

SPRINT FOR MAXIMUM LIFE ENJOYMENT AND AWESOMENESS!

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Every year it's the same thing; as we enter spring and the weather improves (hopefully!), there is a VAST increase in the number of "joggers" logging miles in the park or along the road. And good on them for finding the motivation, right!? Well hang on. Yes I agree to a certain degree (because I encourage movement and outdoor activity in any capacity), but I can't help but also feel a little guilty. Of course there are lots of people doing this out of pure enjoyment or to conquer a lifetime goal of completing some arbitrary distance event, but the fact remains that a majority of these fair-weather joggers are simply looking to shed the winter weight in anticipation of beach season – in many cases lumbering through hours upon hours with the hope that visible abs are just around the next corner. Because of this, my guilt stems from not having done more to educate people how ineffective jogging really is for fitness and fat loss – especially when compared to its super-cool cousin in equipment-free locomotion - SPRINTING!

I think the majority of people today will agree that 500 calories worth of Zebra Cakes do not have the same effects on the body as 500 calories of broccoli. There's a lot of science proving this fact, so if you are still too stubborn to agree, I cannot help you. For the rest, it's time to get on board with the idea that a calorie does not always equal a calorie in terms of expenditure either. To crudely simplify, the person who hits the drive-thru and the hamster wheel in equal proportions looks feels, and performs MUCH differently than the one who eats clean meats and vegetables and balances energy with a few hill sprints each week. It's just science!

I'm not going to get too geeked out on physiology here (we can provide resources if you're a "rabbit hole" type), but guys, human anatomy is just not consistent with supporting steady state pavement pounding. Thick Achilles tendons, quads, and femurs are meant for speed and power. And why are our cardiovascular systems capable of such impressive output if we're supposed to stay within the "fat burning zone" (a completely fabricated myth)? It'd be a shame to keep a Ferrari within the confines of a speed limit ALL the time!

Sprinting is not only effective for speed, power, and metabolism but 4-10 high-intensity work intervals (15-60 seconds), each followed by partial to full recovery, have also been shown to improve strength, musculature, coordination, aerobic capacity, and insulin sensitivity. Plus, going fast is just more fun. There is no single *miracle* exercise, but those benefits sound pretty synonymous with general "health and fitness," don't they? So lace up, buttercup!

As a disclaimer, I'm not advocating that you ditch jogging altogether (or breaking the law in your Ferrari); there are definitely benefits and many find this type of low-intensity activity very calming – both physically and psychologically. Workouts should always include proper warm-up and be appropriate for your skill level. But if you've got the basic foundations covered and your goal is to drop fat, boost performance, or simply to be more awesome at navigating life, trade the road for a hill or open field a couple times a week and really show what you're made of. Rest. Repeat.