



# The Truth Behind the Most Common Exercise Myths

*When you learn to separate fact from fiction, you'll be able to bust through any barrier getting in the way of your fitness and body transformation goals!*



# True or False?

*Do you really burn more body fat if you exercise in the morning?*

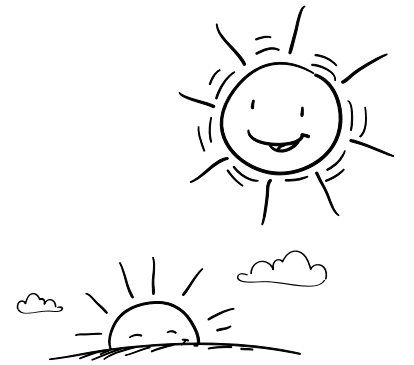
*Will lifting weights give you bulky muscles?*

*Does ten minutes of exercise actually count for anything?*

*When it comes to physical activity, myths and half-truths are rampant. We are especially vulnerable to falling for myths when we search for shortcuts or other too-good-to-be-true "secrets" to maximizing our results. However, some of the more pervasive fitness misconceptions may simply be long-held beliefs about the best ways to work out that were accepted truths at one time but were subsequently disproven by new research.*

*Let's go over some of the most common exercise myths and discover the **real truths** behind them.*

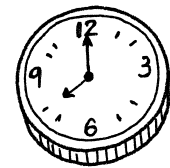
## True or False It's better to exercise in the morning.



**Answer:** *That depends*

**S**ome experts claim that people stick with their programs better if they exercise in the morning. This makes great sense if you think about it. If you get your workout out of the way first thing in the a.m., there's zero chance for life's curveballs to interfere with your plans,

which can happen with afternoon or evening workouts. But the best time to exercise is always the time you'll actually do it! If your best window of opportunity is directly after work, at 5:30 PM, then that's the time to break a sweat!



8 AM

*The best time to exercise is always the time you'll actually do it!*



5:30 PM



# True or False

You should warm up before exercising.

Answer: **True**

**D**oing a gentle warm-up—such as walking at a leisurely pace, marching in place, or doing calisthenics—before your workout provides numerous benefits. For one thing, it increases your core body temperature, which can improve the delivery of oxygen to your muscles and boost your metabolic rate. Warming up can also enhance your range of motion, prevent injuries (by making your muscles more flexible), and help your muscles contract faster (and work harder!) when you go full throttle. If you want to stretch after a gentle five-to-ten-minute warm up, that's fine—**but don't stretch before you get moving because stretching your muscles when they're cold can lead to injury.** There's even some evidence that stretching beforehand could make aerobic exercise more difficult by impairing muscle strength, power, and speed.

*Do a gentle warm-up before your workout*



# True or False

Small bouts of exercise don't count; you need to go for at least 30 minutes at a time.

Answer: **False**

**A**s long as you put in 10 consecutive minutes, it counts! However, you'll notice that our Real Moves exercise videos are about 30 minutes, and most fitness classes are at least that long. Exercising for 30 minutes allows you to take care of your aerobic exercise needs in one bout—nice and efficient! But, if exercising in multiple short bouts per day makes it easier and more likely that you'll stick to an exercise program, go for it! Just make sure to accumulate enough short bouts to add up to your daily goal. For example, if you'd planned on getting 30 minutes of exercise on Tuesday, you could take a brisk

10-minute walk at lunch time, do 10 minutes (after the warm-up) of a Real Moves video before dinner, and walk your dog at a good clip for 10 minutes at the end of the evening.

**Although the bouts may be short, they should still be aerobic—meaning challenging enough so your heart beats harder and you're somewhat out of breath.** If you follow that one rule of thumb, you should absolutely feel free to break up your workout into 10- or 15-minute chunks throughout the day!

*You can break up your workout into 10-15 min chunks throughout the day*



# True or False

## Exercise is bad for your knees.

Answer: **Mostly False**

**R**esearch has found that vigorous, low-impact forms of exercise—such as walking, cycling, or swimming—are good for the knees, even if you already have osteoarthritis. In fact, land-based therapeutic exercises (such as muscle strengthening, walking or tai chi) have been found to significantly reduce pain and improve physical function among those

with osteoarthritis of the knee. However, high-impact activities that involve jumping, running, or other jarring moves can be stressful on the knees, especially if you already have knee pain. Listen to your body and find a level of impact that doesn't hurt, but still raises heart rate and puts you a little out of breath.

Low-impact forms of exercise are good for your knees



# True or False

## Sit-ups, crunches, and other ab workouts can melt fat around your waistline.

Answer: **False**

**S**orry to disappoint, but you can't "spot-reduce" where you want to. Your body gets to decide where to remove the extra fat, no matter what type of exercise you do. However, doing planks, the Real Abs (1 and 2) workouts, or strengthening your abdominal muscles in other ways *will* tone

your midsection, which can make you *look* leaner and firmer. The real formula for flatter, firmer abs? Your cardio and strength training workouts, when combined with reducing or moderating your calorie intake, will trim your total body fat—including belly fat!—to reveal those new muscles.

The real formula for flatter, firmer abs: Your cardio and strength training workouts



# True or False

Weight training won't burn as many calories as cardio workouts do.

Answer: **Both!**

**W**hile weight training won't burn as many calories *during* the actual workout as a hardcore aerobics session will, regular strength training will help you add lean muscle mass, which helps you *burn more calories 24/7*. Plus, weight training (also known as "resistance training") will help you offset the muscle loss that can occur with straight dieting and

aging (generally speaking, muscle mass declines with age, starting in your forties and gaining speed in your fifties). In fact, strength training may be a more effective calorie-burner over the long term because having more lean muscle will increase your body's metabolic rate even when you're not working out.

Strength training helps you burn more calories 24/7



# True or False

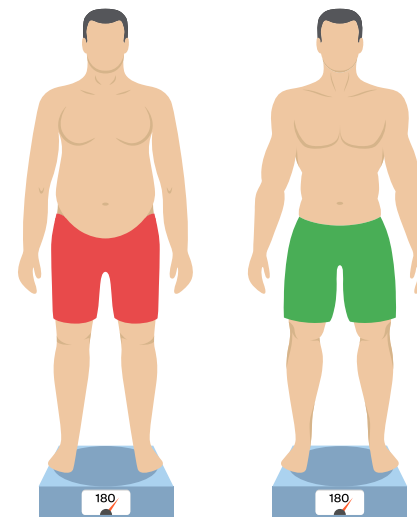
Lifting weights will lead to bulky muscles.

Answer: **False**

**W**hile men, in particular, *can* make their muscles big and bulky by lifting weights, not all do—and it's way more difficult for women to do because they don't have the specific genes or the hormones to add muscle bulk. (Men have up to 70 times more testosterone, a known muscle builder, than women.) Muscles themselves aren't bulky—if **you looked at**

**one pound of muscle compared to one pound of fat, you would see that the mass of muscle looks much smaller than the mass of fat.** The truth is, muscle takes up way less space in your body! So, pick up a weight, some resistance bands, or try any of the Real Moves Strength workouts and you'll be looking *leaner*—not bulkier—in no time.

The truth is, muscle takes up way less space in your body!



# True or False

## Exercising makes you hungrier.

Answer: **It depends**

**R**esearch has found that bouts of moderately vigorous exercise can actually suppress hunger for a while, thanks to changes in appetite-regulating hormones. And, other forms of mind-body exercise, such as yoga, may actually help you tolerate mild hunger without feeling the need to satisfy it immediately. This awareness can help you distinguish between true hunger and passing urges to eat, which can lead to a more mindful

approach to eating in general. However, it also helps to be aware that some forms of high-intensity exercise can increase appetite if they're done for long enough. If we're not conscious of this phenomenon, when post-workout hunger kicks in, we may eat too much (instead of having a small snack and lots of water) and end up overcompensating for the calories we burned through physical activity.

*Some forms of high-intensity exercise can increase appetite. Watch your post-workout snacks!*



# True or False

## You can trust the calorie counts on cardio exercise machines.

Answer: **False**

**E**ach manufacturer uses its own algorithm to calculate calorie expenditure and your personal info may or may not be in sync with that algorithm. Some exercise machines are more reliable than others in this respect. Treadmills tend to be more accurate than elliptical

machines, which tend to err on the high side (up to 30 percent off!). You're much better off using your RealAppeal.com exercise tracker to estimate calorie burn.



# True or False

## If exercise isn't uncomfortable, it's probably not working.

Answer: **False**

**T**his stems from the age-old “no pain, no gain” myth, which is misleading (at best) and dangerous (at worst). The reality is you can burn lots of calories and get in shape doing physical activities you like and that feel great, whether it's dancing, a Real Moves workout, biking—heck, even snowshoeing! Plus, the more you enjoy it, the more often you're likely to do it—and for longer!



# True or False

You need to sweat buckets to burn lots of calories.

Answer: **False**

**S**weat is your body's way of cooling off—it's a response to how hot your body is, not a gauge of how many calories you're burning or how hard you're working. So while you might emerge from a 90-minute hot yoga session drenched in sweat, you may have burned only 300 calories. On the other hand, you might burn up to 500 calories in a 45-minute spinning class or 370 using the elliptical machine for 45 minutes—regardless of how much you sweat. So don't be fooled by how wet your top is!

*Sweat is not a gauge of how many calories you're burning*



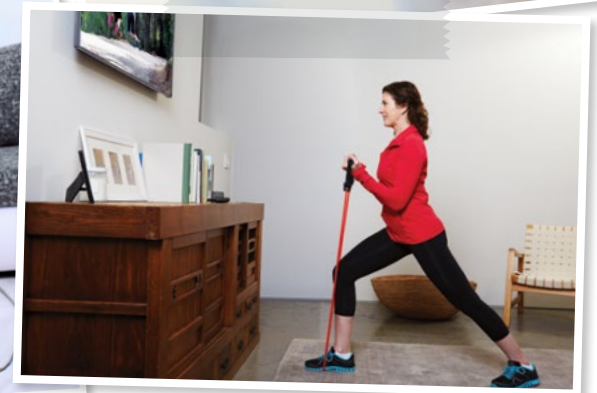
# True or False

Working out at the gym is better than working out at home.

Answer: **False**

**N**either approach is inherently better than the other. After all, there are plenty of people who do more talking and socializing than actual exercise at the gym, and others who really get into their own personal cardio-cranking, strength-building calorie blast at home. What matters in either location is your intensity level and dedication to the workout at hand. Those will always be the variables that have the greatest influence on your calorie-burning, fitness-boosting potential.

*What matters is your intensity level and dedication to the workout at hand*



*I won't let  
exercise myths  
stand in my way*



## Commitment Contract

**To prevent exercise myths from standing in the way of my weight-loss efforts, I will take the following steps:**

- I will decide what time(s) of day work best for me to exercise and stick to a workout schedule that matches those times.
- I will incorporate strength training (if I haven't done so already) because it's good for my body and my metabolism—and will help me look lean and fit (and not bulky!).
- I will listen to my body to gauge how hard I'm working, rather than get distracted by my sweat production or the false calorie counts on exercise machines.
- Meanwhile, I'll continue my other healthy habits to the best of my ability.

**My signature:** \_\_\_\_\_