

SMART Rules

to Fat Burning Cardio

Stretch to avoid injury: As a result of cardio workouts, the hip flexor muscle has a tendency to tighten up if not stretched. This can alter the mechanics of the body, causing injury related to various forms of joint and muscle pain.

Motivate yourself: Making exercise fun will give you the motivation to exercise longer. What do you have fun doing? Consider making it more fun with any of these suggestions:

- Do cardio with a friend so you can “catch up on the latest”
- Listen to music, or an audiobook
- Read a book or magazine
- Perform your cardio while watching a movie, or your favourite TV program
- Make a game of the cardio. Take part in a traditional recreational game with your kids such as soccer, ‘capture-the-flag’, or take the ‘Canadian Coast Cardio Adventure’ and travel across Canada with family and friends (details at the end of this article).

Adapt at your own pace, with a program suited to your fitness level: Experts advise to begin with easier forms of cardio such as brisk walking, elliptical or cross trainer machines, cycling, stationary bikes, rollerblading, rowing machine, canoeing or swimming.

When you’re ready, progress to the more intensive forms of cardio such as running,

BY BRENDAN J. FOX EFT, CK, CSCS, CFC, SPN

Strengthen your heart and **burn fat** this summer with your favourite **cardiovascular** workout. To get the best from your cardio workouts, simply follow Brendan’s **5 S.M.A.R.T. Rules** to Fat Burning Cardio.

skipping, the step master, punching bag work, kettlebells and SPIN cycling classes.

In order to know what intensity you personally should be working at to optimize fat loss, keep your pulse in the Target Heart Rate Zone, between 65 to 85% of your maximal heart rate*. If you don’t have a heart rate monitor you can quickly check your heart beats per minute by counting your pulse for 15 seconds, then multiply by four.

Rule of no more than four: Avoid any foods that contain more than 4 items on the ingredient list. This strategy alone will give you better energy for your workouts, while helping you drop those extra pounds. You’ll be avoiding processed foods while consuming slimming whole foods such as green apples, brown rice, dark green salad, walnuts, almonds, eggs and fish.

Timing is key: To create an effective training success, cardio should be done a minimum of 25 minutes, three times a week. Results develop faster and are more noticeable when you exercise for 45 minutes, five times a week. To burn more body fat, research suggests you perform your cardio when the blood sugar level is lowest, such as:

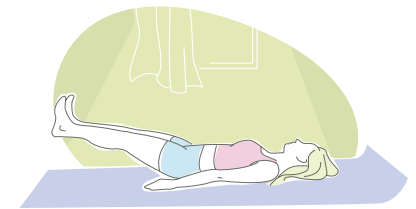
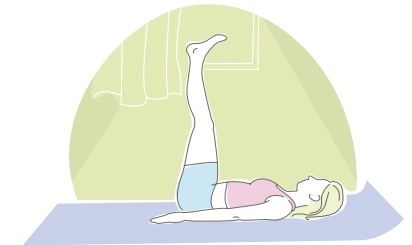
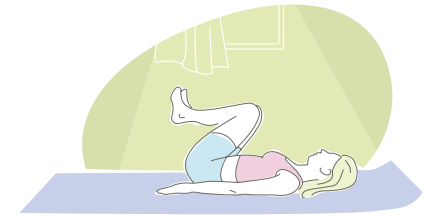
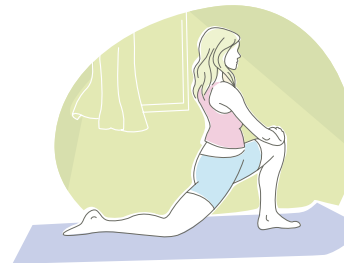
- 1 First thing in the morning on an empty stomach, or
- 2 Immediately following your weight training workout.

The ultimate hip flexor stretch

Tight hip flexors are the major culprit behind injuries associated with cardiovascular exercise. By altering the mechanics in the body, it becomes the root cause behind many cases of knee pain, hip pain, and back pain. Most often, injuries are associated with one hip flexor being tighter than the other, a warning sign that they need to be loosened with stretching.

- 1 Kneel on the ground with one leg forward.
- 2 Push the pelvis forward, stretching the front of the hip on the side of the rear leg.
- 3 Hold the stretch for 20-30 seconds on each side.

To increase the stretch, try raising the arm on the side of the rear leg, while gently leaning the torso over the side of the forward leg.



* Maximal Heart Rate = The number 220, minus your age.

For example: the Maximal heart rate for a 30 year old would be about 190 beats per minute. 65 to 85% of that number would be 117 to 153. Therefore the Target Heart Rate Zone of a 30 year old would be to maintain an intensity between 117 and 153 heart beats per minute.

The ultimate lower ab exercise

You can also relieve tension on the hip flexors by strengthening your lower abdominal muscles. One of the best exercises to strengthen the lower abdominals, and flatten the stomach is Leg Lowering:

- 1 Lie flat on your back.
- 2 Tuck your knees into your chest.
- 3 Raise the feet straight up in the air.
- 4 Slowly lower the straightened legs down under control, keep the spine on the floor.
- 5 Repeat 12 to 20 times.

Looking for a fun and dynamic cardio program?

Brendan has developed a fun program for his clients that takes the drudgery out of the sometime mundane cardio workout. The 'Canadian Coast Cardio Adventure' measures the distance you travel in each of your cardio workouts and correlates it with distances between various cities spanning from Ontario to Nova Scotia. You'll experience immense motivation in reaching various checkpoints along the way and seeing how far you progress on your adventure with each workout. To make it more fun:

- Challenge friends, family, and co-workers to join you. The more people involved the more you'll motivate each other
- You'll be accountable to each other to complete your workouts

- You'll have fun motivating each other to take the lead.

And the big bonus – you will all end up slimmer and healthier.

Be sure to download your copy of the 'Canadian Coast Cardio Adventure' along with all the instructions at www.FoxFitness.ca, follow the stars and click on the Articles menu and the 'Canadian Coast Cardio Adventure'.

And remember, the winner isn't always the fastest person in the race, but is more often the one with the highest commitment and determination. **H&L**

Brendan J. Fox is a Certified Endurance Fitness Trainer, Certified Kinesiologist, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, Certified Fitness Consultant, and Certified Specialist in Performance Nutrition.

WIN* a \$2200 Fitness Shopping Spree

*Contest ends midnight EST August 14, 2006.



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CONGRATULATIONS to Teresa Hutton of St. Catharines, Ontario.

Our lucky winner of the \$2200 Fitness Source Shopping Spree for the Spring 2006 Contest.