

Choosing an Exercise Machine

Modern technology has resulted in the creation of exercise machines which can be used at home and which can be effective, and add variety in exercise for weight loss. Some that are heavily promoted however are little less than a 'rip off'.

The general principle is that "if you don't work, the machine won't work".

So don't hold out any promise of getting something for nothing – despite what the TV advertisements might tell you. Below is a guide for choosing exercise machines, highlighted with an * are those that are best suited for fat loss.

Rating of machines for weight loss

Rating equipment

Item	Advantages	Disadvantages
Treadmill*	Indoor use in cool climates; functional; consistent on joints	Expense; not useful if lower limb problems
Stair climbers* Ski machines etc. Exercise Bikes*	Indoor use; effective energy use; Convenient; good if overweight or have arthritis	Expense; boredom
Rowing machine *	Good all round exercise; uses upper body	Can get boring; often poorly built; resistance may not be alterable; expense
Weights*	Versatility; able to vary programs; wide range of equipment.	May maintain some bulk; Needs sufficient weights, fitness and experience in designing a program
Mini-Tramps*	Novelty; less stress on lower limbs; not overly difficult	Possible injury; motivation over a prolonged period;
Skipping Rope	Low cost; convenient, less impact than running, involves upper body	Can be boring; possible joint injuries for knees and hips
Saunas/ steam baths, hot tubs	Relaxing	No fat loss; dangerous for some i.e. with heart problems, high blood pressure; may cause allergies, infections
Passive exercise equipment (rollers, etc)	Minor massage effect	Some dangers e.g. in injury; no effect on fatness or fitness; almost totally useless
'Tummytrimmers'; electric stimulators; 'sweat pants'	None	Waste of money

* Recommended for fat loss

For more information on exercise and fitness go to www.lifestylemedicine.net.au OR email info@lifestylemedicine.net.au