

WELLNESS CORNER

Functional Fitness for “Real Life”

The purpose of functional fitness exercises is to equip your body to handle real life situations and ultimately improve the quality of movement in your life. These exercises are designed to train and develop your muscles to make it easier and safer to perform everyday activities.

The benefits of functional fitness include:

- Make everyday activities easier
- Increased balance and stability
- Increased strength
- Decreased risk of injury

One example of a functional exercise is an upright row. Every time I load and unload the BJs-sized container of kitty litter into and out of my car, I perform this exercise. A bench press, on the other hand, would not be considered a functional exercise because we rarely find ourselves laying on our back, pressing weight over your chest.

Probably the best example of a functional exercise is the squat. We complete squats repeatedly throughout our day; each time we stand up and sit down, get in and out of our car, and use the toilet.

In contrast, conventional weight training isolates muscle groups, but it doesn't teach the muscle groups you're isolating to work with others.

Wondering if the exercise you are doing is functional? In general, you should be standing on your own two feet and supporting your own weight when completing functional exercises.

Functional training gives you the kind of strength that you need at the end of the day. So instead of measuring your strength by how much weight you can bench press (or curl, or squat), get fit where it counts by doing exercises that stem from natural, everyday movements like bending, pushing, and twisting.

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