



Training Program
In-Person or Self-Guided

Weighted Vests Walking and Running

Summary: Weighted vests, ranging from 10 to 50 pounds in weight, have become popular among athletes and fitness enthusiasts. Originally used for military and firefighter training, recent research highlights their benefits, including improved cardiovascular fitness and increased calorie burn during activities like running and resistance training. However, using them requires caution to prevent musculoskeletal injuries and gait alterations. To use them effectively: Start with a light weight and gradually increase it. Maintain proper form and avoid overtraining.

Using a weighted vest for running can enhance strength, endurance, and calorie burn, but it should be done with care to minimize injury risk.

Weighted Vests Walking and Running



Weighted vests have gained popularity among athletes, CrossFitters, and even celebrities, typically ranging from 10 to 50 pounds in weight, used to intensify workouts. Historically, they were utilized for training soldiers and firefighters, preparing them for physically demanding tasks. Recent research supports their benefits:

- **Cardiovascular Fitness:** Studies show that running with a weighted vest increases oxygen usage, heart rate, and calorie burn, potentially leading to quicker fitness gains, better running economy, and long-term fat loss. However, these workouts are challenging and best suited for those already in good shape.
- **Resistance Training:** Weighted vests enhance resistance training, with one study demonstrating a 4% improvement in uphill treadmill performance and increased oxygen consumption. Results for calisthenics exercises were less conclusive.
- **Everyday Use:** Even less intense activities like walking uphill with a weighted vest can elevate heart rate and calorie expenditure, benefiting cardiovascular health and metabolism.

While research is limited regarding muscle gain, it's clear that weighted vests can significantly improve cardiovascular health. However, potential risks include musculoskeletal injuries, especially with heavier loads, and changes in gait, which may increase injury risk.

Wearing a weighted vest can potentially improve your running performance in several ways, but it's essential to use them appropriately and with caution:

- **Increased Intensity:** Running with a weighted vest adds resistance, which can make your runs more challenging. This can help you build strength, endurance, and cardiovascular fitness.
- **Calorie Burn:** Running with a weighted vest increases the intensity of your workout, which can lead to burning more calories. This can be beneficial for weight management and fat loss.
- **Strength and Stamina:** The added weight can enhance your leg and core strength, potentially improving your ability to maintain good running form over longer distances.
- **Cardiovascular Fitness:** Running with a weighted vest may increase your heart rate and oxygen consumption, which can contribute to improved cardiovascular fitness over time.

However, it's crucial to be cautious when incorporating weighted vests into your running routine:

- **Start Light:** Begin with a relatively light weight (around 2-3kg) and gradually increase it as your body adapts to the added load.
- **Good Form:** Maintain proper running form to reduce the risk of injury. Adding a weighted vest can alter your gait, so pay close attention to your stride and posture.
- **Avoid Overtraining:** Running with a weighted vest can be more demanding on your joints and muscles. Be mindful not to overtrain, and allow your body time to recover between sessions.

Overall, for individuals in good health without existing injuries, weighted vests can be used safely to enhance workouts, provided they are introduced gradually to minimize injury risk.