

Intensity Counts...Are high intensity workouts better for burning FAT?

The answer is Yes and No. It is true that if you exercise at a higher rate of intensity, you burn a little less fat per calorie, and going slower you can burn a little more fat per calorie. **BUT, what is more important is overall amount of total calories burned.**

Cranking up the pace means you burn more calories because the harder the workout, the more oxygen you use, and this translates to burning more calories. So when it comes to weight loss, it will benefit you to burn more calories overall at a higher intensity workout.

Intensity is relative to your fitness level and should be progressed gradually. To increase the intensity you want to work a little bit harder than you previous did. Increase your intensity, only if you've mastered the previous skill and are using good form and technique.

If you engage in resistance / strength training exercises using weights or weight bearing exercises, you may gain muscle and lose body fat. With greater muscle mass, your metabolic rate will increase and you will burn more calories all day and night. How cool is that to burn more calories while you are sleeping! Keep in mind... since one pound of muscle takes up less space on the body than one pound of fat; you can lose inches and gain muscle without actually losing pounds on the scale. Muscles are fat burning machines, so you want them! You can make the intensity of a strength training workout harder not necessarily by adding weight, but instead changing the tempo or add a balance component to the exercise.

As for adding intensity to your cardio workouts, try adding interval training. Warm-up at a low intensity, and alternate one minute of high intensity with a one minute low intensity. As you progress, you can then start to either increase the intensity or duration of the high intensity part and decrease the duration of the low intensity part.

TAKE HOME- Consult with a fitness professional if you are not sure how to increase the INTENSITY of your workouts AND as importantly...listen to your body. It usually tells you if you can work a little harder or if you need to pull back the reins.