



Fitness First Founder,
Steve Ritz

September Fitness Diary

Steve Ritz, Exercise Physiologist, founded Fitness First in 1998 located on 115 East 2nd St. in Chaska, (952) 448-4322. His second location, conveniently located at 23505 Smithtown Rd./Cty. Rd. 19, Ste. 150, in Excelsior, opened in 2008, (952) 401-4322. Steve has developed a prescription for exercise called the SEE-FIT training system. The SEE-FIT system encompasses workouts that are SAFE, EFFICIENT and EFFECTIVE -- all in just one or two intense 30-60 minute appointments a week. Each month we will be profiling the personal experiences of actual Fitness First clients.



Adam Chandler using a Hammer Strength pull down machine with instruction and supervision from Fitness Specialist Nick McCoy.

Adam Chandler, 51, raised his three children in Waconia, has worked for the same company in Eden Prairie for decades and in 2015 went into what he calls a “mid-life pity party.” When he consulted a therapist he received a prescription he did not expect.

“I was told one of the best things I could do for myself would be to make strength training appointments at Fitness First. I was surprised, but willing to try it. I contacted Fitness First in December 2015 to make an appointment with founder Steve Ritz for a consultation and purchased a package of 20 strength training appointments.

Initially the strength training appointments were very challenging and I was sore afterwards. Halfway through my package I began experiencing major life changes. I am not referring to losing weight or changes in clothes size, although, I have experienced both. I am currently on the last hole of my second belt and will soon have to buy a third new belt. I also frequently climb stairs at work which would cause me to feel dizzy and out of breath at the top. Currently, I can chug up with no problem. I also experienced something more which is not measured physically. It is called happiness. I contacted Fitness First to improve my strength and get healthy, but I have accomplished so much more. I begin and end my work week with a Fitness First strength training appointment. Most Monday mornings when I get to work I cross paths with a person I do not call a friend. Typically this encounter has caused me to grit my teeth with a great deal of stress. I actually would anticipate feeling unhappy on Monday mornings. As I began to experience the benefits of strength training at Fitness First, I realized I would arrive at work happy and stay happy. I nod, say “good morning” and happily begin my day. There are no arguments or frustrations and I have a joyful feeling all week. Physical improvements are easier to measure, but the happiness quotient is much harder to deduce. However, I certainly value the positive feeling from strength training at Fitness First over taking an antidepressant any day!”

Stump The Staff Your questions answered

Q: Why do my lungs burn during exercise?

A: Causes

- Fitness level/intensity - Mouth breathing during exercise will dry mucus membranes and may result in a burning sensation.
- Air temp/dry air – Cold/Dry aggravates the lungs and airway.
- Illness - Conditions originating in the lungs (bronchitis, pneumonia).
- Environmental – Exercising in areas with heavy irritants or pollutants.
- Chronic Respiratory Disease – Chronic diseases, such as exercise-induced asthma constrict the airway.



Fitness Specialist Nick McCoy assisting Adam strengthen his chest and shoulders on a Hammer Strength chest press machine.



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