

Factors Affecting Your Workout Calorie Burn

By: Robert Horning, B.Sc. (Kin.), B.Sc. (Pharm.)

If you're like most people out there currently working hard to shed those stubborn pounds, you realize that your results depend on a number of factors. You have to take into account the diet that you're using, the type of exercise that you're doing, as well as the amount of lean muscle mass you currently have. All of these factors are going to be working together to help determine your net calorie balance, which is the comparison of the total number of calories that you've burned off over the course of the day with the total number of calories that you've consumed over the course of the day. Anyone who's ever been successful with fat loss knows that in order to see results, you need to get that calorie balance tilting in your favor. By understanding all the factors that can improve your overall calorie burn during the workout session, you can take a large step forward in the right direction. Let's take a look at the factors that you should know about that either do or do not influence the calorie burn of the workout you are going to perform.

Factors That Impact Calorie Burn

The Exercises Chosen

One of the factors that will largely influence how many calories you burn during any given training session is the specific exercises that you choose to do. If you want to maximize how many calories you burn during each and every workout, there's no question that you must be working as many muscle fibers as possible. This is a big reason why performing free weight exercises over weight machine exercises is highly advantageous and also why exercise balls and bosu balls are becoming more and more common in many people's training routines.

Your Rest Period Protocol

Another factor that will influence the number of calories that you burn in a given training session is how long of a rest period you're taking between the exercises that you do. There is always going to be a trade-off between the amount of rest you take and the weight you're able to lift. The shorter your rest periods, the less weight you're likely going to be able to lift. So what you want to do is find the happy medium where you're using a rest period that is on the shorter side of things but still lifting a weight that is heavy and fatigues you. Aim to keep the weight level at a range where you're fatigued within 8-10 reps, then utilize rest periods of 45-60 seconds during the workout. You'll be on your way to maximizing your calorie burn from that workout without really compromising strength gains.

Your Sleep Status

The last factor that will impact how many calories you burn from your workout program is your sleep status. This has more of an indirect effect however and is due to the fact that the more you're sleeping and the better quality of sleep you do get the more energy you're going to have to be able to put forth towards your workout sessions. This then means you'll work harder, be able to push heavier weights, lower the amount of rest you take since you'll be better recovered, and see a greater calorie burn because of it.

Factors That Do Not Impact Calorie Burn

While all of the above factors will influence the number of calories you burn during your workout session, it's also important for us to take a quick look at a few that will not influence your calorie burn but ones that some people often think do.

Eating Prior To the Activity

One factor that won't influence your calorie burn is whether or not you eat before you exercise. In fact, if anything skipping your meal before the workout session would serve to decrease the amount of calories burned during the session because chances are you won't be able to exercise as intensely. Many people think that not eating before a workout will cause them to lose fat faster. This isn't necessarily the case. While it may get them to turn to metabolizing body fat faster, it's still going to be their total calorie balance at the end of the day that determines the net calorie intake.

The Time of the Day You Perform the Activity

Another factor that some people mistakenly believe may have a large influence on the number of calories they burn during a given workout session is the time of the day they are doing their workout at. This isn't the case. What will impact calorie burn is how hard you're working so the more important thing here is to ensure that you're working out when you feel at your best.

Conclusion

So be sure that you keep all of these things in mind. Getting the best overall calorie burn from your workouts is important if your goal is to get lean quickly because it will help boost the net calorie balance in your favor.