

**DNA After Hrs
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Go beyond cardio

AS PER A STUDY, PEOPLE WHO DID STRENGTH-BASED EXERCISES HAD A REDUCTION OF 23 PER CENT IN RISK OF PREMATURE DEATH AND A 31 PER CENT IN CANCER-RELATED MORTALITY. EXPERTS COMMENT

Lisa Antas

When it comes to fitness, cardio has always been a rage. Walking, brisk walking, jogging and cycling have always been popular forms of keeping fit, especially among those who dislike going to the gym. But more often than not strength-based exercises end up on the back burner. And if that's the case with you, worse, if you don't exercise at all, it's high time you incorporated it and we tell you why.

The study

According to a study's findings, people who did strength-based exercise had a 23 per cent reduction in risk of premature death and a 31 per cent reduction in cancer-related death. Researchers monitored 80,306 adults for 120 years and tweaked adjustments in order to reduce the influence of factors like age, sex, health status, lifestyle behaviour and education. Emanuele Stamatakis, Associate Professor at the University of Sydney in Australia, said, "The study shows exercise that promotes muscular strength may be just as important for health as aerobic activities like jogging or cycling." The research showed that exercises performed using one's own body weight without specific equipment were just as effective as gym-based training.

"When people think of strength training, they instantly think of doing weights in a gym, but that doesn't have to be the case," observed Stamatakis. "Many people are intimidated by



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Sugandee Hazare, senior fitness consultant, Prospect Fitness Centre

Women should do strength training to fight osteoporosis

PH: PRAKASH

gym, the costs or the culture they promote, so it's great to know that anyone can do classic exercises like sit-ups, dips, sit-ups, push-ups or lunges in their own home or local park and potentially reap the same health benefits," he said.

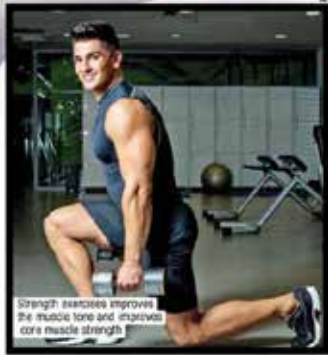
Many ignore strength training

A lot of people only focus on cardio and ignore strength training, observes Sugandee Hazare, senior fitness consultant, Prospect Fitness Centre. "Generally, these people are only trying to lose weight. Cardio gives a boost to burn those calories and helps you shed the weight fast. Most women shy away from doing weights or resistance training as they fear they will bulk up like the men. However, osteogen levels are

high and testosterone levels low in women compared to men, due to which they will never bulk up like men do," he says.

How it helps

"Strength exercises in moderation helps in achieving most of the benefits of aerobic exercise. For example, it helps in reducing bad cholesterol, blood pressure, weight and decreasing risk of diabetes. It does not increase blood pressure and heart rate suddenly and significantly during the exercise period. Strength exercise, most importantly improves the muscle tone and improves core muscle strength. It decreases the visceral fat (abdominal obesity) better than aerobic exercise. However, if the strength exercises are strenuous, it may lead to trans-



Strength exercises improve the muscle tone and improve core muscle strength

sient high BP and fast heart rate, which may lead to further damage to existing heart disease. Strength exercises should be ideally avoided in patients with cardiac illness and the intensity and duration of such exercises should be guided by a sports physician or a cardiologist,"

says Dr Santosh Kumar Dora, senior cardiologist, Asian Heart Institute.

Why should you do it?

Hazare lists out a number of reasons. As women get older, they undergo hormonal changes, due to which the bone density reduces and

they are at a risk of developing osteoporosis. Doing weight training resistance training helps to develop bone density and build lean muscle mass which then leads to support your bones and joints better and gives you a better posture. A good posture results in efficiency of movement of the human body in today's world, movement and functionality of the human body is restricted due to the sedentary life style we lead. This lifestyle and our work patterns strain our body and have adverse effects on us. Strength training resistance training helps us to release endorphins which control the stress hormone called cortisol.

Reduces risk of cancer-related issues

Dr Ehsan Chahar, medical oncologist, Dnyanesh Hospital and Naxos Hospital, totally agrees with the study saying, "There are studies which have found doing strength-based exercises slow reduction in occurrence of cancer and cancer-related mortality. This is true for cancer patients who indulge in exercising post treatment, have lesser chance of relapse. Strength-based exercises increase the oxygenation of cells, strengthens blood vessels, boosts immunity, help fight against free radicals, fight obesity and not just against obesity-related cancers like breast, colon, pancreatic, etc but across the board, so it's a win-win situation." For a lay person, he recommends at least 30 minutes of strength-based exercises, six days a week. If that's not possible, then at least three or four times a week.

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