

For up-to-the-minute cardio tips, go to news.MensHealth.com.

WINNER IS SERVED

Serving in volleyball can be nerve-racking. Stop worrying: **Smashing a volleyball won't help you score, but neither will babying it,** new Spanish research reveals. A slow serve makes it easy for your opponent to react, while a fast one is too risky. Moderate velocity is the most effective. The perfect rec-league move? The "jump float" serve, says lead author Bernat Buscà, Ph.D. As you run forward, toss the ball up in front of your hitting shoulder, jump, and high-five the ball with a stiff wrist.

ON OUR RADAR

Candy for Cardio

Is dark chocolate the perfect off-week snack? In a Wayne State University study, mice fed epicatechin (found in cacao) after 5 weeks of treadmill training maintained their cardio gains. Epicatechin may help preserve the ability to efficiently transport oxygen.

46

MONTHLY DOLLAR COST OF THE AVERAGE GUY'S GYM MEMBERSHIP

Source: Mintel

Your Perfect Gym

A 2011 Mintel survey revealed what men value most in a gym. That's important, since the atmosphere can make or break your exercise resolve, says Cedric Bryant, Ph.D., chief science officer for the American Council on Exercise. How does your gym measure up?

63%

CLOSE TO HOME

Clock the drive when you'd normally go to the gym. It should take no longer than half an hour.

55%

CLEAN LOCKER ROOM

Stop by during peak hours. Be leery of carpet, where bacteria thrive.

52%

LONG HOURS

Pay attention to pool hours, class schedules, and court availability, not just gym hours.

51%

FRIENDLINESS

Attend a group fitness class. An instructor's attitude is a good gauge of the gym's vibe.

47%

LOTS OF CARDIO MACHINES

Machine wait time? No longer than 15 minutes.

46%

NEW EQUIPMENT

New machines tend to have soft, nonboxy angles. Also look for trendy training gear, like kettlebells.

LESS IS MORE

Third time isn't always a charm. **Warming up for too long could slow your sprinting,** a new Tunisian study reveals. Athletes who completed 3 sets of lower-body dynamic stretches, such as butt kicks and knee raises, sprinted more slowly than those who did 1 or 2 sets. More than 10 minutes of dynamic activity can cause acid buildup that slows you down, says study author David Behm, Ph.D.

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