

## Can Whole Body Vibration Increase your Quality of Life?

What is whole body vibration? Whole body vibration (WBV) training is done on a platform that sends 30-50 vibrations per second through your muscles. It does this through reflexes that contract your muscles subconsciously, without your control. It can reduce pain, increase muscle strength, bone density, and flexibility, as well as increase your mobility and postural control. Basically, it helps slow down the aging process and improves your quality of life, just like exercise does. But what makes this different is the ability to achieve these benefits in a shorter amount of time - greater efficiency. WBV can also be used by those who may have a difficult time exercising due to limited mobility or those with past injuries. Currently, it is being used by several professional sports teams in the training, recovery and rehab of their athletes. Some of these teams include the Anaheim Mighty Ducks, St. Louis Cardinals, NY Mets, Dallas Mavericks, Denver Nuggets, Tennessee Titans, San Diego Chargers, colleges Notre Dame and Ohio State, and athlete training centers such as Athlete's Performance and the National Academy of Sports Medicine. But maybe the most beneficial use might be in pain management and in fighting the common effects of aging, such as stiff, achy joints, loss of mobility, and loss of strength and bone density. Studies have shown that it also increases your natural hormone levels of GH and testosterone, while decreasing your levels of cortisol. I recently got back from a seminar on this type of training and with first-hand knowledge can say, it is an amazing piece of technology that has the potential to positively influence your quality of life. While relatively new to the United States, it has been used more frequently in Europe. One version, the PowerPlate, was developed in the Netherlands by one of their Olympic coaches, in 1999. It was originally used with Russian cosmonauts to combat the effects of being in outer space, such as zero gravity. Without exposure to gravity, the muscles atrophy and bone density decreases. Similar to someone who has been bed-ridden for weeks, you lose strength and function. Research on the training of athletes with this technology was carried out mostly in Eastern Europe, before the Dutch coach developed his own machine. In addition to the sports teams using WBV, clinics and anti-aging centers are incorporating it into rehab and wellness activities. There is actually quite a bit of research that has been done on this, mostly in Europe. At the seminar, we were told that there are currently (02/2007) 22 studies being done on the PowerPlate around the world, including a study on Fibromyalgia at Ohio State. This doesn't include the other companies that manufacture vibration platforms, of which there are many. In those with chronic pain, it works by stimulating receptors that send messages to your nervous system on body position and movement. 30 - 50 reflex contractions per second is a lot of information for your nervous system to deal with. This reduces the stimulation of your pain receptors, making them less sensitive. You also get an increase of several hormones that can assist you in feeling better and more youthful. Besides the increased blood flow and circulation of lymphatic fluid that are important to good health, your joints receive necessary movement, providing proper nutrition to the cartilage. Joint mobility is naturally increased also. If you combined WBV with joint mobility movements, I'm sure you would get a synergistic effect, where you received results more quickly. It would also go great with massage therapy to reduce pain and increase your ability to move without pain and/or tension. Lastly, the ability to get more exercise done in a short amount of time, is another interesting fact. By combining WBV with traditional strength training, you can achieve good results with shorter sessions. Or, if you are someone short on time or don't like doing other forms of exercise, you could still get results in about 15 minutes on the vibration platform. This all by itself may not be enough to be as lean as a fitness model, but you would still be much fitter and healthier than if you did nothing.

### About the Author

Aloyd Fitness has the widest selection of fitness equipment on Vancouver Island and we are constantly updating our product line to bring you the most recent.

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