

What Type of Exercise is Right for You?

“Exercise regularly” is good advice, but what does it really mean? There are so many different types of exercise that it can get confusing. There are cardio workouts, resistance training, weight-bearing exercise, weight-lifting exercise, interval training, cross training, and many more styles.

The simplicity is that there are two basic types of exercise, aerobic and anaerobic. Each type does different things metabolically and each type has its benefits, but they are most effective when done in the right combination.

Aerobic means “with oxygen”. Aerobic exercises use oxygen to stimulate certain biochemical pathways in the body to burn fuels such as sugar, fat, and protein in the presence of oxygen to create energy. Aerobic exercises such as walking, swimming, and cycling increase your heart rate and your respiration over a sustained period of time. They get the muscles working quickly which stimulates the lungs to get more oxygen into the blood and stimulates the heart to pump more blood to get the needed oxygen to those muscles. Over time, regular aerobic exercise will strengthen the lungs and the heart.

Anaerobic means “without oxygen”. Anaerobic exercises such as pushups, squats, and weightlifting use a different metabolic pathway. They also create energy, but they do that without oxygen and in a lesser amount than aerobic exercises. Anaerobic exercise will help to strengthen bones, build muscle, and increase stamina.

Either type of exercise stimulates the cells to burn more fuel. The first fuel that’s used is sugar because sugar is the rapid energy source. Once the sugar is burned off, then fat and protein will be the fuels used, but not necessarily in that order.

Aerobic exercises are what we call “burning exercise”. Anaerobic exercises are “building exercises”. Aerobic exercises burn sugar first, then protein, then fat. An unbalanced exercise regimen with too heavy a focus on aerobic exercise can also burn out your adrenals and your vitamins. People who want to lose excess fat often fail with only aerobic exercise because they burn the sugar first then their protein. They’re not able to lose fat until they build up their muscle mass with anaerobic exercise.

It’s important to have an exercise plan that combines aerobic and anaerobic exercises in the correct proportions and on the right gradient for you. Equally importantly, the exercise plan has to be one that you can do and will look forward to doing because you actually enjoy it.

Personal trainers can be a valuable resource whether you prefer to go to a gym or to exercise at home (many personal trainers offer coaching online for at-home exercise programs). We can work with your personal trainer to give him or her guidance as to what types of exercises will work best for you based on test results. If you don’t already have a personal trainer, we can refer you to one. A personal trainer can help you with an exercise program that is right for you, one that is tailored to your metabolism, your body composition, your physical limitations, your health conditions, and your willingness to do it.

Exercise is an important part of a health plan, but you need to have the exercises that are right for you, based on your test results and what you will enjoy doing.

If you would like to discuss developing an exercise plan to improve your health, call us at (780) 485-9468 or [book an appointment online](#).