



Decatur Athletic Club's Guide to Exercise

DECATUR
ATHLETIC
CLUB



Decatur Athletic Club
1010 South Side Drive
Decatur, Illinois 62521

Phone (217)423-7020

Fax (217) 423-7562

www.decaturathleticclub.com

Welcome to the Decatur Athletic Club!
You have just taken the first big step in opening up a new way of life for yourself.

Yes, you may want to lose some weight, maybe just 5-10 lbs, maybe more. Yes, you want to exercise more, perhaps quantitatively and/or qualitatively.

We want to support you in those efforts, by helping you work towards those goals.

What we want for you even more is a total attitude makeover. Research supports our contention that the individuals who not only begin an exercise program, but stay with it, are the same individuals who make exercise a permanent, on-going part of their lives. They may begin to exercise in order to shape up, but they stay with it because, somewhere along the way, they realize that they just plain feel better when they exercise. Working out on a regular basis not only improves their basic health and appearance, but their outlook is better, their sleep is better, their stress level is better, their self-image is better. And as all of those areas in their lives are better, they find that, indeed, pretty much everything is better.

The truth is the benefits of regular exercise extend into every area of your life. People come to shape up, but they stay because they are born anew. Indeed, they are born anew every time they work out.

Here at the DAC, we want to help you be born anew. We would be lying if we told you it's going to be easy. It takes time, commitment and dedication to begin and stick with a new exercise program. It has been shown that, in general, it takes 6 to 12 months of regular, on-going exercise to truly establish the habit. The good thing is you've just committed to a 12 month membership. And along with your 12 month commitment comes our 12 month commitment to help you make exercise a permanent part of your life.

So where to begin?

Exercise as a Priority

One thing that faithful exercisers do is make exercise a priority in their lives. They don't leave it to chance or fail to plan for it. On most days, one of their thoughts is when, not if, they are going to work out. Again, they've made exercise a priority. Otherwise, it just won't happen.

Let's do a little exercise. Sit down and list the top, say, 5 priorities in most of your days.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5

If exercise is not one of them, that's where you need to begin. Really think about what the best time of day is for you to get to the club. It needn't be the same time every day, but for most people, the best way to ensure adherence is to establish one or two times each day that work for you. Then schedule it in. If you're a morning person, make a firm commitment to coming in early almost every morning. Or perhaps lunchtime or right after work, before you go home, is best for you. No matter! Just identify that preferred time, and simply don't let anything (within reason, of course) interfere.

We'll help you identify what exercise is best for you, whether it's weight lifting, spinning, yoga, swimming, aerobics, running, elliptical, circuit training, Pilates...the list goes on and on. Maybe it all works for you, so every day, you cross train by doing something different.

Ensure Consistency

There will be days when all you want to do is sleep in or go straight home after work, to chill out in front of the TV and relax. Meet with one of our trainers to get comfortable in the fitness center. Then hire a personal trainer; you'll keep your workouts productive, as well as create a built-in safeguard to get you into the gym on a regular basis. Or make plans to meet someone at the gym, or maybe sign up for a class; anything to get yourself to come in. We guarantee you'll walk out feeling less stressed, energized and viewing the world as a much happier place than when you came in.

You can make it all happen, and we at the DAC are here to help. Just know this may not happen the first week, maybe even not the first month. But if you can keep at it, we think you'll be hooked. Most of our long term members agree.

Clarify Your Goals

Take a moment and think about what your goals might be in joining the DAC. Weight loss? Better health? Stress reduction? To look and feel better?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Spend some time clarifying your goals, so we can help you figure out the best ways to make them happen. Perhaps a session or two with our certified Lifestyle and Wellness Coach can help you in completing each of these lists, as well as in coming up with ways to be successful by creating accountability.

Elements of a Well-rounded Exercise program

There are many different kinds of exercise here at the club. Throughout everything, however, there are several common elements to any well-rounded, lifelong exercise program

Cardiovascular Training

Cardiovascular training is any continuous activity involving the large muscles, such as your legs, aimed at improving the health of your heart and lungs. Thus, it is an invaluable tool in the fight against heart disease, high blood pressure, as well as weight gain, as it burns lots of calories. "Aerobic" refers to something that needs oxygen. Cardiovascular exercise is aerobic because, for the duration, oxygen is continuously delivered to your muscles. Examples are running, walking, aerobic classes, cycling, swimming, and using the elliptical machine.

To give your heart a proper workout, you need to do cardio with a certain amount of intensity, without overdoing it. One way to measure the amount of exertion while exercising is to monitor your heart rate, or how many times your heart beats per minute. Everyone has a resting heart rate (RHR), or how many times your heart beats at rest. Everyone also has a maximum heart rate (MHR), or the maximum amount of times your heart can beat per minute. Your target heart rate zone is a range of heart rates that is considered to be the best range to be in while exercising, in order to give your heart a good, yet safe, workout. That range is between 50% and 85% of your MHR. Any trainer can help you figure out your target heart rate zone. In general, you subtract your age from roughly 220, and then multiply by .5 to find the lower HR, and by .85 to find the higher HR.

Armed with this knowledge, you can use a heart rate monitor (available for checkout at the front desk) to keep your workout intensity safe yet effective. Less exact, but still very useful, is to use perceived exertion, or how hard you feel you are exercising. The more you work out, the more accurate this method becomes. For beginners, a useful guideline is to be able to carry on a conversation during exercise. This helps ensure you are keeping your heart rate at a safe level.

Where exactly you should aim between 50 % and 85% of your MHR is determined by several factors, including your overall health and fitness level, as well as by your fitness goals. A young experienced runner training for a marathon, for example, is going to keep his heart rate at very different levels than an older person who is new to exercise. Again, any of our trainers can assist you in figuring out the levels of exercise appropriate for you.

Resistance Training

Another aspect of complete, lifelong fitness is weight, or resistance, training. Many believe that doing cardio is the only way to burn fat and lose weight. The truth is, while cardio does burn calories during the activity, resistance training leads to calorie burning not just during the exercise, but also for up to 48 hrs afterward. This happens through what is termed excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC) or “after burn”. Resistance training helps you build muscle. It takes more calories to sustain muscle than to sustain fat. In this way, a well-muscled body burns more calories, even at rest.

Resistance training also improves insulin resistance (thus combating diabetes) as well as helping to shut down the fat-storing enzymes in your body. Not to mention that as we age, we naturally lose bone mass and muscle. Weight training can slow down these aging processes, by helping your body to build both bone and muscle.

The quickest way to change your shape and look your best is to combine your aerobic activity with some type of resistance training, whether you lift on your own, hire a trainer, join a circuit class, or one of the many other classes that incorporate some type of resistance training into their format. (E.g. RIP, Insanity, Body Attack, Boot Camp, and so on.) Don't worry about bulking up; bulk is more determined by diet and how you train. Body builders have to work extremely hard and carefully to put on the bulk they're after. Again, talk to a trainer or aerobics instructor to find out what might work best for you.

Stretching

The other element in any well-rounded exercise program is stretching. This can take many forms, from stretching on your own after every workout, to attending yoga or Pilate's classes. Indeed, pretty much all of our classes incorporate some kind of stretching, if only during the last 5-10 minutes. Stretching enables you to maintain flexibility (which, along with muscle and bone mass, tends to diminish as we age.) Again, our trainers and instructors can help you learn how to stretch in a way that is appropriate for you.

Core Training

Core training will aid in maintaining correct posture, your sense of balance, and body awareness, all of which tend to diminish with age. Most of our classes involve core training of some sort, and our trainers can help teach you exercises to do on your own, in the gym or even at home, with little or no equipment. Add massage by one of our licensed massage therapists to your cardiovascular and resistance training, stretching, and core training, and your life will be dramatically transformed for the better. Remember, this is now your club. Let us work for you!

Notes



1010 South Side Drive Decatur, Illinois 62521