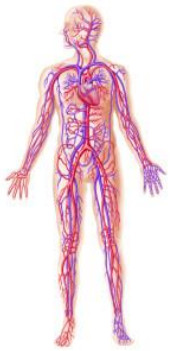
Which Is Best? Steady State Cardio, High Intensity Intervals, Strength Training, or Yoga.

People often ask me "Which is best for fat burning?" to which I reply, "all of them, actually." Used together, these methods can be a powerful combination.

Steady state cardiovascular training is that long, sustainable, walk, jog, bike ride, swim, etc. which elevates your heart rate enough to be exercise but not so much you are laying on the floor panting after 10 seconds. This type of activity burns fat while you are performing the exercise.

High intensity intervals (HIIT, Tabata, sprints, etc.) are short bursts of hard, all-out effort that elevate your heart rate to sub-maximal or maximal rates and then allow short rest intervals. This type burns stored carbohydrates while you are performing the workout and THEN burns fat residually for the next 6-24 hours, depending on the individual. Strength training follows this same principle as you are lifting heavily for an interval (x number of reps) and then resting between sets.

Seems like a no-brainer, right? **"HIIT, Tabata, and weights every day and I'll be perfectly fit in no time!"** Not so fast! If you only engaged in high intensity training your shoulders would be up in your ears, your body would be pumping adrenaline non-stop and you would be HUNGRY all the time. Not to mention oxidative stress and injuries…don't even get me started.



Sometimes in our quest for the perfect body **we forget what's on the inside**. Your cardiovascular system includes your heart, lungs and circulatory system. Your circulatory system is responsible for feeding ALL your tissues the oxygen-rich blood and taking away waste from cells. When we perform steady state cardio we are breathing in a steady supply of oxygen which allows our cardiovascular system to mop up the mess we left behind while we were doing our Tabata class.

The **yoga** sessions help to balance and calm the system, as well as providing isometric (holding a contraction) strength training, and equal work on each side - which can help muscle imbalances. Yoga also focuses on breathing deeply which brings down the body's cortisol levels (stress hormone which can cause belly fat). Even just sitting and focusing on deep breathing (and nothing else) for 10 to 15 minutes is beneficial.

Sample workout week:

1-2 15 to 30-minute Tabata/HIIT workouts
2-3 15 to 30-minute Weight training followed by 15-40 minutes steady state cardio
2 15 to 90-minute Yoga sessions (at home or a class)

Plus, one long walk/tennis game/bike ride/fun activity on the weekend just for fun.