

Fitness Trend: Shake Weight

What they say: This dumbbell includes weight in the ends that recoil when shaken, creating a vibrating effect. The vibrations cause the muscles of your forearm, biceps, and shoulder stabilizers to contract and relax many times. The Shake Weight uses the idea of “Dynamic Inertia” to increase muscle activity. It also claims to give “incredible results in just six minutes a day.”

What others say: The Shake Weight has received criticism from nearly every fitness profession not involved in the marketing of the Shake Weight. Although your muscles may contract many times while using the Shake Weight, they are doing so under very little resistance. This means that the weight is not working the muscle tissues and without work, the muscles simply will not grow. Another major criticism is that the Shake Weight does not work a muscle through its full range of motion. In order to grow effectively and safely a muscle needs to be loaded as it fully lengthens and shortens. Also, muscles need time to recover for proper growth so working them daily is counterproductive to getting stronger. The fact that you would be able to use it daily should indicate how easy the action is for your muscles. Something that is forgotten when the Shake Weight products are criticized is that, while perhaps someone can get a good arm workout in only 6 minutes a day, having defined arms does not mean one is in shape! A good, well rounded cardiovascular and total body resistance program is key to a fit life!

What the experts say: Weighing in at 2.5 and 5 pounds respectively, the Shake Weight and the Shake Weight for men would not provide a well trained individual with a substantial workout, however, it could certainly be felt by someone that is more out of shape. This, however, could happen with any strength or resistance training program.

Bottom line: Unless you intend to use it as a funny prop or gag gift, the Shake Weight is not worth the \$19.95. The most effective way of strengthening your arms is by progressively overloading them through the entire range of motion. Anytime a product promises results in just a few minutes a day, it is best to be skeptical.

