

Body Beauty Being

Miami: One of the Fattest Cities in America?

Our bodies are basically getting molded to our furniture.

By Mark Spreizer, ACE Certified Personal Trainer

If you're living in Miami and feeling less than satisfied with your shape in the mirror, you're not alone. Miami was ranked as one of the most unfit cities in America in a recent issue of *Men's Fitness* magazine. A survey of America's largest 100 cities graded Miami a D- for the fitness of its male residents. This might seem hard to believe. When many people think of Miamians, images of the tan, toned models of South Beach come to mind. However, the survey brings to light the truth that you're probably not one of these people. Miami is just as unfit, if not even more unfit, than the rest of America.

My opinion is that Miamians are no different than the rest of Americans: We're eating more, exercising less, spending more time in our cars, and our bodies are basically getting molded to our furniture. This has been a trend since the early 1900s with the start of the nine-to-five workweek. This, and the over-abundance of false fitness and diet information in our society, has transformed the United States into one of the fattest countries in the world.

So what can you do? Well, for starters, get moving. It's never too late to start a fitness program. Everyone should be participating in some sort of a cardiovascular, strength training and flexibility program. Miami is blessed with such a variety of activities, everything from sea kayaking in Biscayne Bay, to hiking at Oleta State Park, to swimming (with those beautiful people you'll soon become) in South Beach. And what's great about living here is that you can do these activities year-round. There also are a bunch of local gyms in the area where you can do your strength-training workouts. Take a look in the phonebook for the one nearest you, and make sure to talk to a personal trainer to find the right program for you.

As for eating, stay away from fad diets. Their results, if any, are always temporary, and many of them do more metabolic harm than good. Talk to a dietician or nutritionist for a safe, science-based eating plan that's practical and sustainable for the rest of your life.

So the bad news is that we flunked our physical fitness test, but the good news is that we have all of the resources right in our backyard to make up our grade and change Miami from fat to fit. The *Men's Fitness* survey comes out every year, so let's make an improvement for next time. Get to work, and I'll keep you posted on your grade next year.

In case you were wondering, Miami also received a B- in health care and an F in motivation but we scored A's in fitness centers/sporting goods stores and nutrition. So get to it, Miami.

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