



Common Exercise Mistakes That Even YOU Could Make



By: Cari Draft
Certified Fitness Trainer

I try to keep my fitness clients and Facebook fans up-to-date with the most recent fitness information available, but even with a wealth of knowledge at their fingertips, there are still going to be a few slip-ups. You may even occasionally stray from what you know is "right" just because an infomercial caught your attention. But you don't need to let simple mistakes come between you and your ideal body. Here are some common fitness faux pas and their simple solutions.

"I wear the same shoes for all of my workouts."

-- Sarah, East Grand Rapids

Running shoes aren't meant for side-to-side movement. Wearing them for tennis, kickboxing, or a step class is going to increase your risk of injury. It's wise to invest in a separate pair of cross-trainers for your non-running related workouts. If you're a walker, consider buying shoes specifically for walking. They'll have a lower heel than a running shoe and your shins will feel less stressed.

"I hold my breath when I lift weights."

-- Jill, Grandville

I always advise my fitness clients to exhale during the exertion phase of any exercise. If you hold your breath, your blood pressure will raise and you could feel light-headed. Breathe through lightly pursed lips to control the amount of air released.

"I usually leave before the meditation part of my yoga class."

-- Mary, Grand Rapids

After an hour of stretching and strengthening, you may feel like you've gotten everything you can out of your yoga class. But you shouldn't underestimate the power of the mind-body connection. Leaving before the final relaxation exercise is like consuming a tasty meal and not staying to enjoy dessert. Take those final few moments to reap the mental and physical benefits of the resting poses after all the hard work you've done.

"When I'm alone I don't push myself during cardio exercise."

-- Elizabeth, Rockford

It's much easier to stay engaged and immerse yourself in the energy of a group or class. In order to keep the feeling of being challenged when you're by yourself, try planning a route and record your best time. Then aim to beat it each time you bike or run that route. Interval training is another great way to boost your

intensity. Push hard for a minute, give yourself time to recover, and then push hard again.

"I'm afraid to try new things at the gym."

-- Chris, Spring Lake



Consistency is a true virtue when it comes to working out, but doing the same cardio classes, strength training workouts, or three-mile jogging route week after week can lead to a fitness plateau. The best way to experience a new activity is to do it with a buddy. Having someone with you can be a powerful motivator to help you get out there and push your limits. Try something new

today!

About Cari Draft

Cari Draft is a certified personal trainer and owner/founder of EcoTrek Fitness, unique outdoor group workouts all over West Michigan. She also makes one-on-one "housecalls" in the local area and serves on many wellness boards and committees. Find Cari on Facebook at facebook.com/fitgirlcari.FANS or email her at cari@oneononefitgirl.com.



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