

H O U S E H E A L T H Y O U T L O O K B L O G

Healthy Outlook Blog

Cool Hands May Improve Workouts

 Like 19

By Lynn Langway | Posted May 4 2012

[Technology](#), [Weight Loss](#), [Women's Health](#)

And now for some fitness news that's really, *truly* cool: overweight women who chill their hands during exercise may boost their endurance, lower their blood pressure, and trim extra inches off their waists. That was the encouraging word from a small, randomized [study](#) presented at a recent American Heart Association meeting by scientists from Stanford University School of Medicine.

A B O U T O U R B L O G

Our blog is a collection of thoughts and stories that serve as inspiration for what healthymagination is—a shared commitment to creating better health for more people. It's written by the people behind healthymagination, as well as members of our advisory board and guest contributors from around the web.

Y O U M I G H T L I K E



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Researchers monitored 24 sedentary but otherwise healthy women, aged 30 to 45, who had a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 to 30.9—officially considered obese—as they worked out three times a week for 45 minutes or more. While walking on a treadmill, the women tucked one hand into a glove-like “rapid thermal exchange”

device, which cools the blood

passing through the palms to slow down overheating in the body’s core. Half the devices circulated water at body temperature, while the second group used water cooled to 60.8 degrees F.

At the end of 12 weeks, the cool-hand crew recorded significantly lower blood pressure, longer workouts and faster speed—and they shaved an average of three inches off their waistlines. The control group, however, did not work as long or as hard, and showed no change.

”Obese women often complain about sweating and getting tired because they’re walking around with extra insulation,” says lead researcher Stacy T. Sims, Ph.D., an exercise physiologist and nutrition scientist. “Cooling helped reduce the fatigue and negative associations with exercise, which became a positive affirmation to keep coming.”

The [AvaCore cooling device](#) used in the study costs \$3,000 or more, and is normally employed by sports teams and hospitals. But Sims suggests a homegrown method to chill out: Freeze a bottle of water, hold it lightly during your workout (don’t squeeze) and *drink* the icy water as it melts (just holding the bottle



Goodbyes are hard to do, but Dr. Bloch and I would like to thank you for joining us for the Weekly Wellness blog. Reviewing and interpreting GE’s Centricity Database has been an eye-opening and thought-provoking experience for us, and we hope that you took something away from it as well. “GOOGLING” WELLNESS Right now, the [...]



[Statins: The LD on LDL Meds](#)

For some, high cholesterol is hereditary, but for most it’s all about lifestyle. Changing the way we eat is so vexing for some that a multibillion dollar drug industry has emerged as a result. Isn’t it odd that we’ll change our ways to pop a pill every day, but won’t change the way we eat? [...]



[Vitamin Supplements Might Not Be So Healthy After All](#)

Recent data suggests that more than 50 percent of adults in the U.S. take at least one dietary supplement daily. The results? Well, for one, a robust \$25 billion a year nutritional and vitamin supplement industry. Why are supplements, and particularly, vitamins so popular? There are probably a number of reasons, but we think some

without drinking is not sufficient to cool your core.)

[...]

You don't need to be obese for the tactic to pay off. "Anyone can benefit," says Sims, who plans to expand her research to cover men as well as women and varying age groups. Other tips to make your workouts more effective: exercising in front of a fan, wearing a damp t-shirt that's been stashed in the refrigerator, wearing non-wicking natural fibers that stay damp against the skin and enhance heat dissipation. "Anything that makes you feel cooler is going to help," says Sims, who's a competitive cyclist and off-road triathlete as well as a scientist.

CONNECT THE DOTS

To learn more about healthy exercise levels, see these guidelines from the [American Heart Association](#) website. To find out more about [obesity rates and risks](#), visit the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To read about a helpful exercise app, see our blog entry on GE's "[Fit Friendly Exercise Challenge](#)."



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