

The 30 Pound Club

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Interval Everything

If you've been reading what I write for very long, you know I'm a strong believer in the use of interval training. As I wrote last week, it's a great way to boost intensity and get off a plateau. But as I worked out in a fitness room in a California hotel earlier this week, it occurred to me that you can make any type of activity into interval training to increase strength and stamina.

Let me give you this example. I have very long arms, and upper body strength has always been an issue. Pull-ups? Never in my life. Dips? Maybe a couple. Push-ups? No more than 12 or 15 right now. But what if we used an interval approach to push-ups, which are less dependent on body weight than the other two? Let's say the goal is to do 50 push-ups and I'll use myself as an example.

- Start with 5 push-ups
- Rest 30 seconds
- Do another 5 push-ups
- Rest 30 seconds
- Continue these steps until you've completed 50 push-ups

It took about eight seconds to do the five push-ups; resting exactly 30 seconds from the time I finished until starting the next interval, 50 push-ups took me 5:45 to complete. I did most of the push-ups with perfect form; the last interval of five, I really started to feel it, but I did 50 push-ups and I get the benefit of doing 50. Without an interval approach, I would have done maybe 15.

The next step would be to increase the interval—in a week or so, do up to ten push-ups before resting, with the goal still being 50 total push-ups. Or I could decrease the rest time between intervals to 20 seconds, again, getting to 50.

I hope you can see how this would be especially beneficial for those of you who have trouble doing abs without your neck getting tired: do ten curl-ups or leg-lifts with a 15- to 30-second rest and repeat.

The same is true for aerobic activity. I always talk about running, but if you have trouble getting started running, jogging, walking, or even dancing, start with 15 to 30 seconds of activity and then rest. Depending on where you begin, you may have to stop completely, but the key is that you will be able to perform more overall exercise at a higher intensity than if you were to poop out completely after just two or three minutes.

Take any exercise you have challenges with and use this interval approach. If you have trouble figuring it out, send me an email at 30poundclub@drchet.com and I'll help.

You could even apply this idea to eating. Eat for 30 seconds, then put your fork down for 30 seconds, and repeat. By giving yourself time to feel satisfied—letting your brain catch up to your stomach—you may realize you're full sooner and stop eating sooner. Remember you're an adult now and you no longer have to clean your plate—as long as you don't stop eating the veggies to move on to dessert.

One and Done.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet



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