



Fact or Fiction?

1. You can spot reduce *FICTION!*

This myth has been around for years, with no hard science to back it up. The simple fact is: While training certain areas has not been shown to decrease fat in those areas, building muscle does help to reduce fat overall. Developing more muscle increases caloric expenditure, which can help decrease body fat. Fat cells in areas such as the arms, abs, hips, thighs and butt are genetically predisposed. Although we can't change our genes, we can change how much fat is deposited by regulating our food intake and exercise habits. But don't get discouraged. If you keep training those target areas correctly, when the body fat decreases, you will expose finely developed muscles.

2. Training harder and more often will get you to your goal faster *FICTION!*

Training harder doesn't always mean training better. And it won't get you there any faster. When it comes to exercise, it takes 30 to 60 minutes of moderate activity a day for five days a week to make a significant change in your health and fitness, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Also, if you are exercising to increase lean body mass or decrease body fat, overtraining can have a negative effect on your goal. The body adapts to the environments you place it in. Once your body adapts to the exercise or the intensity, you have to change things up, which means you may have to work harder, but at a cost to your health. Since most change occurs during recovery periods, if your body is never allowed to recover, it won't have time to adapt. That is when the body starts breaking down and overuse injuries—such as sprains, strains or tears—

occur. These injuries will limit your ability to work out, inhibiting you from reaching your goals. Instead of increasing your intensity, change your routine by trying a different cardio machine, hand position, plane of motion or resistance exercise. By giving your body simple challenges that force it to adapt, you can increase caloric expenditure, function and hypertrophy. After all, if you keep increasing your intensity and time in the gym, you may never have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of exercise at all.

3. Cardio training is the best exercise for fat loss *FICTION!*

The best way to lose body fat is to regulate your food intake and increase your activity level. Cardio training is just one part of a routine, but it isn't all of it. Resistance training should be a part of your workout routine as well. Resistance training not only increases muscle mass, but also contributes to a higher metabolism, increased caloric expenditure and increased bone density, as well as better overall function. Developing muscles through resistance training creates better muscle definition and tone. Don't worry, this doesn't mean you are going to get big, bulging muscles if you lift a weight. Size is determined by a number of things such as load, volume, intensity and genetics. There are several modes of resistance training available, you just need to pick the type of training that is best for your needs.

By: NASM Editorial Staff

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