

## **Kettlebells for Weight Loss, Conditioning and Improved Back Health**

*By Eric Hunter, Natural News*

Kettlebell training was first used during the 1700s, and is today experiencing increased attention as an effective and fun part of a training program. When used correctly, kettlebell exercises build strength and endurance and can be used as part of a weight loss program or when trying to improve back problems. The basic movements engage the entire body and are often used as part of interval training, crossfit, circuit training etc.

The world's most famous spine expert, Dr. Stuart McGill, discovered some unique loading patterns during the kettlebell swing. These loading patterns and the strengthening of the posterior chain contribute to the improved back health some people experience from doing kettlebell exercises. Other studies support these findings and also show that properly performed kettlebell movements reduce pain in the neck and shoulders.

Kettlebell training can be an effective tool when trying to improve strength, power and endurance. Exercises usually involve explosive movements and shouldn't be performed in the slow and controlled way seen in regular weight training. Kettlebell training isn't as effective as Olympic exercises when training for strength, but includes beneficial movements not found in weightlifting and is also easier to learn.

Kettlebells can be an excellent part of an aerobic workout, and research shows that during an intense 20 minute snatch workout, the caloric burn is at least 20 calories per minute. This is according to the researchers off the charts and compares to cross-country skiing up-hill at a fast pace.

Compared to explosive barbell movements; kettlebell exercises can be done with less weight and are easier to perform. This is the reason kettlebells can be an excellent part of a high intensity circuit training or interval training.

### **Getting started with kettlebells**

Beginners with no previous experience should consult an experienced coach who can teach them how to perform the different exercises. The basic movements can usually be learned quickly and are excellent tools when learning hip extension, glute activation and proper movement patterns.

Performing kettlebell exercises the wrong way increases the risk of injury and limits the actual benefits of the exercise.

Females can usually start with a 12 to 26 pound kettlebell, while an appropriate starting weight for males is between 20 and 35 pounds. If the kettlebell is too light, the movement won't engage the glutes and hamstrings properly.

Beginners will usually experience some pain in the wrist area when doing certain exercises. This is natural and will reduce as they adapt to the exercises and improve their technique .

A 20 minute kettlebell workout performed twice a week can be very effective when trying to enhance back health, lose weight and improve strength and endurance. A couple of minutes of work followed by short breaks can be a good start when using kettlebells as part of an aerobic workout.