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Get Physical with CrossFit: The Ultimate Core Strengthening & Conditioning Workout



For people like me who are looking for fast and optimal results in every aspect of their body, CrossFit offers fast and positive benefits. CrossFit workouts mostly incorporate free weight equipment combined with constantly varied functional real-life movements using your body weight. Power. Strength. Endurance. These are just a few words you may hear coming from an avid CrossFitter when it comes to explaining what CrossFit is.

In recent years, fitness enthusiasts from all over the world are opting for this regime to induce fast and positive results in all areas of their body. It is doable by people of all different fitness levels and works out all components of your body including strength, agility, power, speed, cardiovascular endurance, stamina, coordination, balance and accuracy.

The simplicity of the workouts is what makes them so effective and doable. I recently, dropped by the CrossFit Overdrive gym in Richmond to try out this new fitness regime. A typical session utilizes functional resistance equipment like kettle bells, Olympic barbells, rowing, dumbbells, soft medicine balls and tire lifts as part a participant's everyday workout regime.

A session typically lasts 1 hour and is broken up into four distinct components: Warm-up, Technique, Strength and the Workout of the Day (WOD).

Warm ups can range from tire-flips and swings to sit-ups and double unders. Some of the techniques incorporated include movements within the workout like ring dips, pull-ups, Concept 2 Rowing machines and Olympic weight lifting. The third component incorporates functional strength workouts such as deadlifts, jerks, heavy lifts and front squats to improve your muscular endurance. This is followed by the Workout of the day (WOD) which can range from push-ups, pistols, pull-ups, squats and running.

This particular centre recommends taking a minimum of three to six CrossFit fitness sessions a week depending on your fitness level. This can eventually increase once your fitness goals are reached and you feel more comfortable with the workouts.

The fitness trainer and co-owner noted that it is advisable to take at least one day off when you're doing CrossFit due to the physical demands of the regime. In addition, like with new fitness regimens it is recommended to get enough sleep, eat organic foods, and drink an adequate supply of water and following with a cool down period after your workout so that your heart rate can adjust back to its normal rate.

Every movement in the CrossFit regime involves the core and it is strengthened and conditioned inside out. The majority of bodybuilding workouts in the gym only focus on one specific area of your body such as bicep curls, leg extensions or working on your quads. CrossFit focuses on the functional axis of the entire body, incorporating real-life body movements from the core, which results in a better overall performance.

For example when you're flipping a tire, you're using your abs, back and hamstrings, arms, implementing your whole body to do the workout. Overall, the benefits of these varied functional movements done with heavy weight with little or no rest cannot be denied. Trainers like to mix up workouts using a combination of cardio components, body weight components and weight training movement at different levels of intensity to achieve optimal results for his clients.

Typically, CrossFit trainers advise clients to cycle different workouts at varying intensities throughout the week. "Varying the exercises and the intensities in an important part of toning and strengthening your entire body, rather than just one particular aspect of it."

Due to the high intensity level of these workouts, an average CrossFit workout can burn 300-400 calories upwards to 1000 calories. "It is essential that everyone who partakes in CrossFit workouts are good on their form prior to starting this kind of regime. It's like learning a new sport, you can't play basketball if you don't know how to dribble and shoot."

Typically, the level of intensity and difficulty increases in the open group sessions.

That being said, once the basic tricks are mastered, this workout can really be done by anyone.

The CrossFit workout offers several benefits over regular old-fashioned workouts at the good old gym. A decent old-fashioned workout at the gym requires a minimum of 15-20 minutes of cardio followed by weights to work on strength which can take anywhere between 40-45 minutes. This is then followed by a cool down and stretching period, which can make the entire workout session over an hour.

CrossFit workouts range anywhere between 10 minutes to an hour depending on fitness level, goals and time commitment. It is easy to get a good overall workout in less than 30 minutes which would typically take an hour or more at the gym.

The variation of exercises can add an element of fun into your workouts, so you're not doing the same boring repetitive movements everyday. The CrossFit athlete is not only strong with body movements and weight, but they are also conditioned as well to run at a decent pace doing cardio conditioning.

CrossFit workouts are a popular choice among celebrities, athletes and fitness enthusiasts that are aiming for fast and effective results in all levels of performance. The best part is, CrossFit is for everyone. The workouts can be done by almost anyone who wishes to challenge their body in new ways. Although some of the workouts are more challenging than others, the intensity can be adjusted so that you get the best results for your body. The key idea behind CrossFit is to challenge your body to its optimal level and slowly work your way up.

So if you want to increase your energy, strength and self-confidence, feel strong and healthy in addition to gaining positive results fast, jump on the CrossFit bandwagon.

Before you perform any of these exercises, make sure you have a wide clear area for exercise. Make sure you master the form of each exercise first before moving on to another. If you lose form in the course of a workout, take a break to help your muscles recover first. If you have an injury, please ensure you consult with your physician before starting this or any other new regime.

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