



MINUTES TO FITNESS

Changing the Way You Look at Exercise...Forever!

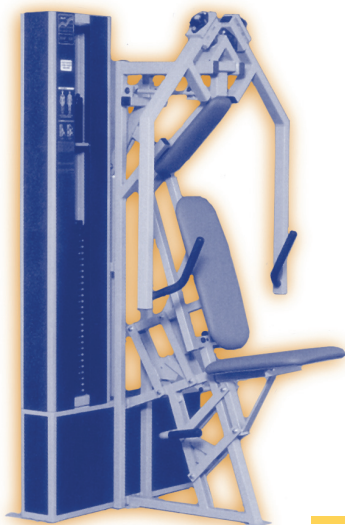
PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT  
20 MINUTES TO FITNESS

## Lifting Weights at a snail's pace can work wonders.

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By Geoffrey Cowley

### Can fitness be so simple?

For three decades we've heard endlessly about the virtues of aerobic exercise. Medical authorities have touted running and jumping as the



key to good health, and millions of Americans have taken to the treadmill (however sporadically) to reap the rewards. But the story is changing. Everyone from the American Heart Association to the surgeon general's office has recently embraced strength training as a complement to aerobics. Enthusiasts claim that by pumping iron at a snail's pace, making each "rep" last 14 seconds instead of the usual seven, you can safely place extraordinary demands on your muscles and elicit an extraordinary response. Slow lifting may not be the only exercise you need, as some proponents believe, but the benefits are often dramatic. Almost anyone can handle this routine. The only requirements are Zenlike focus and a tolerance for deep muscular burn.

For each leg press, bench press,

shoulder press and so on, the machine is set for only moderate resistance. The goal is not to burn calories while you're exercising but to make your body burn them all the time. Running a few miles might make you sweat, but it expends only 100 calories per mile (roughly two Oreo cookies) and it doesn't stimulate much bone or muscle development. When you push a muscle to failure, you set off a cascade of physiological changes. As the muscle recovers over several days, it will thicken and the new muscle tissue will demand sustenance. By the time you add three pounds of muscle, your body requires an extra 9,000 calories a month just to break even. Hold your diet steady and presto you're vaporizing body fat. It may turn out that 20 minutes to (fitness) is the ultimate prescription for fitness.

# Newsweek