

Kinesiologists find that people enjoy high-intensity interval training more than standard workouts

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Credit: McMaster University

Having a hard time getting in shape? The key may lie in more intense, short bursts of exercise, according to new research from McMaster.

A team of kinesiologists has found that high-intensity interval training (HIT) is more enjoyable than [moderate exercise](#). It's the first study to examine changes in enjoyment for HIT workouts versus moderate continuous training, over the first six weeks of an exercise program.

"The physical benefits of exercise are widely known, yet half of the adult population is not sufficiently active for good health," explains Jennifer Heisz, assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology and lead author of the study.

"For sedentary individuals, a key barrier to starting an exercise program is the preconceived notion that exercising is not enjoyable. Failing to find enjoyment from exercise can make it more difficult to stick to an exercise program over time," she says.

At the beginning of the training, sedentary young adults in the HIT group reported similar levels of enjoyment to those in the moderate exercise group. However, as [training](#) progressed and the participants got stronger, enjoyment for the HIT group increased. Levels for the moderate group remained constant and lower.

The findings are important, say researchers, because they suggest high-intensity workouts might help sedentary adults to stick to a workout routine.

"Enjoyment during these first weeks of adopting a new [exercise program](#) may be especially important for preventing dropouts," says Heisz.

More information: Jennifer J. Heisz et al. Enjoyment for High-Intensity Interval Exercise Increases during the First Six Weeks of Training: Implications for Promoting Exercise Adherence in Sedentary Adults, *PLOS ONE* (2016). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0168534](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0168534)

Provided by McMaster University

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