

Friday the 13th and Other Scary Things at the Gym – Part 2

Inspired by the hit movie series, Friday the 13th is often considered a really scary day. Unfortunately, we see scary things at the gym as well. In our last Friday the 13th article, we examined sit-ups, cardio machines, and the scale. Unfortunately, we continue to see other scary things so, just like the movie series, we've done a sequel article as well. Here are a few things often seen at the gym that make us shudder and should be avoided.

People who don't warm up – This is just asking for trouble. Not only are you risking injury, but you won't get the most out of your workout. Your whole body just works better if warmed-up properly.



People who only train with machines – Some exercise machines are ok in certain instances but working out with free weights, cables, and doing body weight exercises is a much more functional and effective way of training as these types of exercises mimic real life or sport movements more closely. As opposed to machine-based workouts, this type of training forces you to engage more muscles, improve muscle function, coordination and performance, reduce the chance of injury, and burn more calories.

Calf raises – Unless you are training specifically for a sport that requires explosive sprinting or jumping (such as volleyball or high jump), then calf raises are just not necessary. Your calves contract with every step you take and are more often than not, over-worked and tight. Performing calf raises at the gym just worsens this problem and is a recipe for injury. If anything, take extra time to stretch them at the end of your workout.

People who forget to cool down – The end of your workout is a great opportunity to let your body slowly relax and is the best time to make gains in flexibility which is an important component of having a healthy body. Don't forget to stretch those calves!

People who don't rest – The same people should not be seen lifting weights at the gym every day. After a resistance training session, your body actually gets stronger in its recovery phase which typically lasts 36-48 hours. Training every day does not give your body adequate time to recover meaning you won't be getting the most out of that next workout and you are predisposing yourself to injury.

Yes, the gym can be scary, complicated, and even dangerous if you don't know what you are doing. Hire a certified trainer (if even for one session!) to show you the ropes and help you get the most out of your workout time. Just avoid any trainer that wears a mask and carries a chainsaw. Happy Friday the 13th!

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