

Don't Forget The Cardio

No matter how much we hate hearing it, cardio is an essential part of a long, healthy and fit life. But since you'll already be spending 15 to 20 minutes on the Long & Lean Toning Plan, I don't expect you to be able to carve out another 45 – 60 for cardiovascular exercise. If you're anything like me, you'll be lucky to get 5 minutes of uninterrupted time in one week (let alone an hour or two of exercise every day). So instead of stressing about a complicated routine, follow this easy premise to shed fat gradually while continuing to build lean muscle with the Long & Lean workouts...

Cardio Points:

Your goal is to garner as many cardio points as possible by the end of the week. The premise is not to worry about a certain amount of cardio points each day, but rather looking at your week as a whole. Want to squeeze in a swim with the family? A walk with the dog? A jump on the trampoline? Do what you can during the course of the week, and gradually build small bits of cardio into your life.

The Mini Cardio Point Plan

This is perfect for any mother who literally has *zero* time to go to the gym, take a walk or run around with their kids at length. Instead, squeeze in tiny bursts of cardio all day long:

- 10 jumping jacks: every time you open the fridge
- 10 squat jumps: every time you use the bathroom
- 10 high knee runs: every time you answer the phone or check your email
- 10 step ups: every time you go to sit down on the couch

Worth of Each Activity: 1 Cardio Point

The Family Cardio Point Plan

Each of the following family adventures counts as exercise (and your kids will love participating)...

- Swimming with the kids (30 minutes)
- Playing with the kids (as long as you're running outside, skipping or actually moving fast for 20 minutes)
- Walking around the neighborhood, park or indoor mall once
- Jumping on the trampoline with kids (at least 15 minutes)
- Going for a hike with the family (add a point for every additional 15 minutes)

- Doing a 10 – 15 minute workout video with your children
- Dancing around in your living room (for at least 15 minutes)
- Rollerblading, roller skating or ice skating for fun (20 to 30 minutes)

Worth of Each Activity: 5 Cardio Points

Your Cardio Goals: How Many Points Do I Need?

So how many points do you need by the end of the week? Remember, you can squeeze in fun cardio activities on your weekend, at night while watching TV or simply while spending time with your little ones. So stop stressing, get moving and it'll add up fast!

“I Want To Maintain My Weight and Health”: 15 Cardio Points A Week

“I Want To Lose Those Tricky 5 to 10 Pounds”: 20 – 30 Cardio Points A Week

“I Want To Seriously Lose Weight and Slim Down”: 45 Cardio Points A Week

My Personal Favorite: The Super Circuit Plan

Finally, if you really don't have time to worry about cardio points or getting moving outside, you can turn each of your daily Long & Lean toning workouts in to a cardiovascular circuit routine. Simply add 2 minutes of a cardio exercise of choice between each toning series. This will add an extra 10 minutes to your workout time overall, but will give you serious results in a short amount of time.

- **Add 2 minutes of cardio movements:** jumping jacks, squat jumps, burpees or high knee runs.
- **Add 2 minutes of basic cardio:** Run around your house, step up and down off your couch, jog up and down the stairs, or march in place.
- **Add 2 minutes of mini stepper:** If I *had* to recommend one piece of workout equipment that's worth investing in, it's the mini stepper. I got mine for under \$50 and adore it. It's the perfect ways to pump out short blasts of cardio while watching your favorite TV show or waiting for dinner to cook.