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Media Release for immediate use – High Intensity Interval Training and High Intensity Resistance Training

From: NZ Register of Exercise Professionals

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## High Intensity Interval Training and High Intensity Resistance Training The panacea for all, or only for the super fit?

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), and High Intensity Resistance Training (HIRT) programmes have been in the news on TV and in the papers a number of times recently with people rightly asking the question - Are high intensity training programmes safe?

The answer came back loud and clear “Yes but...”

Until a couple of years ago you would have been forgiven for thinking that HIIT and HIRT was for athletes, and stayed on the treadmill for 45 minutes of steady state training finishing with a few light weights. With the arrival of exercise products such as Tabata and Crossfit, the fitness and exercise landscape changed. While trends come and go, it is clear that HIIT and HIRT are here to stay.

And there is a good reason for this. When done safely and regularly, HIIT and HIRT get results, and it's not just your trainer who thinks so. The latest research suggests that high intensity workouts can be just as beneficial as longer, steadier state workouts.

HIIT and HIRT are not brand names, so not all training programmes will be labelled with these names. Some types of HIIT/HIRT are licensed brands so can only be taught by certain trainers, but you can get a HIIT/HIRT style class or programme from most exercise facilities and personal trainers.

Not all HIIT/HIRT programmes are created equal, and even a great system will be only as good as the trainer who prescribes it. A good trainer will have not only specific knowledge in a specific exercise style such as HIIT/HIRT, but also a qualification that enables them to understand all the surrounding issues that are needed to keep you safe. This includes a thorough understanding of how the human body works and responds to exercise.

There have been a number of reports about injuries due to HIIT/HIRT programmes. Most often these are due to a trainer with not enough experience prescribing weights and techniques that are beyond their capability. There are risks in any physical activity, but with the right care and support, you can be sure your HIIT/HIRT workout is both safe and effective.

HIIT/HIRT programmes can be adapted to all fitness levels. 'High intensity' is a relative term, so for an untrained beginner, a high intensity programme will be at a lower level than someone who has been working out for longer. The interval part of the programme is the key here, with bouts of high intensity work cycled with rest periods. This is the foundation of any HIIT/HIRT programme. If you can keep exercising at a level that doesn't require regular rests, then it's not a true HIIT programme.

If you have been tempted to try a HIIT/HIRT class or programme, but aren't sure where to go, make sure you ask a few questions of your local exercise facility and trainer offering these sessions:

- Are the trainers qualified? Not just in HIIT/HIRT, but in general exercise and health science?
- Do your trainers hold a current first aid certificate?
- How do you ensure that the exercises I am doing are safe and appropriate for me (at a minimum you should be able to fill out a questionnaire about your health history and talk with the trainer about your individual needs).
- Are your trainers REPs registered? Registration with the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) is the recognised standard to deliver safe and effective exercise in New Zealand.

As a consumer it's hard to know what trainer knows their stuff, and who is just skilled at saying what you want to hear. Save yourself the worry and risk by only choosing REPs registered exercise professionals and facilities. You can find a full list at the website [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)

### **Contact Details:**

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### **Who is the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)?**

REPs is an independent non profit organisation administrating the New Zealand exercise professionals register to ensure that the public receive safe and effective exercise advice. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "Warrant of Fitness Check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 70,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - [www.icreps.org](http://www.icreps.org).

