Sensible Eating in the New Year

Q: What is sensible eating?
A: Sensible eating is the practice of eating healthier by making small, manageable changes over time, rather than many big changes all at once. Sensible eating doesn’t have any strict diet plans or rigid menus. Rather, it is about letting people discover how they can eat well in a way that works with their lifestyle.

Q: Why should I practice sensible eating?
A: Fad diets are often overwhelming and difficult to maintain. For most people, sensible eating is a more effective way to make long-lasting changes for long-lasting results.

Q: How can I practice sensible eating?
A: Eating sensibly often starts with planning which puts the power to make healthy choices in your hands. By planning meals and snacks ahead of time, you can avoid the bad choices that often result when preparing meals under time pressure or when extremely hungry.

Portion control is another area on which to focus to improve the way you eat. Measuring food before putting it on your plate can be useful to help prevent overeating. Try to start with a single serving on the plate. Make the decision to have another only after finishing the first. Another option is to use a smaller plate which simply cannot hold as much food as a larger one.

The most powerful aspect of sensible eating is focusing on small changes. Making numerous or drastic changes all at once often leads to frustration and failure. Many of us can find a small way to improve if we take a good look at our eating habits. Perhaps we can replace a donut with a slice of whole wheat toast or eat an apple rather than a cookie. The list can go on and on, and focusing on one change at a time will help to make eating better more manageable and less frustrating.
Heart Month: The Rowing Ergometer

Before we discuss the Rowing Ergometer, let us begin by noting the importance of cardiovascular endurance. Cardio for some is a dreaded word and for others, a passion. It is a key component that should always be included in fitness training.

Cardiovascular exercise benefits the body over time by increasing its readily available supply of oxygen. Cardiovascular output is measured as the amount of oxygen carried into the blood and pumped by the heart to the active muscles in one given minute. Thus, all cardiovascular exercises are based on the fact that various repetitive movements will increase heart rate and blood circulation throughout the entire body. This means an increase in the amount of oxygen in the blood. As one exercises more, the heart will adapt and strengthen, allowing for increased cardiovascular performance. There are many ways to achieve this increase, but for the purposes of this article we will discuss the Rowing Ergometer.

What you need to know:

1. The rower has zero impact on the joints.
2. The rower requires equal effort from both the upper and lower body.
3. It is crucial to move through your hips, not your spine.
4. If you have back or hip issues, this may not be for you. Seek assistance for proper technique.
5. Using the rower will more quickly increase general fitness.

The rower exercises several major muscle groups and will help develop both the upper and lower body for cardiovascular endurance and power. Most importantly, rowing will facilitate a serious aerobic or anaerobic workout. Time is not a factor in how effective the rower can be, whether it is used for 4 minutes of high intensity interval training (H.I.I.T.) or 30 minutes of steady-state cardio.

Some suggested workouts to try:

1. 500-400-300-200-100 meters with 60 seconds rest between sets.
2. 2 x 1000 meters with 90-120 seconds of rest between sets.
3. 30 seconds on, 30 seconds off for 10 minutes.