

# FUN – FITNESS



# ACTIVE FOR LIFE

## **Some benefits of playing racquetball.**

Racquetball gives you an intense workout that keeps you on your toes in a fast-paced game. You can play all year long in one of the more than 3,500 indoor facilities around the globe. Once inside the court, racquetball requires little equipment -- just shoes, glove, goggles, ball and racquet. Less rigid than tennis, racquetball offers numerous physical and mental benefits.

### **Burn Calories**

A one-hour game of racquetball burns more calories than an hour of many activities, including aerobics, circuit weight training, basketball and tennis. Depending on your intensity level and weight, you can burn over 700 calories playing racquetball. For a casual, moderate-intensity game, you will burn 511 calories if you're 160 lbs., 637 calories if you're 200 lbs. or 763 calories at 240 lbs.

### **Strengthen Bones and Muscles**

A weight-bearing exercise, racquetball makes your bones and muscles stronger, while slowing bone loss. You can develop and maintain muscle tone throughout your body as you use all your major muscle groups in a racquetball game. Because you're in constant motion, racquetball benefits your most important muscle -- your heart. One hour of play is equivalent to running 2 miles. Your heart rate increases and maintains at 70 to 80 percent of its maximum, says the California State Racquetball Association.

### **Improve Balance, Coordination and Flexibility**

In order to run across the court and dip low to hit that returning ball, you need balance coordination and flexibility. You may stumble and miss that shot in your first game, but through practice, your hand-eye-coordination and balance improves. You use a wide range of motion in racquetball, forcing your body to stretch, in turn increasing your flexibility. To avoid pulling a muscle in the game, stretch before you play.

### **Reduce Stress and Health Risks**

Any physical activity can reduce stress by increasing your endorphins, but racquetball can especially erase your worries. When you're caught up in the intense back-and-forth of racquetball, you're not thinking about the day's problems or tomorrow's to-do list. Shedding the day's tensions can lead to daily improvements in energy and optimism in all that you do, says MayoClinic.com. Regular physical activity through racquetball can reduce or eliminate your risk for many health problems, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. Racquetball can also reduce your risk for coronary heart disease by reducing your triglyceride levels and increasing your "good" cholesterol.

### **Friendships**

Friendships are formed through racquetball. Over the years of playing you become friends with other players in your town, province and in the country, and depending on the skills that you achieve with the sport, you can have international friends as well. **Friends 4 life, sport 4 life!**