

The Recovery

The Power Issue: The Unquestionable Benefits of Strength Training

Strength training - this form of exercise typically has a negative connotation to it especially for women. Well, this issue of *The Recovery* will start out with some of the most popular strength training misconceptions and will end with the most relevant reasons why you **SHOULD** make strength training an important part of your overall fitness program.

MISCONCEPTION #1 - Weight lifting is dangerous.

Let's face it - injuries can occur anywhere at any time - this is obviously pertinent in the realm of sports or anything related to physical activity. While machines have the reputation of being safer than free weights, there are studies that tell a different story. Weight lifting does not produce more injuries compared to machines. The injury rates are actually lower in any other sport. Weight lifting is used for (p)rehabilitation because it can prevent and fix injuries. A sure fire way to injure yourself is if you use bad technique. Use your head, be smart, and you will be safe.

MISCONCEPTION #2 - Weight lifting makes you bulky.

Muscle is denser than fat. You will look slimmer at the same body weight if you increase your muscle mass. The huge guys you see in muscle magazines are undoubtedly supplementing. So, getting bulky means gaining weight, and to gain weight, you **HAVE** to eat more.

MISCONCEPTION #3 - If you stop strength training, your muscles turn into fat.

This is like saying that gold can turn into brass! Muscle and fat - these are two completely opposite types of tissue. This is where the *use it or lose it* principle comes into play. Your body fat will increase if you do nothing to replace the lean muscle you lose. When people decide to go off their weight training programs, they start losing muscle due to inactivity, and they usually drop the healthy eating habits as well. Therefore bad eating habits combined with the fact that their metabolism is lower due to inactivity, and lower degrees of muscle mass, give the impression that the subject's muscle is being turned into fat while in reality what is happening is that muscle is being lost and fat is being accumulated.

So why **SHOULD** you incorporate strength training into your fitness program? Here is some evidence that ought to compel you to embark upon this journey. And as always, we are an open book at SACPT, so don't be afraid to ask us questions. We are more than happy to get you started on this path! Prevention starts with education and education takes place when there is an inquisitive mind on the scene.

So here's the skinny on weights - if you want to reduce body fat, increase lean muscle mass and burn calories more efficiently, strength training is key to achieving this. So what? You might not want to reap the harvest of this particular seed, but you ought to know that the benefits extend far beyond these three factors. In fact, strength training, when performed correctly and regularly, can incur the following: improve focus; positively affect bone density; increase overall range of motion; improve stability and balance; develop and/or maintain lean muscle mass; improve work capacity; heighten perception and mental cognition; improve cardiovascular function; and relieve stress. Moreover, it is a powerful tool in reducing the signs and symptoms of numerous diseases and chronic conditions, which include: arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, back pain, and depression.

Still not interested in strength training? Scientific research has shown that exercise can slow the physiological aging clock. While aerobic exercise, such as walking, jogging, or swimming, has many health benefits - it maintains the heart and lungs and increases cardiovascular fitness and endurance - it does not make your muscles strong. **STRENGTH TRAINING DOES**. Studies have shown that lifting weights two or three times a week increases strength by building muscle mass and bone density.

So how do you get started? When you have your physician's approval to start a program, choose a weight that is heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12-15 repetitions. When you can easily do more reps of a certain exercise, gradually increase the weight or resistance with the emphasis being **GRADUAL**. If you jump too quickly, the outcome will be slightly demoralizing, and you might want to quit your program. Consistency is critical for success - this applies to any fitness program. With the right amount of discipline, expect to enjoy noticeable improvements in your strength and stamina in just a few weeks. If you keep it up, you'll continue to increase your strength and surprise yourself - don't ever underestimate your ability.

SAN ANTONIO Center for Physical Therapy

San Antonio Center for Physical Therapy is a privately-owned clinic offering personalized rehabilitative care to individuals with neuromuscular and musculoskeletal dysfunctions. The Doctors of Physical Therapy are certified Manual Therapists and specialists in orthopedic and sports injuries. We are committed to excellence by providing quality, cost-effective, outcome-based physical therapy. It is of utmost importance that our patients are treated with respect and friendliness in a professional, caring environment.

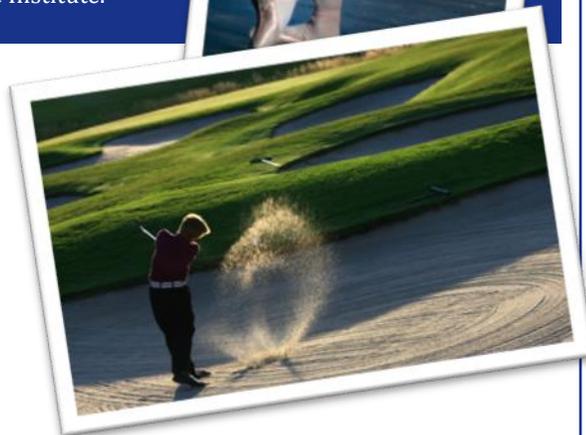
Dr. Jarrett and Dr. Nietz received their Manual Therapy Certification (MTC) during their Doctoral studies at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences in Florida. They utilize a unique manual approach to specialize in the treatment of spinal dysfunction, headaches, neck pain, and sports injuries. They are the company Physical Therapists for San Antonio's premier professional ballet company, Ballet San Antonio. Dr. Jarrett and Dr. Nietz have specialized training and certifications through the American Sports & Fitness Association and the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries. Dr. Nietz has further training and certification through BACKtoGOLF and the Titleist Performance Institute.



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San Antonio Center for Physical Therapy
Located in Suite 210 of the Sonterra Oaks Medical Plaza

From I-10:

Take 1604 East to 281. Stay on access road and take the turnaround to access road for 1604 West. Turn right on Hardy Oaks Blvd, just past Macaroni Grill.

From 281, Heading North or South:

Take Sonterra Blvd Exit. Take right onto Sonterra Blvd. Turn left on Hardy Oak Blvd.

From I-35:

Take 1604 West to Stone Oak Pkwy Exit. Merge to right lane of access road. Turn right onto Hardy Oak Blvd, just past Macaroni Grill.

