

Don't Fear That Trampoline!

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I was asked recently by one of my patients about trampolines. I had to honestly say that aside from kids loving them, I really didn't know a lot about exactly what benefits are produced by jumping around on a trampoline. Obviously I thought, jumping up and down for hours at a time as kids will do simply has to be good for them, right? Here are some interesting facts about trampolining, as it's called, that you'll be happy to know.

NASA did a study a few years ago and found that ten minutes on a trampoline is 68% more effective for the cardiovascular system than a 30-minute run—giving you more benefits in one third the time! Thus making it very good for your heart.

It's also considered a low impact exercise, as the soft mat absorbs most of the force when you land, decreasing the jarring on your spine, ankles, hips and knees.

Jumping on the trampoline also improves your lymphatic function. The up-and-down bouncing apparently works well to stimulate the system's one-way valves, clearing the body of toxins and improving overall immune function.

It's great for working your core muscles. Each time you jump, you use your abs and back muscles, especially those close in to the spine. Some sources say that consistent trampolining can be more effective than sit-ups or crunches.

It's great for your legs! In fact, NASA has its astronauts use the trampoline to restore muscle and bone mass after prolonged time in space.

It improves coordination and upper-body strength. Each time you bounce, the muscles in your arms and upper back contract to help you maintain balance, strengthening all the small stabilizer muscles throughout the system.

IT BURNS CALORIES! The average person will burn over 400 calories an hour jumping on a trampoline! I was so glad to learn that! **AND** it's really fun—just ask your kids! Now, after learning all the facts, it turns out jumping on the trampoline with the kids may be some of the best exercise you will get this summer—**AND** the kids will **LOVE** having **YOU** up there with them! ■

Happy Trampolining!

—Dr. B



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