

Cardio and You – Work it!

Cardio is so misunderstood, but generally there are 2 kinds of cardio. Mix ‘em up!

LSD - There are other times when you’ll want to ‘zone out’, and pedal at a slightly easier, consistent pace. If this is the case, then do long slow distance cardio, and make sure you’re getting your heart rate up to 130 bpm minimum and keep it there. Make sure you’re doing 20 minutes, or more as this is when the real fat burning clicks in.

Example: How to Find Your Target Training Zone for LDS cardio (your HR will be higher with HIIT!) (It’s a 2-part formula):

- $220 - \text{your age} - \text{resting heart rate} \times .70 + \text{resting heart rate} = ??$
- $220 - \text{your age} - \text{resting heart rate} \times .85 + \text{resting heart rate} = ??$

You’ll be working between these 2 numbers. Example: I’m 50 and my resting heart rate is 59, so... $220 - 50 - 59 \times .70 + 59 = 136$ and $220 - 50 - 59 \times .85 + 59 = 153$ So for LSD to ensure I’m working hard enough, I’m between 136 and 153 bpm. The upper range will be higher for HIIT, I’m usually around 180 or more!

HIIT (high intensity interval training) is becoming popular, due to the fact that you get great results in half the time. It burns more fat, aids recovery and revs the metabolism.

Here’s how you do it - warm up (5 minutes) then go at a high level for 30-60 seconds, then return to a lower level for 1-3 minutes, and repeat throughout your session. This is tough, and it takes time to build the intensity, but it is very effective. You can’t talk thru this one! (If you are on blood pressure or heart medication, you definitely have to speak to your doctor!).

When should I do cardio?

If you’re trying to lose weight (and most of us are), do cardio on an empty stomach – first a.m., 2-3 hours after eating or *after your weight training session*. The exception to this rule is if you’re a runner, then obviously you’re not doing it for fat-burning purposes, you’re doing it to improve your skill.

How much cardio should I do?

Minimum 15-20 minutes, 3-6 times a week, on your choice of equipment (remember, **elliptical** and **stairmaster** are best as they work more muscles (and the glutes!), so they are a better choice, followed by rowing machine, bike and treadmill). Don’t be afraid to push it!

Tip: Don’t eat for up to 1 hour after cardio and you’ll continue to burn fat. Then...throw in a nice protein shake or protein-rich meal....at least 25 grams of protein!

Have fun!