

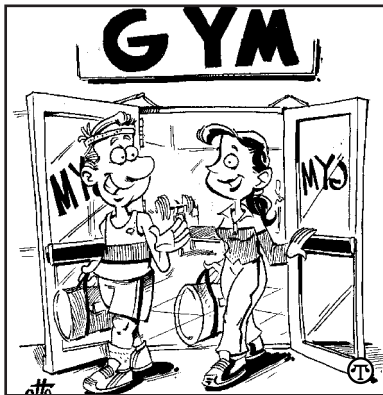
Fitness Facts

Make A Smart Decision When Choosing A Health Club

(NAPSA)—Many Americans wonder how people manage to stay motivated enough to maintain a regular workout routine. While there is not one magical remedy, a number of people have discovered that finding the right health or sports club is a big part of the solution. A record 33 million Americans currently belong to a health club, gym, or sports club. The International Health Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), a non-profit association of commercial health clubs in more than 70 countries, has suggestions to help you find a gym or club that best suits your individual needs.

Today health clubs, just like their members, come in all shapes and sizes. In most major cities and suburbs there are clubs that cater to families, clubs that are for women-only, clubs that specialize in serving mature Americans, clubs that focus on racquet sports and clubs with specialized studios that offer classes such as Yoga, Tai Chi, and others. As you search for a club that matches your needs, you must consider your fitness goals and what interests you.

You can tear out this page and bring this checklist with you as



you visit local clubs. IHRSA recommends asking yourself the following questions:

- Is the location of the club convenient to where you live or work?
- Have you visited the club at the time of day when you would most likely use it?
- Is the club clean and well maintained?
- Have you met with the staff and fitness professionals and are they helpful and friendly?
- Do the fitness professionals and other club staff have appropriate educational backgrounds and/or certifications? (Nationally recognized certifying organiza-

tions include the American Council on Exercise, the American College of Sports Medicine and the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America.)

- Does the club provide new members with an orientation to fitness equipment and classes?
- Does the club offer a sufficient number and variety of programs (group cycling, aerobics, step, yoga, etc.) for you to remain motivated and interested?

“Health clubs and fitness centers serve people from all walks of life, so join a club where you feel that you best fit in,” says John McCarthy, IHRSA’s executive director. “Joining a health club is a personal decision. Take the time you need to find a place that makes you comfortable—that is the only guarantee that you will want to return again and again.”

As a resource, IHRSA offers *Healthclubs.com*, a unique search engine that helps you find quality clubs with programs and amenities you most want. The easy to use Web site finds the most convenient clubs for you and provides directions to the locations. You can even search to locate a club while traveling.