



Reclaiming Fitness: Ethics, Simplicity and Scientific Responsibility in Modern Fitness Training

The Maharashtra Ophthalmological Society “MOS Webinar on Fitness & Nutrition - Thrive: The Essential Guide to Wellness”¹; which was telecast live on 29th March 2026; featured talks by young doctors on fitness and nutrition and was indeed in sync with our long-time view that doctors (along with fitness trainers) should be fitness models for the society.²

The human physique is perhaps, one of the most remarkable expressions of biological design. To cultivate, respect and maintain it; to be able to perform at its maximum potential; should not be merely a personal choice; but a responsibility; that each one of us realizes; as this has implications for individual well-being. A society that values both preventive health through exercise and curative care through medicine is better positioned to achieve long-term public health outcomes.

Without any doubt; physical training should be an integral part of daily life. Regular exercise; ideally practiced 5-6 days of the week; alongside a balanced, wholesome home cooked diet and adequate sleep represents the most accessible and inclusive model of fitness. This is a simple and sustainable approach; which can be universal. In this context, fitness trainers occupy a role of profound importance, comparable in many ways to that of medical professionals demanding a high degree of knowledge, ethical integrity and accountability.

Thus, for fitness trainers comes a critical obligation; which is to distinguish between evidence-based science and commercially driven narratives. Further, with advances in exercise science; such as hypertrophy research, progressive overload, nutritional periodization, recovery optimization and stress management; significantly enhancing outcomes for “elite athletes”; it is up to the fitness trainers to realize that the application of these concepts to the “general population”; who are their everyday clients; must remain measured and appropriate. Overcomplication of simple fitness concepts can be intimidating and risks alienating the very individuals who stand to benefit most - the general population.

A concerning trend is the growing commercialization of fitness. It is concerning to see individuals who have built strong physiques through years of disciplined training and simple nutrition; retrospectively attribute their success to supplements. This creates a misleading narrative, especially for young individuals - teenagers and individuals in their 20s; who may perceive such products as essential rather than supplementary. The resulting financial barrier takes fitness out of reach of these youngsters and thus can discourage their participation, undermining the inclusivity of fitness. It is, thus imperative to

Mayur R. Moreker¹, Krushna R. Waghmare²

¹The Gen X author is a Consultant Ophthalmologist at Bombay Hospital Institute of Medical Sciences who is a fitness and gym enthusiast for 32 years; a brown belt in Shotokan Karate and a swimmer

²The Gen Z author is a certified personal fitness trainer and trained in nutritional sciences and functional training for special populations; currently a fitness trainer at S P Jain Institute of Management & Research, Mumbai

Corresponding Author:

Mayur Moreker

Associate Professor, Dept. of Ophthalmology, Bombay Hospital Institute of Medical Sciences, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

E mail: mayurconsults@gmail.com

emphasize that, for the majority general population, consistent training and adequate nutrition; achievable through traditional home-cooked meals - are sufficient to build strength and health. Supplements, may be beneficial in “specific contexts”, are not indispensable for “foundational fitness”. These “specific contexts”; may be in relation to “elite athletes” and are not part of the “foundational fitness”; which most general population need and are looking to benefit from. Further, an unregulated use of “performance-enhancing substances”; beyond the individual risks of organ damage and premature mortality; contribute to a broader erosion of trust in fitness culture, potentially deterring wider participation from general population.

Another cultural shift worth talking of; is the increasing emphasis on “aesthetics” and “superficial appearance”, often at the expense of “functional strength”. While “looking good” is a legitimate goal, an overemphasis on it risks neglecting the foundational attributes of strength, endurance, and resilience. For younger individuals, training should prioritize building functional strength, structural integrity and stamina. In the later years of life, the focus should remain on maintaining strength and preventing disease. Thus, across the lifespan, functionality (based on your profession); must precede and be the guiding factor for your fitness goals (Overgrown forearms would not be in sync with one’s profession as an eye surgeon; being an apt example).

It is important for us all to realize and acknowledge that advanced scientific methodologies, supplementation strategies and performance optimization techniques should be reserved for serious athletes operating under expert supervision,

with the aim of achieving excellence at competitive levels. Distinguishing between general fitness and professional athletic development is essential to prevent misapplication of complex interventions.

If the society is to see more fit individuals; the core principles need to be: accessibility, sustainability, and integrity; prioritizing longevity, strength, and overall well-being.

The future of fitness depends not on trends or commercial interests, but on a collective effort from doctors and fitness trainers with a commitment to truth, responsibility and the enduring value of disciplined physical effort.

How to cite this article: Moreker Mayur R, Waghmare Krushna R. Reclaiming Fitness: Ethics, Simplicity and Scientific Responsibility in Modern Fitness Training. *Bombay Hosp J* 2026;68(2):1-2.

Conflicts of Interest: None. **Source of Support:** None.

REFERENCES

1. Maharashtra Ophthalmological Society. THRIVE: The Essential Guide to Wellness [Internet]. MOS Webinar on Fitness & Nutrition. YouTube; [cited 2026 Jun 29]. Available from: YouTube URL.
2. Moreker, Mayur R; Tiwari, Nivesh Kishore. Doctors as physical fitness role models for the society – Is it the need of the hour?. *Journal of Clinical Ophthalmology and Research* 12(2);p 186-187, May–Aug 2024.

© The Author(s). 2026 Open Access. This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and non-commercial reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made. The Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication waiver (<http://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>) applies to the data made available in this article, unless otherwise stated.