



Do you even lift?

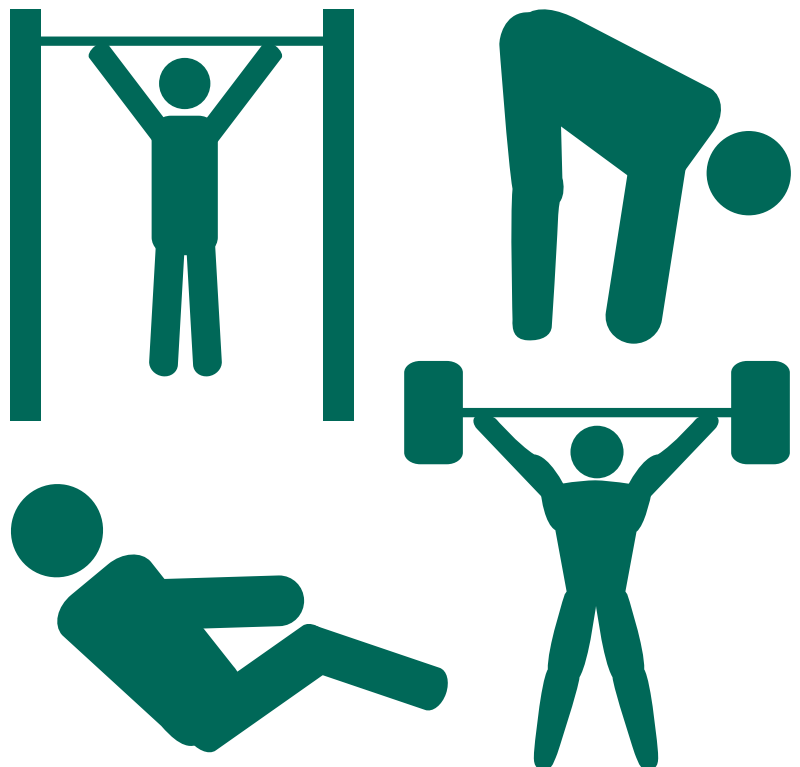
Regular participation in muscle strengthening activity also called weight or resistance training, has many benefits. Muscle strengthening activity includes exercises using weight machines, free weights, resistance bands or your own body weight.



When performed regularly this type of activity leads to improvement or maintenance of muscle strength, power and endurance. Recent research shows a large majority of Australians do not engage in any muscle strengthening activity.

Historically public health recommendations have mainly promoted moderate and vigorous intensity aerobic exercise (such as brisk walking and jogging). The current Australian guidelines, however, now include the additional recommendation for adults to do muscle strengthening activities on at least two days each week. The addition of these activities into the recommendations is due to emerging evidence linking this type of activity to reduced risk of type two diabetes, high blood pressure, weight gain, heart disease and poor musculoskeletal health. Most importantly, weight training has great benefits for bone/joint health, general mobility and slowing the loss of skeletal muscle mass and strength. Studies indicate each decade from the age of 30 we lose approximately 3 – 5 % of the muscle mass we naturally carry.

The good news is it is never too late to get started. If you are currently not doing muscle strengthening activities, even a small increase is likely to benefit your health.



Some tips to get started:

- Begin with body weight exercises like squats, sit-ups or push-ups at home
- Do household chores that involve digging, carrying and lifting
- Join a gym to do weights or other strength training

It is important to pay attention to safety and good form. If in doubt, a registered exercise professional can help you develop a safe and effective program.

A coaching mind set

Many of us struggle when we are faced with feedback from other people. In order to turn feedback that has not been delivered carefully or tactfully into something useful, we can make an effort to take on “a coaching mind set”.

The term comes from an article published in the Harvard Business Review entitled “Finding the Coaching in Criticism”. Here it is argued that feedback from others runs the risk of triggering emotions that make it difficult to register the message and derive benefit.

Taking feedback well is a process of sorting and filtering. Some feedback is evaluative (“your rating is a four”) and some is coaching (“here’s how you can improve”). It is not always easy to distinguish one type from the other; fortunately there are steps we can take to become a better receiver of feedback.

- ▶ Know your tendencies – what is your typical pattern of responding? Do you defend yourself, strike back, smile outwardly but seethe on the inside? Once you understand your standard response, you can make better choices about where to go from there.
- ▶ Disentangle the “what” from the “who” and set aside snap judgments. Interlinking the content of the feedback with your feelings about the giver can diminish the learning opportunity.
- ▶ Unpack the feedback. It is not always immediately clear whether feedback is valid and useful. Before you accept or reject it, do some analyses to better understand it.

▶ Ask for feedback. Feedback is less likely to set off your triggers if you request it and direct it. Find opportunities to get bite-size pieces of coaching from a variety of people throughout the year e.g. “what’s one thing you see me doing, or failing to do, that holds me back?”

▶ Engage in small experiments. Once you have worked to gain and understand feedback it may still be difficult to work out which bits of advice will help you and which ones will not. When someone gives you advice, test it out. If it works, great, if it does not, you can try again, tweak your approach, or decide to end the experiment.

Adopting this coaching mindset involves us being determined to learn from whatever feedback we get. According to the authors, of the Harvard Business Review article, *“Your growth depends on your ability to pull value from criticism in spite of your natural responses and on your willingness to seek out even more advice and coaching from bosses, peers, and subordinates. You are the most important factor in your own development.”*

Pumpkin Chilli Winter Warmer

A simple vegetarian, vegan and gluten free dish perfect for the cold winter nights.

Ingredients:

- ▶ 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- ▶ 1 medium size red onion (peeled and roughly chopped)
- ▶ 3 cloves of garlic (finely chopped)
- ▶ 1 tablespoon of turmeric
- ▶ ½ tablespoon of cumin
- ▶ 1 tablespoon of ground coriander
- ▶ 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper (optional)
- ▶ 1 tablespoon of smoked paprika
- ▶ 2 tablespoons of tomato paste
- ▶ 1 can of crushed / chopped tomatoes
- ▶ 500 – 600g pumpkin (peeled and diced into large cubes)
- ▶ ½ cup of quinoa (washed & drained)
- ▶ 1 cup of water

To garnish:

- ▶ Yoghurt / coconut yoghurt
- ▶ Lime wedges
- ▶ Pickled jalapenos

Method:

Fry off onion in olive oil on low to medium heat until soft. Add all spices to the pan and continue frying, then add the garlic. Add in tomato paste and stir for a couple of minutes before adding the canned tomatoes. Add the pumpkin cubes making sure every piece is coated with the spices from the pan. Add in the quinoa and stir well. Stir in the water and add salt and pepper to taste.

Bring the pan to a boil and lower the heat to medium. Put the lid on and let the pumpkin and quinoa cook for 15 – 20 minutes until pumpkin is slightly softened and quinoa is cooked. Check it every 5 minutes, if it seems dry, add some water and give it a stir.

Plate it up serving with yoghurt, lime wedges and pickled jalapenos as a garnish.

All the spices can be adjusted to taste. A great dish to make in advance, it always taste better the next day.



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