

Lifting Heavy Weights is NOT Just for Men

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When it comes to fitness and personal training, there are a lot of misconceptions that everybody from the casual gym visitor to the professional personal trainer have to battle daily. After all, fitness is more like medicine than math. Often, there isn't one right answer but instead many theories and preferences on how to go about solving the problem: in medicine's case, treating an illness, in fitness's case, reaching individual fitness goals. If one asks two personal trainers the very same fitness questions, they may have completely different answers, and both of them may be right.

Misconceptions happen in any vocation where more than one answer is acceptable and/or right. Many theories spring up, sprouting many versions of one theory, leading to interpretations of those theories by people not qualified to make quality interpretations. This is how we arrive from many right answers to a many wrong ones.

One of the biggest misconceptions in fitness is that women should not lift heavy weights — that heavy weightlifting is only for men. There are many false interpretations and cultural stigmas that fall into that misconception, and we are here to dispel them all.

“I Don’t Want to Look Like the Incredible Hulk.”

A valid concern. Unfortunately, lifting heavy weights is most often associated with huge, hulking muscle men who grunt, sweat and destroy unsuspecting shirt sleeves with their 20” biceps. Keep in mind, however, that this look is not “accidental” — these guys didn't just puff up one day after pumping iron at the gym for a while without meaning to. These body builders have specific goals, work extremely hard and diet to achieve the massive level of muscle you see, and although they should be commended for their work ethic, that look isn't for everyone. For most people, a well-balanced heavy lift routine will lead to a nicely toned body, without the huge mass.

“I Don’t Need to Get Strong, I Just Want to Lose Weight.”

Muscles need food in form of protein, and some carbs. The more muscle you have, the more food your body will need to properly feed the muscle. What happens when your body is using up more food than before? It doesn't need to store as much. Since our bodies store food as fat, more muscle = less fat. Gaining more muscle is a great way to help your body lose weight, and keep it off. Be warned though, muscle weighs more than fat, so as you gain muscle, be sure to use hip/waist/chest/arm measurements to accurately assess how much fat you are losing.

“I Don’t Want to Get Hurt Lifting Heavy Weights.”

Another valid concern. Improper technique or too much weight without proper preparation can lead to

serious injuries. However, with proper technique, a heavy lift routine can actually strengthen joints, ligaments and, of course, muscles, thereby reducing the risk of injury down the road.

As is the case with any workout routine, be sure to work with a personal trainer to determine the right workload, and always, no matter how light or heavy the weight, use proper technique.