Strength Track

Strength Training Benefits & Basics
Strength training has many benefits including increased strengthening of bones, muscles and connective tissues (the tendons and ligaments). This increased strength also decreases the risk of injury.

There are many different ways of strength training. It is important to find what works for you and stick to it. Many exercises can be combined into a program that works all the major muscle groups. Neglecting certain groups can lead to strength imbalances and postural difficulties. Your personal trainer can help you develop a safe, effective program.

Training Guidelines
Aim to exercise each muscle group at least two times per week, with a minimum of one days of rest between workouts. Training more frequently or adding more sets may lead to slightly greater gains, but the minimal added benefit may not be worth the extra time and effort (not to mention the added risk of injury).

One set of eight to 12 repetitions, working the muscles to the point of fatigue, is usually sufficient. Breathe normally throughout the exercise. Lower the resistance with a slow, controlled cadence throughout the full range of motion. Lifting the weight to a count of 2 and lowering it to a count of 3 or 4 is effective. When you are able to perform 12 repetitions of an exercise correctly (without cheating), increase the amount of resistance by 5 to 10% to continue making safe progress.

Don’t forget about cardio! If you want to get strong, you need a well-rounded exercise program. Make sure to meet the basic guidelines for cardiovascular fitness as part of your workouts. Adults should get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes each week of aerobic physical activity that requires moderate effort. Physical activity experts say that spreading aerobic activity out over at least 3 days a week is best. Also, do each activity for at least 10 minutes at a time. There are many ways to fit in 2 hours and 30 minutes a week. For example, you can do 30 minutes of aerobic activity each day, for 5 days.

What should you do for Strength Training?
There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether it's at home or the gym. Great ways to strength your muscles included:

- Lifting free weights or weight machines
- Working with resistance bands
- Doing exercises that use your body weight for resistance (push-ups, sit ups). Taking a Yoga or TRX Class is a great way to gain strength by lifting your own body weight.

Ask your trainer to help you set up a strength training program to help you meet your specific goals.