

IS RESISTANCE TRAINING SAFE FOR CHILDREN?

Resistance training refers to a conditioning method that involves working against a different range of resistive loads.

Strength training has traditionally been discouraged for children and adolescents because of unfounded concerns regarding the safety of the skeletally immature population. There were outdated concerns regarding the safety or efficacy of resistance training for youth; however, scientific evidence and clinical impressions indicate that resistance training for youth has the potential to offer observable value for the health and fitness of children and adolescents.

Resistance training can be especially important for today's young athletes who are more likely to specialize in a sport at a young age at the expense of improving general fitness and learning diversified sports skills. In this sense, stronger young athletes will be better prepared to learn complex movements, master sports tactics, and withstand the demands of training and competition, if resistance training programs are properly designed, supervised, and instructed by qualified professionals.

A comprehensive training program based on resistance training and motor skill development can optimize a young athlete's potential to maximize her athletic and sports performance while reducing the risk of sport-related injury. There is now a wealth of scientific literature showing that resistance training is not only safe for young athletes but is routinely associated with increased muscle strength and may indeed play a role in preventing sports-related injuries. It is now almost universally accepted that resistance training, when performed under the close supervision of a qualified instructor, using the proper training equipment, and a gradual progression of loads and skills, can be safe and effective for the young athlete