



Fitness Quiz: Test Your Exercise Knowledge

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There sure is a heck of a lot of exercise information available in the mass media. While some of it is helpful and useful, a lot of it is misleading. This month, I thought it'd be worthwhile to share some of the exercise principles I've learned over my career in personal training. Let's see how you do! (answers appear at the end of the quiz)

1. It is important to change up your workout routine now and again. This systematic change to your regimen is known as:
a) Structuring b) Rotations c) Periodization d) Leveling
2. The process by which we lose muscle mass as we age is known as:
a) Sarcopenia b) Hypertrophy c) Atrophy d) Aging
3. The most common source of low back pain is a problem with the:
a) Spine b) Muscles c) Ligaments d) Nerves
4. Which of the following has been proven to yield the greatest benefits in improving one's bone density?
a) Swimming b) Cycling c) Elliptical Machine d) Strength Training
5. How many minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week does the Center for Disease (CDC) recommend?
a) 120 minutes b) 150 minutes c) 500 minutes d) none of the above

Answers

1. Answer C.

Your body adapts to doing the same activities over time (in the fitness world, we call this reaching a 'plateau'). For example, if you do the exact same weights on the exact same machines, your rate of improvement will ultimately slow, and in some cases, stop. Continuing down this path could ultimately lead to losses in strength. A general rule of thumb is shake things up every 1-2 weeks, assuming you are exercising regularly a few days/week.

2. Answer A.

Not to be confused with atrophy, sarcopenia is specific to age-related muscle loss. Atrophy is a general term related to muscle loss. It is common when an area of the body is injured or more specifically, when an area of the body is immobilized due to inactivity.

3. Answer B.

Outside of the common cold, back pain remains the chief reason individuals visit their primary care physician (PCP). While nerves, bones, and ligaments can be problematic for some suffering from low back, it is actually muscular issues that present with the most common problems. Often times, general atrophy and/or weakness can lead to pain, or, more specifically, arthritis. General strengthening and stretching exercises can help myriad issues related to back health.

4. Answer D.

While swimming, cycling, and using the elliptical machines are all good forms of exercise, they aren't 'weight-bearing' and thus, don't aid with improving bone mineral density (BMD) quality. Strength training with machines, free weights, or even your own body weight can help in improving BMD. Strength training can also help reduce body fat, burn calories, and improve posture and balance.

5. Answer B.

The standard remains 30 minutes/day for 5 days/week. While some people don't have that kind of time in their schedule, it is important to note that exercise is as beneficial when performed intermittently as it is continuously. That is, you can spread your time throughout the day in 10-minute increments rather than needing to perform 30 continuous minutes if that serves your schedule more favorably.



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