



I am devoting this article to women because a common issue that comes up consistently with them is their frustration with not getting the results they desire. The truth is, no matter what you do, if it doesn't incorporate progressive resistance training, you are wasting your time. Progressive resistance training is a method in which overload to the muscle is an absolute requirement in order to see progress. The body can quickly adapt to weight, intensity, repetitions and rest periods and needs to constantly be challenged in order to prevent a plateau if the body to transform. Essentially, it is the backbone of strength training, which is vital to ensuring success in achieving those lean, toned arms, hips and thighs that women are usually looking for.

When I assess people, I review their fitness history to educate myself on what has been done and what can be improved. The first question I ask is: "When was the last time you worked out twice a week for at least three months?" If the answer is "never," then I know that's the number one reason why results were never achieved. You absolutely must train a minimum of twice a week with progressive resistance training for at least three months to get real long-term results. If the answer is that the person has been training for the previous three months or more but is still not seeing results, I investigate their actual work out. A very common finding is that light weights are used within the workout. Did you know that weights should almost NEVER be light, but rather specific to the goal?

For example, if you have been using 8 lb. dumbbells for three months, most likely the last 10 weeks have been a complete waste of time. No wonder so many people give up on working out! Your body adjusts quickly to weights, only taking a week or two to adapt; therefore, the amount of weight needs to regularly progress in order to stimulate the muscle. Additionally, if during your weight training you stop lifting before you reach your maximum repetition, you have wasted time and energy. I've seen and heard too many women cap their repetitions at a specific

number because they simply thought they had done enough. If you lifted a weight 10 times and stopped, but could have really lifted it 10 more (a total of 20 repetitions), you aren't going to have any progress. If you were truly working to your maximum potential, that 9th and 10th repetition should have been very hard, maybe impossible, to do.

Please do not read this article then go to your gym and lift weights that are too heavy for you. If your body is not ready and your form is not perfect, you will do more damage than good. If you can't lift the weight without proper form, it's too heavy! There's a delicate balance between progressive loading of weight and proper form.

Lastly, I have said it before and will say it again: women, you will not get bulky from lifting heavier weights! You don't produce enough testosterone, and you need to eat massive amounts of calories to support this feared bulky muscle development (which is quite the task – ask any female body builder how difficult and time consuming it is to become bulky).

The benefits of strength training for women are endless. Here are just a few:

- Weight management/fat burning
- Prevents osteoporosis
- Improves posture
- Prevents injuries
- Boosts self confidence
- Improves balance
- Slows aging process (possibly reverses aging process)
- Helps prevent high blood pressure and cholesterol
- Natural mood lifter (equivalent to anti-depressant medicine)

Take a moment and re-evaluate your training to see if progressive resistance is applied in your exercise routine. You're in charge of your transformation.

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