

## HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training)

HIIT is a training technique utilizing intervals of intense activity, coupled with intervals of less-intense activity or complete rest. You give all-out, one hundred percent effort through quick, intense bursts of exercise, followed by short, sometimes active, recovery periods. This type of training efficient in that it gets and keeps your heart rate up and burns more fat in less time. The key is to ensure that the high-intensity intervals are truly performed at your highest intensity. This increases the body's need for oxygen during the effort and creates an oxygen shortage, causing your body to ask for more oxygen during recovery (EPOC, or excess post-exercise oxygen consumption). This afterburn effect is the reason why intense exercise will help burn more fat and calories than regular aerobic and steady-state workouts.

### The Benefits of HIIT

Not totally convinced? Here are a few other benefits of HIIT.

1. **Increases Your Metabolism-** Your metabolism gets a boost for up to 48 hours after a complete HIIT routine which means you'll still be burning fat even after you've finished.
2. **Production of BDNF-** Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor – This is how you greatly reduce your chance of dementia and/or Alzheimer's Disease. BDNF is both neurogenic (produces more brain cells) and synaptogenic (increases the synapses between brain cells).
3. **Quick and Convenient-** Long gone are the days of not having enough time for exercise. HIIT workouts can be done anywhere: at home, in a hotel room, in a park, at the beach, etc. And most are 30 minutes or less! Who can't spare that?
4. **No Equipment Necessary-** HIIT workouts generally use only your body weight (although you can use exercise machines), since the focus is on getting your heart rate up and keeping it there. These workouts result in optimal muscle building and muscle retention coupled with fat loss and increased calorie burn.

### Sample 20-minute HIIT Workout:

2-Minute Warm-Up

8 Cycles of HIIT: Each one 30-seconds of high intensity activity followed by 90-seconds of recovery  
(total of 16 minutes)

2-Minute Cool-Down

You can do a HIIT workout with almost any exercise: a recumbent bike, treadmill, bicycle, running outside, elliptical machine, sprinting, or other calisthenics - *any exercise that will raise your heart rate*. That's because it's more about intensity than the specific movements. But to help you narrow down what to do, choose a mix of moves that force the glutes, quads and hamstrings (the body's biggest muscles) to work explosively.

How do you know if you're HIIT-ing it hard enough? Go at 80 to 95 percent of your maximum heart rate during the work intervals, and 60 to 65 percent during your rest periods. (To find your max heart rate, just subtract your age from 220. Then take the percentages from there.) If you don't have a heart rate monitor, push hard enough through the work intervals that you're sucking wind. You shouldn't be able to hold a conversation.

You can alternate between a lower body and upper body move, or a lower body and total body exercise. The alternation forces your heart to pump blood out to the muscles in a much higher volume, which, naturally, means your heart rate is significantly elevated.

**\*\* HIIT is done 2-3 times per week but no more than 3 times!**