

Strength Training Tips for Teens

Strength training is an important part of many sports and fitness programs. It builds muscle strength, tones the body and helps develop strong bones. It also increases cardiovascular fitness and weight loss. The end result is improved overall physical and mental health.

People who strength-train usually increase their energy. Most discover an ability to be more physically active. The increased muscle mass also helps the body burn more calories throughout the day.

Teens typically use strength training to:

- Get stronger,
- Improve performance in a particular sport,
- Be healthier,
- Rehabilitate an injury, and
- Join peers and friends in the activity.

Strength training is not power lifting or body building. Lifting and body building use heavy weights to build large muscles.

With strength training, teens use free weights, weight machines and resistance bands. These make muscles work harder than usual.

Get expert advice. Before beginning a strength-training program, your teen should consult a doctor. After a sports' physical, the doctor can advise a safe lifting and exercise routine. This helps avoid injury to your teen's growing bones, tendons, muscles and joints. Doctors can also answer questions and discuss the dangers of performance-enhancing substances.

Muscle strains are a teen's most common injury. Straining can affect your teen's hands, low back and the upper trunk. Certified trainers can provide tips to help avoid injury. Many schools, gyms, and fitness centers have fitness experts on staff to design a program to obtain desired results.

As with all other exercise programs, teens should start their workout slowly. As their body strengthens and gets in shape, they can increase weight, do more repetitions and add exercises.

In addition to strength training, your teen also needs aerobic exercise. Biking, swimming, walking and running work the heart and lungs. With the addition of a healthy diet, your teen will enjoy the benefits of overall health and wellbeing.



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