

Get in better shape in less time at Fitness Xpress

By Ruth Fields
Courier Advertising Writer

Teresa Adams is no stranger to working out. Over the years, she worked out in lots of gyms, sometimes taking group classes, and also worked out in her home. She stayed strong, slender and fit.

When Teresa was 39, her daughter, Jesse, was born. Afterwards, Teresa found it increasingly difficult to stay in peak physical condition. She tried to “sneak in a couple of days a week” at a local gym, taking Jesse with her, but when Jesse got older, she was bored with her mom’s gym routine. Gym workouts seemed to take a long time because Teresa often had to wait for her favorite equipment to become available. Teresa found herself working out less and less.

“My family is the most important thing in the world to me,” she said. “I work full time, so any extra time I have, I want to spend with Jesse and my husband.”

Still, Teresa knew that staying fit was not only important to her health, but also helped her to look and feel better.

“Most of Jesse’s friends’ mothers are about 10 years younger,” Teresa said. “I didn’t want people to think I was her grandmother.”

Teresa could tell that she was losing muscle tone and strength, so when a friend told her about Fitness Xpress, it sounded like a good idea. At Fitness Xpress, trainers work one-on-one with clients for just 20 to 30 minutes, one to two times a week.

In February 2008, Teresa, a controller for a local chemical company, began coming to Fitness Xpress once a week on her lunch hour. By that time, it had been almost a year since she had worked out.

Teresa quickly began to see the advantages of working out at Fitness Xpress. Rather than waiting until after work, when she was tired, she could work out during her lunch hour. Workouts at Fitness Xpress run strictly on schedule, so Teresa never had to wait for her workout to begin.

In addition, she was surprised to discover that, as promised, she didn’t even need to shower afterwards. Fitness Xpress workouts use more weight than most strength training regimens, but feature limited, slow repeti-

tions in a 68-degree studio. Participants report that they don’t perspire when working out.

As an added bonus, when Teresa returned to work after working out, she felt better.

“It’s like a runner’s high,” she said. “Your body feels tired but your mind is alert again.”

After just a few weeks, Teresa saw such a dramatic



Teresa Adams works with Kirk Gary, owner and trainer at Fitness Xpress.

increase in her strength and fitness, she began working out at Fitness Xpress twice a week. Just eleven months later, she has become dramatically stronger, more than doubling the weight she can press on some machines. On the leg press, she can handle an astounding 720 pounds of resistance.

Teresa is amazed that she has been able to improve her fitness so much by working out for just 40 minutes a week – better results than she attained when working out four hours a week at a gym. Her goal is to be in the best shape of her life by the time she turns 50 later this year.

“Seriously, this is the best workout I have ever done for the amount of time you put into it and the results you get out of it,” Teresa said, “and I have been working out for a long time.”

Fitness Xpress utilizes slow cadence strength training, an exercise protocol that has recently surged in popularity. When using more weight and slow, limited repetitions, the work is done by muscles – not momentum. Muscles are exercised intensely, but only once or twice a week, so that they have a chance to rest and strengthen between workouts.

“You do less and accomplish more,” said Debra Moyer, fitness manager and trainer at Fitness Xpress. “You get maximum benefits in a minimum amount of time.”

Because weights are lifted slowly, clients can work out without fear of injuring their joints. Surprisingly, clients usually experience little or no muscle soreness after workouts.

Kirk Gary, owner of Fitness Xpress, has found that clients are pleased that they get such great results from their limited time in the studio.

“I always ask the question, ‘do you like to sweat?’ Then don’t and you can still be in shape.”

Some clients lose weight, Kirk said, as long as they don’t view their workouts as a free pass to overindulge in beer and barbecue. Others don’t lose weight, but as they build muscle and lose fat, they notice that their clothes are baggy.

“They say, ‘I haven’t lost any weight, but I just went out and bought smaller pants,’” he said.

Fitness Xpress has clients of all ages. The studio specializes in over-40 fitness and even has one client in her nineties.

To Debra, working out at Fitness Xpress makes good sense. Most people, she said, wouldn’t work five or six days at their jobs if they could find a way to get more work done in one or two days. The same concept applies to working out: why spend more time when you get better results from less?

“If you’re going to the gym three to four days a week,” she said, “you’re wasting your time.”

FITNESS XPRESS

Specializing in over-40 Fitness

3401 West Davis Street

936-539-5678

fitnessxpressstudios.com

People of all ages gain strength and fitness at Fitness Xpress

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When 94-year-old Verna Simmons fell while climbing up the steps to her daughter's home on a Thursday in late April, her daughter, Linda Harrison, rushed to her aid. It was the eighth time that Verna had fallen in the previous three years.

Although earlier falls had resulted in broken bones, an emergency room examination revealed lots of blood and bruises, but no fractures. Considering Verna's age, emergency room personnel were amazed.

Remarkably, Verna only missed one session at Fitness Xpress, where she had been working out twice a week for about two months. By the Monday following her fall, she was working out again.

"That was the most inspiring thing I have ever seen," said Debra Moyer, fitness manager and trainer at Fitness Xpress.

Linda believes that Verna's strength-training regimen was a main reason that she didn't break any bones when she fell. That's reason enough for Linda to encourage Verna to continue her exercise program.

"She sees that I come," Verna said. "She knows what's good for me."

Linda, however, doesn't have to coerce her mother. Verna said she feels better after working out and enjoys coming to Fitness Xpress.

"I truly love it," she said. "I am going to hang in there until I get to be 100."

Meanwhile, Linda has also been working out at Fitness Xpress and has quickly increased her strength. She has also lost inches and has noticed that her joint pain has diminished. As an added bonus, she is now able to assist her mother without straining her back and arms.

Verna and Linda had high praise for Debra, who works with them one-on-one.

"She's my buddy. She is so good," Verna said. "If it wasn't for

her, I would be under the ground."

Although Verna gets aggravated that she can no longer do some of the things she once enjoyed, like playing in a ukulele band, she can still do a lot.

"She does so many things for herself," Linda said. "Most people at 75 and 80 can't do things that she does for herself."

Meanwhile, Debra has been amazed at Verna's progress. Since February, she has doubled the weight she lifts with large muscle groups.

"It has been amazing to see the transformation," Debra said. "I work with women who are in their 40s and 50s and I tell them, 'You have to keep up with Verna. She's doing more weight than you are.'"

Every day, Linda said, Verna does something of value, either for herself or for her family, and she credits Verna's commitment to exercise for allowing her to continue.

"Exercise keeps her going," she said. "This has been the best thing she has ever done for herself."

Ever since the business opened last year, area residents of all ages have discovered that they can get fit and gain strength at Fitness Xpress, most of them with just one 30-minute workout per week.

Fitness Xpress utilizes slow cadence strength training, which is based on a philosophy that is quickly gaining in popularity. In slow cadence strength training, participants use more weight, but perform fewer repetitions than in traditional strength workouts; repetitions are done slowly, so all the work is done by the muscles, unaided by momentum.

Muscles are exercised to a level of maximum benefit, but only once a week, so that they have a chance to rest and strengthen.

"You do less and accomplish more," Debra said. "You get maximum benefits in a minimum amount of time."

Studies indicate that sedentary adults can lose one percent of their strength per year after age 30. After decades of neglecting muscles, the continual loss in strength can mean that those in their 60s and 70s will be able to do few of the things they enjoyed when they were younger. However, Debra said, studies also show that as much as 50 percent of the lost strength can be regained through conscientious strength training, even by people of advancing age.

"It's never too late to start. We work with any age, any fitness

level," Debra said. "If you are just starting out and haven't done anything for years and years, obviously you are not going to be as strong as someone who has been working out regularly."

Fitness Xpress is especially forgiving of middle-aged participants because it utilizes hydraulic machines combined with slow cadence strength training—a combination that makes joint injuries uncommon.

Not surprisingly, although Fitness Xpress works with clients of all ages, most of the company's clients are middle aged. Most of them have chosen to incorporate strength training into their lives so that they can continue to do the things they enjoy. Many of them hope Fitness Xpress will help them lose weight, and for good reason: studies show that metabolism is boosted as muscles become stronger. To help clients utilize the synergy that results when they pursue strength training and eat right, Fitness Xpress counsels clients on good nutrition.

Clients report many advantages to working out at Fitness Xpress. Many appreciate the private, non-intimidating environment at the studio. Because they work one-on-one with Debra, they don't have to be concerned about using equipment improperly and don't have to worry about what they look like or what they're wearing.

In addition, clients like being able to get all their strength training done in one 30-minute session; sessions run on schedule, so they know they'll be out on time. During the rest of the week, clients pursue the cardiovascular exercise of their choice on their own. Some choose to come by Fitness Xpress to work on cardio equipment; others cycle, run, walk or play tennis.

"You need to do something that you enjoy," Debra said. "If you don't enjoy it, you're not going to keep doing it."

While some clients work out at Fitness Xpress to lose weight or stay in shape, others, like Verna, want to gain strength in order to stay active in their senior years. Regardless of their goals, Debra finds it satisfying to watch them progress.

"Each person has different goals," she said, "but I enjoy seeing them become successful."



Debra Moyer, fitness manager and trainer at Fitness Xpress, works with Verna Simmons twice a week.

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