WHICH IS BETTER AT REDUCING FAT WEIGHT TRAINING OR AEROBICS?

There has been a long debate as to which form of exercise is best at reducing fat. The pro aerobic group cite the fact that you'll burn more calories, minute for minute, doing vigorous cardio exercises like running than you will during weight training. The weight training groups say that though that's true, you'll burn more calories the rest of the day by weight training because you put on muscle mass. And more muscle mass will make your body burn more calories while resting. So what does the science say? In the largest study ever done on the subject researchers had 3 groups train for 6 months, doing aerobics, weight training or both. **So who lost the most fat?**

It wasn't even close. The aerobics group lost 7 *times* as much fat as the weight training group. But, before you get to excited and sprint over to the treadmill to start jogging, you should know that the aerobics group lost only 3.7 pounds of fat over 6 months doing the equivalent of running 12 miles a week. While the weight trainers lost just *0.5 pounds and spent an hour more in the gym a week than the aerobics only group.* Of course the weight trainers gained lean body mass and so did the aerobic group, but not nearly as much as the weight guys, as you would expect. What about the group that did both I hear you asking? They lost an additional 1.7 more pounds than the aerobics group for a total of 5.4 pounds. But they had to spend twice as much in the gym as the other groups. Now before all the muscle heads start screaming about how much fat they lost by weight training, you probably fall into one of 2 categories (or both). One, If you only gained a modest amount of muscle, than most of the fat you lost is through your diet. Two, researchers estimate that about 15% of the population are what they call "high responders". That refers to people that pack on significantly more muscle through weight training than most of the population. Since each pound of muscle you add burns 14 more calories each day, if you put on a lot of muscle you raised you metabolic rate significantly which burns more calories all day. Of course even the high responders probably still lost a lot of weight through diet too. But for the average person, aerobics definitely beats weight training for fat loss. The bad

news is aerobic activity alone won't contribute *a lot* to your fat loss, unless you consider 3 pounds over over 6 months a lot. The **good news** is, according to one study I found, each pound you lose through aerobic exercise is worth **3 times** of the amount in **visceral fat loss** (that's the bad kind) than each pound you lose through diet alone. In other words, if you lost 3 pounds of fat through aerobics you would have to lose 9 pounds of fat through diet to have the same amount of visceral fat loss. More good news, according to this study and another one done years later. If you are aerobically fit and fat you will live just as long as a person of normal weight who is also aerobically fit. *So weight loss should not be you primary goal.* Rather getting a high level of cardirespiratory fitness (Vo2 max) should be. The other thing I want to point out is that dieting will have the most profound impact on your body mass. But dieting without weight training will cause you lose some lean body mass. **So it's important to incorporate all 3 methods in order to lose weight without losing muscle and to achieve cardiorespiratory fitness.** In addition weight training will improve the quality of your life, especially as you get older, by enabling you to stay strong, agile and mobile throughout your life. But why doesn't weight resistance reduce as much fat as all the hype says? For one, most people don't put on a lot of muscle mass. Most add between 3 and 7 pounds. Second, added muscle mass doesn't burn nearly as much calories as most people think. Just 14 calories per day per pound. So the argument that your metabolic rate will significantly increase just doesn't hold water. Especially for women who only gain about half as much muscle as men.

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