, you will lose it!

Additional Resources:

- VeryWell Fit: <https://www.verywellfit.com/what-is-resistance-training-3496094>
- Mayo Clinic: <https://mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/strength-training/art-20046670>
- American Heart Association: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/strength-and-resistance-training-exercise>

