

# Spin cycle



“Spin” is a popular new exercise option at fitness clubs these days. The spin cycle incorporates a stationary bicycle with a 35-pound flywheel, 10 resistance levels and three hand positions. Spin training can substantially improve aerobic capacity. One apparent benefit of spin is that it encourages people to stick with an exercise program through its approach of leadership and group involvement.

Spinning is a high-energy, indoor stationary cycling program where the instructor takes participants on a "virtual" outdoor road race complete with hills, valleys, and finish lines. Created in the 1980s by world-class cyclist Jonathan Goldberg (a.k.a. "Johnny G"), Spinning has become hugely popular and has spawned many "spin offs"--making indoor cycling programs one of the biggest trends to hit the fitness industry since step aerobics.

Like dance aerobics class, cycling is a form of aerobic activity that will give you a great cardiovascular workout and burn calories. Unlike aerobics, cycling is a non-impact activity that can be easier on the joints than high-impact forms of exercise such as running or step class. Here are few tips to get you going in a spin class.

**To avoid overexertion** and possible injury, participants in indoor cycling programs either be in very good cardiovascular condition or have the discipline to go at their own pace--even when the instructor is chanting "faster, faster" and the music is peaking to a crescendo! You should know about the 'rate of perceived exertion' and workout accordingly. Always remember that you are competing with no one else but your own self.

## **Don't forget your h<sub>2</sub>o**

Bring a full water bottle and be prepared to consume plenty of fluids throughout class.

### **Make the proper adjustments**

Before class begins, have the instructor help you adjust your seat to the appropriate height. If the seat is too low, you won't be able to get enough leg extension on the downstroke. If it's too high, you'll be straining to reach and might injure yourself. Here's a good rule to follow: Your upstroke knee should never exceed hip level, while your downstroke knee should be about 85% straight.

### **Relax your grip**

Don't grip the handlebars too tightly, since this will increase the tension in your neck and shoulders.

### **Exercise at your own pace**

Don't be intimidated by the high speeds and furious intensity of your cycling mates. Listen to your body and adjust the tension and speed accordingly, and don't be afraid to sit back and take a break when necessary.

### **Ask instructors about their training**

In addition to cycling knowledge, they should have experience teaching group exercise.