

HORSE RIDING FOR FITNESS: EQUESTRIAN WEIGHT LIFTING AND STRENGTH TRAINING

Article courtesy of FitnessHigh.com

Horse riding is not just a pastime for the fit, Horse riding is not just a pastime for the fit, but a sport that can make you fit. Horse riding is a great fitness potion, which can be both fun and challenging. Horse riding is an enjoyable activity that helps improve fitness, balance, co-ordination and confidence. One should be warned that first few times would make you aware of the muscles that you never knew existed, reason being that they will undoubtedly ache but if you have the will power to hang on then you are bound to be rewarded with the great workout and fit body. Horse riding is fast becoming passion among the fittest physically and mentally. There are many vaunted benefits of horse riding. A riding session addresses many fitness aspects; fat burning, limbering up, strengthening the core, boosting flexibility, quicker reflexes, better relationships, no boredom, no exercise blues, and a great stress buster.

Equestrian Weight Lifting and Strength Training are great way to improve muscle mass, more flexibility and agility needed to become avid horse rider. Muscular strength assists horseback riders in better controlling a horse, both from the ground and in the saddle, letting the horse know who is boss and in riding more safely. A horse can easily decipher if a rider is weak and ineffective. Not only will a horse sometimes simply not respond to a weak rider, but he also can react badly because the weak and ineffective rider is not capable of giving the horse the confidence for which he looks to the rider to provide at uncertain moments.

Benefits derived from Equestrian Weight Lifting & Strength Training include:

1. Decreasing the chances of serious injury.
2. Helping injuries heal quicker
3. Looking better and more elegant in the saddle.
4. Making riding more enjoyable
5. Increasing metabolism by increasing muscle mass (which usually decreases every year after the age of 25).

Horse riding is useful considering these following fitness aspects:

Fat Burning: Consider an interesting fact, an hour of trotting blasts 450-600 Kcal. Graduate to galloping or countryside racing and you could incinerate up to 1000 kcal in 60 minutes. Do this even 3 days a week and you'll never need to step inside a gym ever.

Limbering Up: Try mounting a 6 ft tall horse with chest-high stirrups. Every leg muscle is called on to execute the act. Sitting astride a steed also replicates the traditional squat that works the quads and hamstrings – a stance you'll be maintaining at least 30 minutes apiece.

Strengthening the Core: Balancing yourself on a moving horse is as good as working out on an unstable surface such as a Swiss ball, which forces the postural muscles (abs, back) to come into play. In addition, horse riding massages the tailbone, the effects of which reach deep into the spine and improve the blood circulation, according to avid riders.

Boosting Flexibility: To stave off post riding fatigue and muscle pain, an hour of walking and 30 minutes of stretching is recommended. Bonus points: More calories burnt.

Quicker Reflexes: Managing a steed involves a lot of leg, hand and eye co-ordination and pro-active judgment.

Better Relationships: Riding is not just about technique, but about establishing a rapport with the horse. It is a teamwork that takes time, patience, and understanding to nurture. Qualities you need sorely in every aspect of life, whether it's dealing with the fussy boss or spouse.

No Boredom, No Exercise Blues: This is one factor even a one week old rider would swear by. The reason is you are riding an intelligent animal that has its own moods and thought processes. And no one, not even an ace horseman, can ever predict how a ride will turn out to be. It's this element of mystery that keeps the tempo high.

A Great Stress Buster: Horse riding biggest virtue is that it has a calming effect. The rhythmic trot, the wind brushing against your face, and the sense of release that you get on a horseback can soothe even the most agitated of nerves.

So Saddle Up!