

What causes a fitness or weight loss plateau and how to avoid it?

You stop seeing results when you stop challenging your body. *The important thing is not to give it up, but change it up!* The body is very adaptable and when it becomes efficient in performing a movement it doesn't have to exert as much energy and thus you don't burn as many calories. And that means your weight loss will come to a halt.

Research shows that you should "spice up your routine" every six to eight weeks to avoid the plateaus. It can be simple changes such as:

1. Adding interval training to your steady state training or cardio bursts
2. Using free weights instead of machines
3. Changing your strength training tempo to slow training
4. Last but not least...And this one is very important, so it is worthy of more explanation. After initial conditioning progress from single joint/muscle exercises to total body exercises. Using the entire body requires you to use the core muscles to stabilize your body. Because the core muscles have to transfer the force between the upper and lower body, it requires more muscle activation and thus a higher caloric expenditure. You can get more done in less amount of time!
5. You may just need time off (2-5 days) to recharge and come back with renewed vigor. It's really OK to take a break! It ensures proper soft tissue recovery and muscle repair.

It especially feels good to remind my clients that it is OK, and beneficial, to reward yourself for your accomplishments, no matter how small they may seem to you. Enjoy a meal at one of your favorite restaurants, purchase new outfit, a peaceful bath... anything that contributes to feeling that success and motivates you to continue. I have seen much success using these principles and hope you will too!

Feel free to email me your thoughts or questions to focus1onfitness@gmail.com