

## Why Cardiovascular Exercise?



Cardio. For some it's a dreaded word and for others it's a passion they can't get enough of. Either way you look at it though, cardiovascular exercise is one of the key components that should never be left out of a fitness plan.

Cardio, short for cardiovascular exercise, is any movement that gets your heart rate up and increases blood circulation throughout the body. There are various forms and methods of performing cardio exercise—all which will have specific benefits and guidelines.

Most individuals performing cardio are using it as a way to burn off excess calories and since you are moving the body, it is going to increase the need for energy. Some forms are slightly better when strictly speaking of fat loss but all cardio, regardless of form will burn off calories. Since fat loss does depend on calories burned versus calories consumed it is a step in the right direction.

The reason to do cardio does not end with fat loss though; there are a wide variety of health benefits you receive from a regular cardio program.

### 5 Other Benefits of Cardiovascular Exercise:

#### 1. Improved Heart Health

The first one is an improved condition of your heart. Your heart is a muscle just like any other and in order for it to become strong it must be worked. If you fail to work it, it will weaken over time and this can cause a variety of negative health effects. By getting the heart pumping at a faster rate on a regular basis you will keep it in shape and healthy.

#### 2. Increased Metabolism

Another reason to perform cardio is for its effects on the metabolism. Along with speeding up your heart rate, cardiovascular exercise also increases the rate of various other processes in the body, also known as your metabolism. Generally speaking, the more intense the cardio session, the more noticeable increase you will see with regards to your metabolic rate. An increased metabolism means an easier time maintaining your weight (or losing weight as the case may be).

### 3. Improved Hormonal Profile

Performing cardiovascular exercise also changes the hormonal profile in your body considerably. It releases "feel good" hormones that will help ease symptoms of depression and fatigue as well as releasing hormones that decrease the appetite. Individuals who partake in regular cardio exercise often have a much more positive outlook on life simply because they are getting the stress-relief benefits from these hormones.

### 4. Improved Recovery Ability

Certain types of cardio exercise, usually lower, more moderately paced forms, can decrease your recovery time too. If you have just performed a hard session in the gym, hopping on the treadmill for a walk or light jog will help to remove some of the by-products that were created during a weight lifting session. This will help to reduce your DOMS (delayed onset of muscle soreness) and help bring more oxygen rich blood to the muscle tissue improving in the repair and rebuilding process. To you, this translates to your being able to get back into the gym quicker and work the muscles again.

### 5. Management Of Diabetes

Lastly, for those who have diabetes, cardiovascular exercise helps them manage this condition. By performing the exercise, you will increase your muscle's ability to utilize glucose. Those who exercise regularly tend to have better control of their blood sugars and do not see as many blood sugar swings as those who don't. For diabetes this is increasingly important as they are extremely sensitive to changes in blood sugar levels.

Those are just a few of the benefits that you will see with regular cardiovascular exercise.

- *If you are just getting started, first focus on simply finding an activity that gets you moving and gets your heart rate up. Those are the two key components to what cardio is. Any form of exercise will do, whether it is going for a walk, a bike ride or performing in an organized sport.*

