

FITNESS

Snappy workouts for those on the go

THE colloquial phrase “no time” is one of the most commonly heard reasons or excuses uttered by those who procrastinate or skip a workout.

Beginners hoping to start a fitness routine might also be put off by the thought of spending two to three hours exercising on weekdays.

But time might not be as big a factor as most imagine. Here is a possible solution:

Local gyms are offering shorter classes or express workouts, which last about 30 minutes a session, for those who are pressed for time or simply do not want to spend hours a day to stay in shape.

Fitness instructor Dennis Ang believes that these express workouts, known as a Fitness Fix at his workplace Fitness First Singapore, are gaining in popularity.

Said the 27-year-old: “The Fitness Fix workout routines are becoming increasingly popular with our members, many of whom are working professionals who are often pressed for time and appreciate the short yet effective full-body workout.”

A spokesman for mega gym California Fitness also said that its 30-45 minute Express Zone workouts, targeted at members looking to make the most out of their lunch breaks, are “very popular” with about 200 to 300 participants daily across all of its 10 outlets.

Yvonne Lim, 24, is a self-confessed “addict” of these express workouts. The member of Amore Fitness attends Power Me On – a 30-minute circuit-training

lunch-time session which covers cardiovascular and strength training for the major muscle groups.

Said Lim, who is juggling studies and work, both on a part-time basis: “The training seems easy, but it’s not always the case. Sometimes my whole body aches and I really feel like I’ve fully stretched myself out.”

Amore Fitness sees about 15 to 20 sign-ups for Power Me On at its City Square Mall outlet on a daily basis.

Rajesh Singh, 35, uses Fitness Fix as a refresher to start his day. He attends the workout two to three times a week before he goes to work at a bank at 9am.

He said: “It’s high intensity for half an hour which helps me keep my focus at work.”

At times, he also squeezes a lunch-time session into his busy schedule. He said: “When I have lunch-time sessions, I usually have a granola bar in the morning and then grab a sandwich to eat in the office after the workout.”

Fitness Fix is a weights-free 30-minute routine that changes daily. The exercises, which include lunges, burpees and push-ups, focus on the core, flexibility and stability.

It comprises a beginner’s version for those who come on a weekly or monthly basis and also an advanced version with shorter rest times and longer set duration for more frequent members.

Ang said: “Short rest intervals in be-



Busy folk like Rajesh Singh and Andrea Chee going through their express workouts at Fitness First Singapore, assisted by trainer Dennis Ang. ST PHOTO: NG SOR LUAN

tween exercises in the Fitness Fix session keep the heart rate in the target zone, ensuring that you burn more calories and get the most out of your workout.”

Andrea Chee, a mother of two in her 40s, also subscribes to the Fitness Fix workout. The running enthusiast uses it as supplementary training in her build-up to the adidas Sundown Marathon where she will attempt her first half-marathon.

Chee, who works out in the gym four times and runs three times a week, usually accompanies the sessions with a half-hour inclined run on the treadmill.

At California Fitness, its Express Zone is a circuit workout that combines resistance training and high intensity aerobics, targeting 10 muscle groups by rotating through different exercise machines.

True Fitness of True Group, a regional fitness and wellness chain, also runs an Agility Circuit Training programme which lasts from 30 minutes to one hour.

Said master trainer Wendy Cho: “Unlike most types of training systems that only target the large and superficial muscles, VibroGym recruits deep proprioceptive muscles into the exercise. They are very crucial to joint and posture stabilisation.”

Most trainers say that a regular routine is needed. Said Cheryl Chow, master trainer at California Fitness: “For the express workouts, you will see the effect only when you come on a regular basis.”

It also helps if you have a goal like Iris Tan, who is working towards strengthening her abdominal muscles to achieve a “six-pack”.

Said the 26-year-old events manager who works out in the gym about five days a week: “You have to be very disciplined in keeping to the routine. I don’t know if people are as sadistic as me.”

CHAN U-GENE