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# Society

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# Muscle out ill-health

**Building muscle safely is the most important physical activity you can undertake to maintain life-long health, says exercise instructor Dr Aji Razak**

By Ritwick AK | Photos by Firoz Ahmed



Dr Aji Razak

In the weight-watching and waist-watching world of the fitness conscious, where pumping iron in a gym or sweating it out in the open, doing 10 laps of the local park is the done thing, Dr Aji Razak of Enter The Exercise, Barwa Village could be speaking the equivalent of gibberish. But that is only for those have been blindly pursuing fitness trends. The body strengthening exercises that he advocates have been known at least to some fitness enthusiasts around the world for some time now.

These not very common exercises have now come to town and with the tiny amount of time it demands to stay fit, it wouldn't be surprising if this regimen becomes the talk of the town in future. In addition to building one's physique to its fullest potential it could be panacea for aches, excruciating pains and also for controlling one's cholesterol and blood glucose.

This writer first heard about Dr Aji's fitness centre from an acquaintance. His nephew used to religiously jog for an hour each day. Then he gave up jogging after joining Enter The Exercise. Some months later, what impressed the acquaintance was that his nephew had become unbelievably muscular after doing as few as one or two 20-minute sessions a week at the new fitness centre. This sounded incredible to my gym-obsessed mind, so I decided to quiz the slight-built, bespectacled exercise trainer who is a qualified medical doctor as well.

## Testimonials

*"I was advised surgery for my shoulder injury right before I joined Enter The Exercise. The progress has been nothing short of miraculous."*

**Shamseer P**

*"Workout ups my energy to achieve and I feel like a teen altogether."*

**Christy Thomas**

*"My friends who spend one to two hours at the gym three days a week are amazed at my body transformation from the 15-minute workout sessions performed infrequently."*

16-year-old **Faraz M**

*"I have tried many methods for my back pain. My back never felt this better."*

**Jyothi**

## Why do we need body strengthening exercise and what is the prescribed age to start?

The only way, short of pharmaceuticals to affect any subsystem of the body, be it cardiovascular, respiratory, neurological or endocrine, is by doing mechanical work with muscle. Strength training is the most efficient way to do that. Muscle is the one factor we can control and develop to help maintain all of these other subsystems. Unfortunately, after your mid to late twenties, you begin to lose a certain quantity of muscle each year. Proper strength training is the only method that can reverse this.

Muscle is also the biggest driver of your metabolism and it is the natural loss of lean tissue as we age that makes it so easy to gain unwanted fat. Muscle also acts as

a cushion around the body's bones and joints, stabilising them and protecting them against trauma. Muscles absorb the impact, keeping your bones and organs safe. Strength training also increases bone mineral density, effectively reversing or halting osteoporosis and keeping your bones strong as you age. In short, building muscle safely is the most important physical activity you can undertake to maintain life-long health.

In many cases it is the best way older adults can engage in strength exercise. That is because the controlled lifting speeds, watchful eyes, and special equipment won't exacerbate any pre-existing injuries. Also, the older we get, the faster we lose muscle, which leads to falls, injuries, digestive disruptions, joint problems, and loss of bone density. The key



to preventing all these issues is engaging in a safe, yet intense strength-training programme.

Children can begin strength exercise at any age from when they are capable of following instructions.

**Q What needs to be done before a person begins body strengthening exercise?**

**a** Absolutely not different from beginning any other physical activity or enrolling in any other exercise programme. But of course a detailed personal exercise history and medical history are discussed before we set a programme for the beginning client

**Q Are weights used with a gradual increase?**

**a** Yes, thanks to the well-designed low friction equipment, resistance can be increased progressively, using smaller increments, depending on the client's

improvements in performance.

**Q How often and for how long do these exercises have to be performed?**

**a** Twenty minutes, once a week is all you need to set into motion the chain reaction in the body to start building stronger muscles. Once stimulated, the best thing you can do is to let nature do its thing -- You need at minimum of four to five days and up to two weeks before your body has the chance to adapt metabolically and synthesise stronger muscles. Exercise stimulates the body to improve, but it is the body that produces the improvements. For the body to produce the fitness and appearance improvements stimulated by the workout, time off for recovery and adaptation is required. While the required time for recovery and response, varies between individuals, we have found most people experience the best results training once every week.

Some people achieve better results training slightly more frequently, and some do better training less frequently. The instructor will determine the best training frequency for you, based on your body's response to exercise and then results you want to achieve.

**Q How long does each exercise session last?**

**a** A professionally-supervised workout is very time-effective. The body receives a greater exercise stimulus with less wasted time. A session would last for 15-20 minutes in most cases.

**Q What precautions need to be taken by the person performing these exercises?**

**a** The exercise subject is instructed preliminaries before commencing the exercise. Otherwise precautions are the same as engaging in any other sport or recreational physical activity.

**Q What happens within our bodies when we perform body strengthening exercises?**

**a** Physiological changes at the cellular level that happen when mechanical work is performed by skeletal muscles occurs when a subject performs SE.

On observation we can see changes in the heart rate and breath rate. Also increase in body temperature due to heat released when energy is produced during muscular contraction.

Right from your first workout your body's biology is being pushed to change for the better. Many trainees report the feeling of 'something's happening' within the first 2-3 weeks of the programme. If you're working out consistently (just 20 minutes, once a week) by Week Six you should definitely feel stronger, have less overall fatigue, and your aches and pains should be lessened. Within 12 weeks most people start to see the physical changes in body composition.

**Q Does every person have to do every exercise and in a particular order or can it be done randomly?**

**a** Every workout is individually customised as per the subject's needs. Every workout is different and may differ from

one individual to the other. So workouts are not based on a defined order.

### Q Are there specific exercises for specific benefits?

A Yes. There are specific exercises for specific needs such as in the case of pre-existing injuries.

### Q What makes the equipment used for body strengthening different from equipment one would find in a gym?

A Enter The Exercise's state-of-the-art, American imported, handcrafted equipment is engineered specifically for the performance of the scientifically advanced exercise protocol used at the facility for the programme.

The equipment provides resistance that matches muscle strength in all positions of movement, by the use of special cams. The cams and lever match strength curve and resistance curve.

The extremely low-friction equipment works the body in accordance with muscle and joint functions and correct biomechanics. This enables a complete workout with the highest exercise quality in minimum time.

The equipment provides the best exercise stimulus with the ultimate in safety. The exercise protocol on the Enter The Exercise equipment applies minimal and safe resistance to the body within the protection of constraints and ergonomically-correct positioning. This ensures kindness to joints. Entry and exit are achieved without loading the muscles until properly positioned on each machine. The equipment accommodates clients of all sizes.

### Q What foods are best avoided for maximum gain during body strengthening to maintain weight and muscle fitness at an optimum level?

A In our programme no changes are made in food habits for the first few sessions. After which the clients are educated on the best way to care for their health, based on the latest nutritional information available. In most cases we don't count calories nor advise clients

on calorie restricted crash diets. Better knowledge on anti-nutrients and correcting nutritional deficiencies have shown to equip the clients in making better choices often resulting in improved hormonal balance, reduced inflammation and stronger immune system. Which usually leads to spontaneous change in body composition. 'Intentional weight loss', quite often promoted these days may not be the healthiest solution for most subjects interested in losing excess body fat.

### Q How are body strengthening exercises performed and how do they gradually progress to an advanced level?

A We focus your muscles to work hard, safely and make it unable to rely on momentum to propel movement. And, because your movement is less jerky, the risk of injury is reduced.

Using specialised equipment we provide a full-body workout by doing only three to five compound exercises. Our focus is on strengthening and maintaining muscle. This will help to supercharge your metabolism and to increase cardiovascular endurance, which will make you leaner and stronger.

After your workout, we advise a resting period of at least four to seven days. During this recovery time, your body will actually build stronger muscle fibres. The recommended resting period allows your body sufficient time to recover while still burning fat. Also, your already busy schedule is gifted with more free time to live your life to the fullest and participate in the activities that bring you pleasure and joy

The protocol greatly reduces the forces that commonly cause injury to your joints, muscles, and connective tissue.

Controlled movement also reduces momentum, which requires the muscle to do most of the work. The result is a much more efficient workout. When you can no longer move the resistance, the stimulus for muscle strengthening has begun.

Armed with the knowledge that you can train without injury, you will have the confidence to push your muscles to the

## Enter The Exercise

- Low force total body strength training programme
- Once to twice a week for 20 minutes
- Clinically controlled environment (room temperature maintained. Private, distraction-free environment (no music, no mirrors, no loud clients or instructors)
- State-of-the-art (scientifically advanced) equipment (engineered to provide low friction and match human muscle joint function)
- By appointment

required level of fatigue, making your workout more effective.

The combination of a nutrition plan and the strength training at Enter the Exercise is the one-two punch you need for a complete body makeover.

### Q What benefits can an obese person expect while performing these exercises?

A An obese person can improve hormonal imbalances, very common in such cases and begin a cascade of chain reactions that lead to spontaneous change in body composition. In other words, they shed excess body fat in a healthier, safer and long-lasting way as they advance in strength exercise, leading to total body transformation. In most cases this requires dietary changes which are introduced as the client progresses.

### Q Can a person suffering from arthritis or regular muscular pain perform body strengthening exercises for benefits?

A The advanced exercise protocol is the most joint friendly way of exercising subjects with such issues and our clients with joint issues have shown remarkable progress. The reduction in total body inflammation and improved immune system have greatly benefited those subjects suffering from high uric and other such issues. Numerous research both new and old, supports the improvements we often witness at the facility ●