

## **Not So Old Fashioned Medicine Ball Training**

The use of medicine balls for fitness and sport activities dates back to the Ancient Greeks. More recently than that – in the 1920s – they were used to restore muscle function in patients. And now, they have made even more of a come back and are regularly used as part of strength and conditioning, and general fitness workouts.

Medicine balls are extremely versatile pieces of training equipment and there's a huge range of exercises that can be done with them. They are also easy to use, relatively inexpensive and come in a range of shapes, sizes and weights, which means there are medicine balls and medicine ball exercises for everyone.

Unlike a lot of machine weight or free weight exercises, most medicine ball exercises involve moving the body as a unit rather than just individual or localised parts of it. These actions mimic the body's natural flow of movement and make medicine ball training valuable for both daily living activities as well as fitness and sport related activities.

Many medicine ball exercises involve rotation – particularly of the core muscles around the mid section (the abdominal muscles, lower back and hip muscles). These exercises are extremely effective for developing core strength which is essential for stabilising the body, strengthening the link between the lower body and upper body, and for effectively transferring force from the lower body to the upper body when we engage in activities such as throwing, hitting, twisting and bending. Since the body's functional chain (lower body – core – upper body) is only as strong as its weakest link and core strength is often overlooked in strength training, doing medicine ball exercises for core strength is one of the best uses medicine balls can be put to.

There are lots of medicine ball exercises for both the lower and upper body. And one of the greatest advantages of medicine ball training is that many of these exercises can be done at different speeds of movement – from slow and controlled to dynamic and explosive. This means that both strength and power can be trained with medicine balls.

By using different weighted medicine balls for different exercises, a total strength and conditioning program can be developed for almost everyone. Ask Hyperactive Fitness Training for more information about safe and effective medicine ball workouts.

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