



## Hiring a Certified Personal Trainer Gets Results

by Molly Stamos

It's that time of year again, and if you've decided to get into shape, well, you won't be alone. Fitness centers and gyms will be packed with people with the same intention. Dealing with traffic, parking lots and waiting for equipment can be overwhelming. Many of us loathe the very idea of stepping into this kind of atmosphere, let alone figuring out all those machines, weights and apparatus. We hate looking foolish—wandering through the crowd at the gym, out of shape, not up on the gym fashions, and really not knowing where to start.

Hiring a certified personal trainer (CPT) is one way that can motivate you to go to the gym. A trainer can customize an exercise program appropriate for you and your goals, and can also take you through each exercise and show you exactly what to do.

Still looking for another way? You can also hire a personal trainer to come to your home or office. He or she will bring the equipment, establish the workout structure, motivate you and help you develop a healthy lifestyle—all in the privacy of your own home. Don't expect to be benching heavy

iron plates in your living-room workout though. Trainers more often use the most advanced workout techniques of core and functional training, with elastic bands, balls, body weight and sophisticated body mechanics in compound moves that can have you sweating in short order. Functional training is the new wave in training science. It helps develop body balance, agility, strength and flexibility while burning fat and most importantly, building satisfaction and self-esteem.

Whether you are new to exercise, an experienced athlete or bored with your current program, a good trainer can be an excellent coach, teaching you new techniques to round out your program. Before you commit to getting back to long distance running or racquetball with your coworkers, you might want to start out with a trainer and workout program to sidestep an injury if you feel you are a little out of shape. A good trainer will design a safe, well-balanced workout, which focuses on results.

If you decide to hire a CPT start by looking at his or her credentials. The trainer should have a fitness indus-

try training certification such as ACE, ASCM, NSCA or NASM, and have CPR and first aid certifications. An Internet search can help you make sense of the alphabet soup of acronyms, or you can check with several experts on staff at your most convenient fitness center. Set up an interview, ask questions and get references. Also, ask to speak with some of the trainer's clients who are involved in the type of program the new trainer has recommended for you, and ask them if they've reached their goals. If you follow your instincts, you'll find the right fit.

Make 2009 the year you meet your fitness goals. It's tough to do alone, and having a little expert help will get you maximum results in the minimum amount of time. Start with a deep breath and visualize where you want to be with your new body, sense of well-being and fitness level. Then visualize how your life will change as a result.

*Molly Stamos, CPT, owns Fit to Go, an in-home personal training service for women. For more information on personal training and finding a trainer, call (803) 719-2732, or visit [FitToGo.Health.OfficeLive.com](http://FitToGo.Health.OfficeLive.com).*