



High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

Not all exercise trends and new ideas stand the test of time, but High Intensity Interval Training or HIIT is proving again and again that it is achieving results and is here to stay.

Judges in the 2017 Exercise Industry Awards have noticed that entrants using HIIT as part of their service offering have increased, with the high calibre of these entrants showing that HIIT is remaining popular and getting results in the hands of appropriately qualified registered exercise professionals.

So what is HIIT? This type of exercise is simply alternating between higher intensity bursts of exercise with time to rest in between, and with bursts of less than 2 minutes. The shorter bursts mean an exerciser can work harder as they don't need to sustain the effort for long. HIIT sessions also tend to be shorter so are helpful for those who are time poor.

For those whose injury history or fitness level makes harder exercise less achievable, it's important to remember that it's not one size fits all when it comes to intensity. Interval programmes can be adapted to all exercise/fitness levels, So 'high intensity' is a relative term, and for a beginner, a high intensity programme will be at a lower level than someone who has been exercising for longer.

And it's not just for the young. Research released earlier this year from the Mayo Clinic in the United States indicated that HIIT training had positive impacts at cellular level in older adults, as well as the obvious and expected improvements in general fitness. The study looked at a range of exercise modes over varied ages but the most compelling results were with the older volunteers who saw a 69% increase in their mitochondrial capacity, which helps the body create energy. All ages in the HIIT group also saw their insulin sensitivity improve, which may lower their diabetes risk, and they had an increase in ribosome activity, which helps build proteins that create muscle cells.

Working at a higher intensity does come with some risk, but this can be limited by making sure you are working with a qualified professional in a suitably supervised environment. A good exercise professional will have not only knowledge in a specific exercise style such as HIIT, but also a qualification that enables them to understand all the surrounding issues that are needed to keep you safe.

If you would like to give HIIT a go then there are questions you should ask anyone offering a session:

- Are the trainers qualified?
- Do the trainers hold a current first aid certificate?
- How do they ensure that the exercises you are doing are safe and appropriate for you (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).

As a consumer, it can be hard to know which trainer knows their stuff, and who is just skilled at saying what you want to hear. Save yourself the worry by only using REPs registered exercise professionals

References:

[http://www.cell.com/cell-metabolism/fulltext/S1550-4131\(17\)30099-2](http://www.cell.com/cell-metabolism/fulltext/S1550-4131(17)30099-2)
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/04/170407103559.htm>

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NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. 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 safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

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