



## OLYMPIC LIFTS, NOT JUST FOR THE ATHLETE

Matt Walker, NPTI CPT, USAW

Certified Personal Trainer/Nutritional Consultant

USAW Level 1 Sports Performance Coach

Let me guess... when someone mentions “Olympic Weightlifting,” you immediately have visions of a large Eastern European man in tights, grunting and sweating while lifting an unimaginable weight. Well, you’re partially right, but there’s much more to Olympic Weightlifting than you may think. In fact, performing Olympic Weightlifting movements can be beneficial for athletes preparing for sports, as well as others looking to enhance general strength and fitness.

The two events performed in Olympic Weightlifting competitions are the Clean & Jerk and the Snatch. In plain terms, the Clean & Jerk involves lifting a loaded barbell from the floor to your shoulders, and then over your head – essentially two movements. The Snatch, on the other hand, involves lifting the barbell from the floor directly over your head in one movement.

### Benefits of Olympic Weightlifting

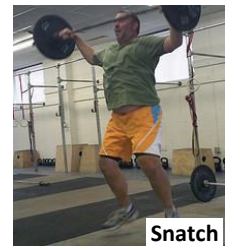


Power Clean

In order for you to lift a weight from the floor to a position over your head, you have to use a large number of muscles – pretty much every muscle in your body. Unlike a bench press or an arm curl, Olympic Weightlifting requires you to recruit a very large proportion of muscle fibers throughout your entire body. For athletes, Olympic lifts are economical because they reduce the need to perform many lifts in a workout, thereby reducing the time in the gym.

Because Olympic Weightlifting movements are typically high velocity, high load and cover extreme ranges of motion, significant coordination and muscle control are required. These movements translate well to explosive sporting movements like jumping and sprinting. There is also a significant metabolic cost to doing these lifts because of the energy required to recruit a large amount of musculature very quickly. Most competitive lifters – aside from the heavyweights – are very lean and have very little body fat.

Olympic lifts also require significant core strength and stability. This strength and stability can help prevent injury when performing daily activities. Injury often occurs when lifting is not done properly. For instance, if you do not maintain proper posture, engage your core muscles, and use your legs when picking up a heavy box and placing it on a shelf, you can certainly risk injuring your back. Olympic lifting not only strengthens your entire body, but it teaches you how to move properly in functional situations. The technique required for Olympic lifts teaches individuals to use proper posture, muscle firing patterns and leverage for optimal force application and safety.



Snatch

Not only do Olympic lifts help prevent injury, they help you recover from injury as well. Taking your body through a full range of motion with some resistance can keep muscles from atrophy and help build bone density which is very important especially as we get older.

If you are interested in learning more about you can develop greater core strength and stability, please stop into any of our three locations and talk to our Physical Therapists and Personal Training Staff. At BREAKTHRU we offer FREE Physical Therapy consultations. Our Physical Therapists work directly with our Personal Training Staff to help develop a workout and fitness plan that’s right for you and your needs.

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#### Medford

200 Tuckerton Rd.  
Medford, NJ 08055  
856-396-2250

#### Voorhees

701 Cooper Rd.  
Voorhees, NJ 08043  
856-346-0526

#### Moorestown

1273 N. Church St.  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
856-722-1044