Dear Alice,

What is the best fitness equipment to buy for my home to lose fat fast? I had a treadmill and I used it but it was so big. I have a stepper, but it is a fold up and doesn't really work very well because it is so small. I would like to lose ten lbs. before the holidays. I am 5'6" and 135 lbs. Size 6. I am very good about faithfully going to the gym until now, because of my work schedule. Is there any new equipment to help me?

Thanks
?Goldilocks looking for something "just right"

Answer

In your question, you bring up two issues ? how to fit exercise into a hectic schedule and how to achieve quick weight loss. Let's deal with the quick weight loss issue first.

First of all, despite what the infomercials say, there is no particular piece of equipment that will help you lost fat better than another. Losing fat is a result of expending more energy than you consume, not what type of equipment you use. Second, no matter what you read, hear, or imagine (again, forget what the infomercials say!), quick weight loss usually is not permanent, because our bodies just DON'T burn fat very fast. When you see a dramatic drop on the scale, it's usually from water loss.

Theoretically, to lose one pound of fat, a person must have an energy deficit of about 3500 calories, meaning one has to eat 3500 fewer calories than one needs, burn 3500 more calories than one eats, or find a combination somewhere in-between. To lose ten pounds, a person has to generate a deficit of 35,000 calories (yes, that's thirty-five THOUSAND). Since most women of about your weight need approximately 1800 to 2200 calories a day to meet their total energy needs, this could take some time to accomplish. Women who are trying to lose weight still need to consume at least 1200 calories a day (any less can have unhealthy effects on your body).

Instead of focusing on quick weight loss, it is a good idea to focus on ways to keep healthy and active in order to reach your long-term fitness and weight management goals. You may also want to look at why you want to lose ten pounds. Consider asking questions like, do I have the energy to do what I need and want to do? Is my weight keeping me from other participating in other activities? Based on the information in your question, you appear to
already be at a healthy weight for a person your height and gender.

Now, onto your scheduling issue. If getting to the gym proves difficult, consider other ways to keep fit. Without investing large amounts of money on fitness equipment that ends up becoming a high-tech clothes hanger, try:

- Investing in a jump rope? put on some lively music and skip to the beat. With a jump rope you can alternate between jump rope sets with strength builders, such as sit-ups, push-ups, and other free weight exercises.
- Incorporating more activity, that really won't take up any extra time, into your regular routine; for example, climb the stairs instead of using an elevator or escalator at every opportunity.
- Going for an early morning walk, jog, or run first thing if you typically get too bogged down later in the day.
- Checking out websites or mobile apps that feature workout videos on-demand.

Remember that exercise doesn't have to be an "all or nothing" endeavor. Do your best during the busy times, and try not to let the exercising itself become a source of stress.

Sticking to a balanced eating plan will also help you to manage your weight. Starving oneself or restricting your calorie intake by too much can lead to overeating later on. Instead, concentrate on nutrient dense foods rather than calorie dense ones; they will be more satisfying in the long run. And during busy times, having a light snack before a party or event can help to keep hunger in check and may help prevent you from overindulging later.

Here's to enjoying your food and your workouts!

Alice!

Related questions


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