

high energy

Fitness legend Kathy Smith is all about results, and assures us that few modern approaches deliver like metabolic training.

BY MARILYN DEMARTINI

KATHY SMITH HAS MADE IT HER business to act as guinea pig for the many methods that spring up within the health and fitness industry. When she encounters a philosophy without merit, she lets it fall to the wayside. And when a new fitness trick offers value, she incorporates it into her time-tested routine. These days, this 62-year-old single mother of two—who barely looks 40—is all about one thing: metabolic training.

THROUGH HER LONG-STANDING MULTI-MEDIA CAREER—INCLUDING TV SHOWS, HEALTH AND FITNESS MAGAZINES, AND HER PROLIFIC BOOK AND VIDEO COLLECTION, KATHY SMITH HAS EDUCATED GENERATIONS ON HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND FITNESS ROUTINES. HER ENDORSEMENT HAS SOLD LIFESTYLE PRODUCTS VALUED AT OVER \$300 MILLION. BECAUSE IF KATHY SMITH USES IT, EATS IT, OR DRINKS IT, IT MUST BE GOOD FOR YOU.

“The word ‘metabolic’ translates to the breaking down of food into energy,” Smith says. The high-intensity interval training (or HIIT) uses “bursts” or “push” sessions that alternate intense levels of exercise and brief rest periods, in timed intervals. The protocol yields amazing results. Just ask any speed and performance athlete.

Why the great results with HIIT? We burn more calories working at peak levels, alternating between active rest periods. The added benefit is the residual calorie burn after the workout—referred to as the EPOC (Excess Post-Exercise Oxygen Consumption). As your cells continue to need more oxygen, they are multiplying and working harder after the workout. Smith notes HIIT is catching on in programs such as CrossFit, P90X, and Tabata training. “These metabolic workouts indicate that something new is happening, which can change our workouts, our bodies, and our weight,” she says.

If you properly prepare for a high-intensity workout, benefits such as increased stamina, strength, and accel-



Ropes training will offer fast and fun firming intensity.

erated caloric burn-off will soon follow. However, poor preparation can lead to injury. Smith suggests adapting a training system used by athletes that cycles movements (repetitions, volume, and intensity, for example) that allows them to build strength and rest, according to the seasonal demands of their sport.

Once this program is established, she suggests building strength by adding resistance. Follow this by building speed and then adding “push” to the normal level of training with resistance, incline, or speed. Follow with rest. The body requires time to heal, and to avoid injury.

Fabio Comana, director of continuing education for the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM), says that women handle exercise differently than men. Therefore, they need to approach workouts in their own way.

Estrogen can, in certain circumstances, limit the conversion of glucose to adenosine triphosphate, the coenzyme that “powers” cells. Women also have fewer “fast-twitch” fibers, less muscle mass, and lower blood

volume—factors that can add “drag” to one’s athletic performance and endurance.

Comana says women benefit from high intensity training, though they may need longer periods of recuperation between intervals. He recommends an evaluation of fitness level before embarking on a program. “A professional can identify weaknesses through movement evaluations and prepare the body for intense training,” he says.

While Smith recognizes the biological and physical differences between women and men, she encourages women to proceed wisely into metabolic training. “Differences shouldn’t stop us,” Smith says.

Smith sees high-intensity training as just one tool in a vast toolbox, designed to keep us at the top of our game. “High-intensity intervals can help us achieve our fitness goals in a time crunch, or when we are trying to train for something special. But let’s not lose sight of our long-term goal: life-long fitness. For a healthy life, exercise—at high or moderate intensity—is non-negotiable.” ●

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kathy's HIIT tips

Run or cycle to achieve the top level of intensity, and then scale back a bit for your recovery phase. If you don’t run or bike, you can walk your way to high-intensity intervals.

Try LeanWalk, Smith’s 3-part series of one-hour audio workouts, which gradually incorporates a higher intensity metabolic workout (kathysmith.com). New You readers can download the MP3 files for

free until March 23, 2014, using the code, **NEWYOUSPECIAL**. Along with exercises, the workouts include motivating music, messages, and tips on how to use your muscles and clear your head.

HIGH-INTENSITY WALKING

Walk at a warm-up pace, pumping your arms as you walk to increase your level to a moderate intensity (where you can still carry on a conversation). Use Kathy’s “push/squeeze” technique by pushing through your toes and squeezing your glutes while keeping your abdominals tight.

Now, walking at a moderate pace, you can increase to a higher level, staying concentrated on your walking technique. Slow back down to a recovery pace, breathing steadily and following your breaths with shoulder lifts and squeezes to release any tension. Get ready for a good stretch.

When you can comfortably walk a mile in 20 minutes or less, you are ready to move on to intervals of higher intensity or longer walks.

GOOD MOVES

In addition to walking, running, or cycling, you can use these two exercises in your high-intensity training to add some variety. Change it up by alternating levels and adding rotational moves.

180

◆ Place your weight on your right foot and pivot your body 180 degrees back to the left. Land on the left foot with a wide stance with your body facing left.

◆ As your left foot lands, brace your core and squat down for

two pulses. Sit back into a squat position, raise your back up just a few inches, quickly squat back down, and return to standing.

◆ Keeping your right foot as the anchor, pivot 180 degrees forward, until your body faces right. When you land with a

wide stance, do two pulse-squats.

◆ Do 16 repetitions on each side.

Master move

◆ Turn the pivoting into a propulsion (forward push): Instead of keeping the right foot anchored to the floor, explode up into the air.

◆ As you jump, use the propulsion and your abdominal strength to rotate your body a full 180 degrees. So if you start facing left, do two pulse-squats, explode up into a jump, rotate while in the air, and land facing right. Do another two pulse-squats, and repeat in the other direction.

TIP

Maintain a tight, stabilized midsection, making sure that every time you squat down, your weight is in your heels and your hips sink down behind you. Don’t let your knees jut out past your toes.

SPIDERMAN

◆ Start with a basic squat: Stand with legs slightly wider than hip-width apart; lower the hips down into squat position.

◆ As you’re squatting down, reach the left hand toward the floor and the right hand toward the ceiling. Keep your neck and shoulders relaxed.

◆ Press yourself back up to standing and then repeat on the other side: right hand now reaching to the floor while the left hand reaches toward the ceiling (a)

Master move

◆ Add some propulsion. Instead of returning to standing in between each squat, press up into a small jump. Be sure to land with

soft knees after each jump.
◆ Imagine that the propulsion is being driven not by your feet, legs, or momentum, but by your core. This will help ensure that you maintain safe and proper form while still getting the most out of this—and every—move (b).



TIP

Start slowly and gently and keep your core muscles engaged throughout the move. Be sure not to lock the knees, landing softly each time.