

For visible results make your running inefficient!



For many years I'd tell my typical trainee's NOT to run as part of their cardio workout.

When training for bodybuilding or typical "cosmetic" reasons, running is very counter productive for a few reasons. Much higher heart rate effectively wipes away the fruits of your labor in the weight room and the overall efficiency of the running process does not load up certain muscle groups as much as I would have liked.

So in 9 cases out of 10 I'd prefer a high incline treadmill or stairmill for a client, the problem was, some people simply wanted to run despite my objections. Having done my fair share of running in the off-season during my competitive cycling days I could understand, the problem was, typical running didn't help us reach client's goals any faster, Certainly there are solutions, interval training, HIIT cardio, etc. Recently I've come across another one.....snow

For a month now I've personally been attempting to clear my head by beating my body into shape by running in winter conditions. Remember Rocky Balboa in Rocky IV preparing for a fight by running in the snow? Bingo!

And though my opponent - my head, is far more formidable than brutal power of Ivan Drago, the intensity of the conditions and the workout itself help me to workout the anger and clear my head in under half hour.

It is between -7 and -30 Celsius in Moscow and though I've attempted running at minus 20 only once and realized it was foolish, I've still managed to get on a bit of a roll, typically getting out 3 times a week which caused me to drop over 12 lbs in less than 4 weeks and more importantly most of it was body fat.

My legs now look practically contest-ready with great definition in quadriceps and hamstrings, any resemblance of love handles is gone and the six-pack is back after a long hiatus. All of it is due to me simply getting back to the first form of exercise I learned.

Typical running is a very efficient process, in fact that's what runners strive for is efficiency and synergy. Shoes with good traction, appropriate light gear, so they get from point A to point B with lowest energy output possible, so that they can use that energy to go past point B, or make a trip from A to B faster. That is NOT what we want when working on your body for "cosmetic" or visible results.

We want your body and muscles to work and the winter weather creates some of the best and more challenging conditions for your legs - sleek, uneven surface, sometimes having to run through deep snow, etc....so the tempo of the run will not be fast, keeping your heart rate in the fat burning zone most of the time. Because your legs have to constantly control the process it never becomes an efficient process as on the treadmill or a typical flat surface run, providing for actual workout for the muscles

Your ligaments, tendons and muscles constantly fight to keep the balance and adjust to the surface making this a very effective cardio for fitness, bodybuilding and typical "cosmetic" reasons. Furthermore, my bad knees have never felt better, constant pounding on flat surface I know would destroy them even more, but in these conditions everything has tightened up and my knees feel 10 years younger, so those of you with similar issues - keep it in mind!

I realize it doesn't snow all year and in some parts ever. So here's a solution for you, if you're in California - ditch the treadmill for a stretch of the beach.

Use it instead of your typical cardio and start with 3x week for 15 minutes, believe me you don't need much more than that. After 2 weeks you may bump it up to 20. Give it a month or two and then check the definition of your leg muscles, you WILL be very pleasantly surprised!

Alexander Shulatnikov
ShulaSports Personal Training
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