

Myth Busters #1 Lifting weights make women look bulky

Liverpool Personal Trainer Dean Connor Dispels the Myth: Lifting weights makes women 'bulky' and actually challenges the myth and tells YOU why it is ESSENTIAL for effective fat loss that women crank up the weights!

As a weight loss specialist Personal Trainer in Liverpool I know what it takes for women to achieve a lean, toned look. I also know how to get these results in the quickest, safest time possible.

When I am asked one of the most common questions by female clients; 'What is the quickest way to tone up and lose fat', my immediate response is: A balanced nutritional plan along with lifting weights and full body exercises.

The response I get is usually very similar to, 'I am not lifting weights and getting big muscles and big legs'.

Today I am ready to dispel this myth and take you through step by step WHY weights will not make you 'bulky' and why women benefit more than men from lifting weights for fat loss.

The majority of us will be joining the gym or attending classes for fat loss and trying to get fit. However, the reason so many of us do not reach our goal or get sufficient results is because we do not work efficiently or effectively.

Before we continue with this article we need to be clear on one thing: For you to achieve the photo's you see of women in fitness magazines with arms bigger than your legs we would need to inject you with some serious amounts of testosterone for you to achieve that figure. You simply do not have the capacity to achieve that 'look' without sufficient levels of it.

These are the pictures that tend to put a lot of women off lifting heavy weights. It pains me to see women in gyms on the machines lifting the first or second plate or 2kg dumbbells for fear of 'bulking up'. Yet in essence all they are doing is restricting their results gained in the gym.

Another is for women to spend an hour+ on cardiovascular machines in the hope of burning tons of calories and toning up fast, when the facts are you will not tone up from the cardiovascular machines because you are not conditioning and building the muscle shape.

The final dilemma is seeing women do 100's of crunches on Ab Rollers etc in the hope of achieving the flat stomach; the sad thing is it is not their fault.

Rarely do you see pictures of celebrities lifting weights achieving their figure. The only photo's you will see of them working out is running or doing sit ups. Pop star concerts are like circus acts now. These women could not physically perform the routines without spending time in the gyms conditioning and building muscle strength.

They will be performing exercises that involve their whole body working as a functional unit, pushing/pulling the weight. With the exercises used they will be burning a far greater amount of calories than in a 'comfortable' jog.

One of the biggest calorie burners in the gym is spinning; the reason for this is how the workouts are planned and are based around interval training, hill climbing and recovery.

By lifting weights using the same principles of sprints or short bursts of work, resistance (Hills) and recover you will burn an even greater amount than from spinning.

Below are the 8 benefits of weight training for women

1. INCREASED METABOLISM – faster fat loss
2. INCREASED MUSCLE TONE - You will develop toned, balanced physique
3. FLATTER STOMACH – pushing weights forces you core to work as a unit developing your abdominal muscles
4. INCREASED MUSCLE FUNCTION – reduced injuries
5. MORE ENERGY – increased fitness and recovery levels
6. GREATER BODY SHAPE – more muscle tone
7. GREATER FLEXIBILITY – reduction in injury
8. IMPROVED CORE STRENGTH – flatter abdominals

There are tons of other health benefits to lifting weights such as, decreasing your risk of heart disease and osteoporosis and back pain.

However when it comes to EFFECTIVE fat loss and tone and conditioning, weight training is PARAMOUNT to your success.

This doesn't mean that you are expected to walk in to your local gym and hit the free weight area bench pressing 100 kilo's.....this is not the case. Exercises like swings, windmill's with kettlebells or squat and presses, deadlifts, walking lunge and press.....with dumbbells or barbells are full body movements. The calorie expenditure from these forms of exercise is far higher and superior than any other form of traditional exercise.

Add this form of training to a well balanced nutritional plan (please do not skip carbohydrates!) then you are well on your way to achieving that lean, toned look that you set out for.

Below is a sample workout that I use with my female clients when they are trying to strip body fat and tone up in the quickest time possible. You will see when completing the workout that ALL major muscle groups in the body are covered and along with the muscles working you will also feel how aerobic the workouts are too.

You want to use a weight that will allow you to complete 12 repetitions. I would recommend between 6 kg – 8 kg but if you are stronger then please feel free to lift more.

How the workout works:

Using the exercises below you will complete each exercise for 10 repetitions, then moving back to the start you will go through the same circuit for 9 repetitions then 8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1.

If you wanted to time yourself for the workout then please do. This is a good way to see your fitness levels increasing as you will be able to complete the workout faster. PLEASE do not substitute a good time for poor form. If you feel tired, dizzy, sick or can feel you are not completing the exercise right take a breather and either stop or carry on when fully recovered.

Alternating Lunge and Press

Bent-Over Dumbbell Row

Press ups

Kettlebell or Dumbbell Swings

Squat Thrusts

You will be surprised by how quickly your body changes shape towards your goal when choosing lifting weights. For the next 6 weeks just try implementing a few full body exercises into your routine using barbells, kettlebells or dumbbells and enjoy the reward.

I am sorry but the gossip magazine will have to be left in your bag too, but you can read that later when your feeling great about what you achieved earlier on.