STRENGTH TRAINING 101

Tips on how to improve your muscular strength and endurance

ITHACA COLLEGE
Center for Health Promotion
What is strength training?

• Strength or resistance training are training techniques that improve muscle strength and/or size.

• Resistance training can be done to improve health or athletic performance.

• Strength training often involves the use of weights, but could also involve using pneumatic resistance or elastic bands.
How often should I strength train?

• Build up slowly in order to avoid injury.

• Strength train for each major muscle group 2 to 3 days a week. A single muscle group should not be worked twice within 48 hours.

• The major muscle groups are: chest, shoulders, upper and lower back, hips, abdomen and legs.

• Work each muscle group in a single workout, or target certain muscles each session.
How much should I train during a workout?

• Train each muscle group with 2 to 4 sets of exercises per workout. These can be for sets of the same exercise or different exercises. Ex) 2 sets of bench press and 2 sets of pec flys.

• 2 to 3 minutes of rest should be taken between each set. Exercises for different muscle groups can be done during this time.

• Aim for a level of resistance that elicits fatigue after 8 to 12 repetitions.
Strength training for certain goals.

• If your goal is increasing muscular endurance (ability of the muscles to work at low levels over a long period of time) use a weight that causes fatigue between 15 and 25 repetitions.

• Rest periods between sets should be shorter when training for muscular endurance.

• If your goal is to improve total strength, use heavier weights that allow the completion of 4 to 6 repetitions.
Using Proper Technique

• It is important to perform strength training with proper technique to avoid injury.

• Seek out an expert to give you proper instruction. Make an appointment with a personal trainer at the Fitness Center (fees apply, but they are reasonable).

• Perform your exercise in a slow and controlled motion.

• Work through a full range of motion for your joints.
Improving/Maintaining Strength

• Once the exercises you are doing begin to feel too easy, you must work harder to see more gains in strength!
• Increasing weight or repetitions will improve strength.
• Don’t increase the amount you are exercising too much! Pick a training load you can handle to avoid injury.
• Doing resistance exercises once a week at a constant intensity will maintain your strength gains.
Other Tips:

• Do a short warm up, such as 5 minutes on the bike, before performing resistance training.

• Do a warm up set of each exercise using a very easy weight.

• Train opposing muscle groups, such as the biceps and triceps, to avoid muscle imbalance.

• Wear your mask while working out, especially when in a public facility.
Sample Workout:

- Dumbbell Chest Press - (works the chest)
- Dumbbell Row - (works park of the back)
- Overhead Dumbbell Press - (works the shoulders)
- Lat Pull Down - (works part of the back)
- Dumbbell Bicep curls - (works the biceps)
- Overhead Triceps extensions - (works the triceps)
- Leg Press Machine - (works the legs and glutes)
- Abdominal Machine - (works the stomach)
- Back Extension Machine - (works the lower back)

* Perform 2-4 sets of 8-12 repetitions of each exercise