

The **Healthy Hash**

aims to simplify and make practical points from a very busy and confusing hash of world health information.

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Fitness Training Types – Aerobic based

Aerobic training (aka cardio) will improve your ability to respond in activities that involve large muscle groups requiring continuous rhythmical contractions such as running or swimming. The biggest improvements experienced will be specific to the activity practiced although some general aerobic improvement will carry over to like activities. It's important to note that the same health benefits are achieved from an increase in any style of aerobic fitness training. Another worthy mention here is that exercise involving predominantly the lower body will generate a higher overall aerobic capacity, for example running compared to table tennis.

Increases in aerobic capacity can occur really quickly, particularly if the trainee has been sedentary. However the thing to watch here is doing too much too early before the body's structures ie bones, joints, muscles, ligaments & physiology have been properly prepared through a planned & progressive build up of appropriate exercise.

Interval style training involves multiple periods of 'work' broken up by 'recovery' periods. The periods can vary infinitely depending on the result required of course & are most commonly designed to reflect similar periods within a sport. A practical example might be using small intervals of jogging initially on a walk to eventually transition from a walker to a jogger. You might walk (recover) for 2 minutes & jog for 30 seconds repeatedly with the idea to gradually increase the jog periods & decrease the walking periods over subsequent training sessions. Thereby becoming a jogger safely by building your aerobic capacity & body structures at the same time according to your current level of readiness. The advantage of Interval style training over 'Continuous' is that you can achieve a much higher level of intensity of 'work' for shorter periods that has many benefits as described in my previous article.

If you're an athlete you can set your intensity of effort just below your best time for a certain distance or period. Your recovery can be complete rest or 'active rest' (obviously low intensity). When training the aerobic system use a work:rest ratio of 1:1 or 1:1.5. This will maximize adaptations of your aerobic system. Training ratios less than 1:1 are also used but typically for more anaerobic based regimes such as power based sports like boxing, wrestling, squash etc.

Continuous style training is typically performed at 60-80% intensity (6-8 PRE). This style is more popular for endurance athletes & is usually used together with interval based training. This gives you the ability to train for as long as or longer than your actual goal event which enables your body & mind to adapt & be completely ready for a longer duration of exercise with less injury.

Needless to say both styles of training are valuable however the right mixture, flavour (meaning discipline eg cycling, boxing, walking, running, swimming, dancing etc.) & modifications (eg. Low impact) may need to be ascertained by your coach, sports trainer or fitness leader before embarking on your new fitness training regime. Good luck!

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In the next article – **Fitness Training Types - Strength**