

Brand New Study:

Strength Training to Failure Improves Cardiovascular Function

Authors of a study published recently in the Journal of Exercise Physiology have presented what is perhaps the most interesting and unquestionably one of the most important findings in exercise science in decades: **Strength training to the point of momentary muscle failure improves cardiovascular function.** The authors suggest that a false dichotomy exists between the cardiovascular benefits of strength training and "aerobic" exercise (the dichotomy implies that strength training is good for muscle and bone while aerobic exercise is good for our heart). Their 25 page review offers compelling scientific evidence that strength training exercise is just as "aerobic" as traditional aerobic exercise and brings about the same benefits.

Noteworthy conclusions from this research are as follows:

"It is recommended for athletes and non-athletes, whether traditional or circuit style, that resistance training should be performed to failure to improve cardiovascular fitness."

"Studies in which resistance training has been performed to failure with athletic populations have reported significant improvement in economy compared to the control groups that continued to perform the usual aerobic training program."

"In fact, this review states that resistance training to failure can produce cardiovascular fitness effects while simultaneously producing improvements in strength, power, and other health and fitness variables."

The take home message from this study is not to avoid traditional cardiovascular or aerobic exercise but instead, to be mindful that when we are performing strength training exercise, we are in fact, simultaneously performing "cardio" and will receive cardiovascular benefit.