



# Interval Training: Increase Your Fitness One Minute At A Time

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Want to increase your endurance, loss weight, and increase the capacity of your lungs and heart? You can do this all easily with a simple training trick. It's called interval training. It may sound daunting but it really isn't. Although used for years by athletes to build fitness and aerobic capacity, it is simple and easy enough for anyone to do, no matter what the fitness level.

Interval training is alternating short bursts of high intensity exercise with slower recovery type exercise. This is alternated throughout a single workout. An example would be walking at a normal brisk pace. Throughout your walk if you are fit enough you may alternate a couple of minutes of jogging, followed by your normal walking pace for a few minutes. Anyone can do interval training however, even if you are not that fit. Whatever exercise you are doing, increase the pace of the exercise until it feels hard and keep that pace for 1 minute or so and then go back to your normal pace.

## **What will interval training do for you?**

1. Burn more calories thus leading to weight loss. The harder you exercise the more calories you burn even if you only increase the intensity for a minute or two at a time.
2. You will improve your aerobic capacity. Interval training will increase the ability of your heart and lungs. As your fitness improves you will be able to continue getting fitter each day because you will be able to exercise longer or harder.

3. You will keep boredom at bay. Mixing intervals into your workout routine can keep things interesting and mix up the old boredom of a slow steady pace minute after minute.
4. You don't need anything special to use this trick. You can use it on your morning walk if you like.
5. The muscles will get stronger. Intense exercise causes waste products to build up in your muscles causing fatigue and soreness. These waste products can make harder exercise seem almost impossible. If you alternate intense exercise with periods of easier intervals you won't get so much waste product build up but you will get more intense exercise.

If you are an athlete looking for improved performance or the average person longing for increased fitness, interval training can take you to new levels. There may be some differences in the method of interval training you choose based on your fitness level and goals but the basic principle is the same. If you have a chronic health condition or haven't been regularly exercising you will want to consult a doctor before trying interval training. Make sure that you are fit enough to increase the intensity of your exercise and be gentle and gradual when trying something new.

*Black Hills Health and Education Center is a medical wellness retreat offering wellness programs and lifestyle change in a beautiful setting of the Black Hills in South Dakota. BHHEC is unique in that it offers a Christian based lifestyle program that includes everything from lodging and meals, physicals and comprehensive blood work, to daily treatments, exercise sessions with a personal trainer in the gym, classes presented by physicians, the Dietician, the Fitness Director, and other staff, cooking classes, sightseeing tours (Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse, Custer State Park Wild Animal Game preserve) and aquatics classes at the lovely swim center in Rapid City. Also included are counselling and stress-relief classes.*