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POWERED BY: **NOEMI OLAH** 







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Cover Photo by Cory Sorensen / Hair & Makeup by Nancy J / Top & Shorts by Lorna Jane, lornajane.com

#### Med-Ball Mash-Up

Stuck in a dumbbell barbell rut? Add a medicine ball to your work out for a new challenge that is sure to burn more fat.

#### **How to Accessorize**

Strengthen your weakest links with these moves designed to address common imbalances.

#### **The Perfect Goblet Squat**

If you're not doing goblet squats, you should! Here's why.

#### **Your Best Spring Diet** Advice, Ever!

The latest research on how to eat for maximal health and a lean physique.

#### Feed the Machine

Dialing in your precise intake of protein, carbohydrates and fat is a necessity if you want to look and feel your best.

#### **Your Perfect Week**

This comprehensive meal plan tells you exactly what to eat for a week.

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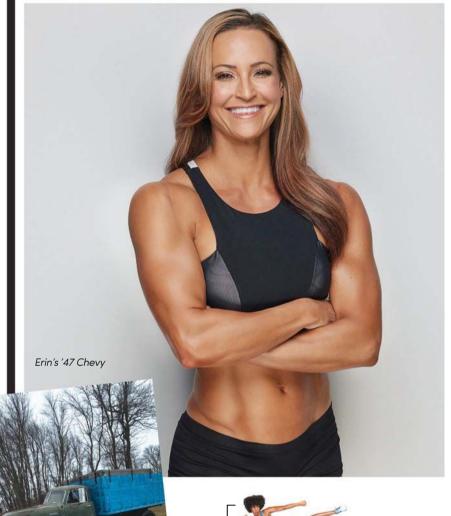
14 editor's letter

16 inbox

# gennag.com

#### Erin Stern: QUICK SHOTS

From her latest Instagram obsession to her superpower of choice, read our hilarious rapid-fire interview with our mothertrucking cover model Erin Stern. (She recently purchased a 1947 Chevrolet dump truck.)



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#### LET'S GET **SOCIAL:**

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What is your fitness inspiration? Whether it's vour favorite workout, a run through the neighborhood or vour voga mat, we want to see what inspires vou. Share it with us on Instagram or tweet us using the hashtag #oxygenexhale and your photo could be featured in an upcoming issue of Oxvgen!

- @halevchakfitness Well, it's not going to lift itself.
- ©blancabunny99 Just reflecting on today's workout.
- ©heathlfitz You mean pizza isn't a veggie?
- aglofitnessx3 Every day is back day.
- @brwnlab Friends don't let friends TRX alone.

- Ourban apron Cashew milk and coffee. the perfect match.
- ajdebifitphotog Beast mode activated.
- **@iovkushner** Stretches with a view.
- @angela\_fitnessobsessed Go heavy or go home.







"Carbs are bad for you"













Now on oxygenmag.com
Go to our website for up-to-the-minute news on health and fitness, plus we post new workouts, moves and recipes every day! Here's a small taste of what we have in cyberspace in March and April.

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#### contributors

#### **Raven Harrington**

Model for "The Perfect Goblet Squat," Page 64

Fitness journey: Raven Harrington, a personal trainer in Pasadena, California, started as a dancer but was sidelined by a knee injury. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in international business from Azusa Pacific University.

Hair apparent: "It was a blast to work with the team at Oxygen. I appreciate the opportunity to be shot with my natural hair, and I hope that it empowers women to be confident in their own individual beauty," she says.

#### **Laurel Leicht**

Author of "Alleviate Those Aches," Page 82

#### Marathon runner:

Laurel Leicht, CSCS, has a master's in journalism from the University of Missouri, and she has completed 11 marathons as well as six Olympic-distance triathlons.

New moves: After writing her article for this issue on common training injuries, Leicht was surprised to learn how common shoulder problems are. "It's an area I tend to ignore, but I've been doing more shoulderstrengthening and [shoulder]-stabilizing moves since reporting this piece!"

#### Lee Boyce

Author of "How to Accessorize," Page 58

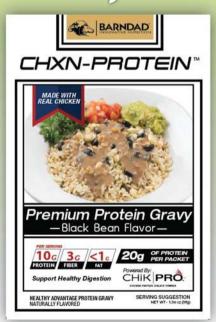
Walk the walk: Fitness

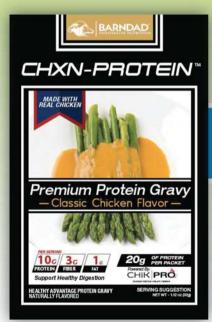
writer and strength coach Lee Boyce, CPT, works with clients in his hometown of Toronto The little things: When researching for his article in this issue, Boyce says he found it interesting to look at all the muscles used in a motion. "The antagonistic muscle groups can play a role in inhibiting the strength of a prime mover," he says. "It really shows the need to look at the little things

and find balance."



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# Food for thought

his issue was fun to produce. Not only did I get to spend the day with Erin Stern when she was in the office shooting "The Michelangelo of Muscle" (Page 46), but I also had a great time in the chilly outdoors (pretending it wasn't cold!) shooting the medicine-ball workout ("Med-Ball Mash-Up," Page 52). I also enjoyed putting this issue together because it's our nutrition issue.

Just like many of you, I started a new training program in the new year, and I also resolved to start eating better. I'm not going to lie - I eat like a 14-year-old boy. Unfortunately, at 47, I don't have the metabolism of one. As a recent trip to the Napa Valley proved, I can no longer eat and drink whatever I want without consequences. I gained extra weight, and I haven't been able to shake it. And even though I'm less concerned about the number on the scale, I want to get rid of the weight because some of it has settled into my belly, and as Oxygen readers know, belly fat increases your chance of heart disease and diabetes, among other health issues.

Even though I know better, I convinced myself that I could out-train my bad diet, but the reality is, the conven-

tional calories-in-calories-out thinking just isn't true, especially because all calories are not created equal. I can squat until I drop and do hours of high-intensity interval training, but it'll never be enough to burn off those french fries, bread and wine. It didn't help that I was having a hard time getting through my workouts because I wasn't properly fueling my body.

Now that I've (finally) come to terms with that, I've slowly been making changes. I'm eliminating sugar, Diet Coke and a bunch of other junk from my diet, and I have been adding in more lean protein, healthier fats and energy-producing carbs. After reading "Feed the Machine," Page 72, I've gotten smarter about when I eat, something I've been pretty lax about before. We make it easy for you to figure out what you should eat and when to eat it in order to reach your goals.

I'm finally getting on the right track, and I've been sleeping better, I have more energy and I even dropped a few of those lingering pounds. Here's to eating smarter!

Train hard,

Maureen Farrar
Editor-in-Chief

© @mofarrar



# TriggerPoint MB5 Massage Ball Nis quilted by Carrie Underwood Duffle Bag This quilted duffle is as hardworking as it is sophisticated. With lots of inside and outside pockets, it's big enough to fit everything you need for the gym. And, honestly, it's so versatile that I sometimes use it instead of my regular tote bag. \$70, caliastudio.com

I have some range-of-motion deficits in my upper back and shoulders, and this 5-inch-diameter ball is designed to get into those larger muscle groups like the upper back, shoulders, hips and legs/glutes. \$25, tptherapy.com

#### TriggerPoint Nano Foot Roller Massager

Who needs a massage therapist when you have this foot roller? Regularly using this helps increase the flexibility in my feet, and few things make my tootsies feel better after a long day of wearing high heels. \$25, amazon.com

► TheraBand Resistance Bands

Not only are these bands good for train-

ing on-the-go, but I also use them to do lighter sets of moves before I perform heavier lifts. They are a great way to improve range of motion. They come in eight levels of resistance. **\$13 and up per** 

set, thera-band.com





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#### **Unnecessary Profanity**

I just received my January/February 2017 issue of Oxygen magazine. As a longtime subscriber (Bob Kennedy era), I always look forward to Oxygen. I've given gift subscriptions to my friends, and my inspiration wall is full of images from your magazine.

I immediately flipped to the article on the new 2016 Oxygen Challenge winner, Patricia Arredondo. I never made it past the very first sentence of the first paragraph. I realize it's the 21st century and that, sadly, too many people pepper their conversation with profanity. I also realize that we all have different motivational tools to inspire us to reach our goals and better ourselves. However, I don't speak that way, nor do I surround myself with people who speak using such profanity. I don't want a magazine sitting on my coffee table that's accessible for others to read, specifically my 13-year-old daughter, that puts such offensive language in print. You should never take liberties of assumption with your subscribers or others who may buy your magazine from newsstands and assume that type of language, even if it is a quote from a sign, is acceptable.

My hope in this email is you'll perhaps be a little more considerate when choosing what to print in future articles.

— GLORIA, VIA EMAIL

I was extremely disappointed to see vulgarity used in "Unstoppable" (January/February 2017). I leave my magazine lying around the house where my children (who read) can pick it up and see it, and I recycle them to my office waiting room and would hate to see my clients offended by this reading material. Seriously, you could have gotten the point across without using the f word. Please edit carefully for future editions.

--- WENDY, VIA FACEBOOK

Editor's Note: We were not trying to be offensive by publishing that word, and we definitely didn't want to take away from Patricia's amazing story and transformation. We thought it was a funny way for her to stay motivated, but we could have added some symbols in there to blunt the impact.

We realize that not everyone thinks profanity is appropriate in Oxygen or print in general, and we apologize.

#### More, Please!

Wow! I just wanted to say how very impressed I am with the "Bulletproof Shoulders" article (November/December 2016)! I absolutely loved the 360-Degree Flex sidebar, which focuses on mobility and flexibility with both preworkout and post-

# NOT ALL AMINOS ARE CREATED EQUAL

Whether you're looking for a way to increase lean muscle, become a better athlete, or just make sure each workout is giving you all the results you need, there is one common denominator that everyone who works out needs more of: amino acids. Amino acid products are everywhere these days, but don't think for a second that all amino acid products are created equally. If you want to get the most out of your training, make sure you look for an amino acid supplement which includes high levels of the following amino acids.'



ENERGY | FOCUS | RECOVERY
ENERGY | FOCUS | F

workout exercise suggestions. I absolutely love that there is a Movement Prep section. This is such a comprehensive workout for the shoulders and the best workout article I've ever seen in a magazine. I would love to see more articles just like this for each bodypart. I can hardly wait to work this into my fitness routine. Keep up the outstanding work!

— EDEN, VIA EMAIL

I love this magazine and have for four years. So excited to see the next issue, I run to the store every month. I save the workout in my workout scrapbook and try out the recipes on my family because we love to eat clean. I'm down 21 pounds in five weeks and body build six days a week. I'm a huge fan. Thank you so much for publishing the most amazing stuff and staying up with it.

— VICKI, VIA FACEBOOK

#### **Room for Improvement**

I have been an *Oxygen* subscriber since 1998, and I still have all my magazines. I am writing because your magazine has really changed and, in some ways, not good. Why have you stopped covering the fitness shows? These were one of the many articles that made *Oxygen* great. Also, I feel that you need to have more black women and women of color

on your covers because I would like to see someone like me represented. Black women do body build and are fitness athletes. Latisha Wilder, Tanji Johnson and Charmaine and Lisbeth Lopez are just a few who come to mind. I think it would also be great to do an article on "Where are they now" about the past Sisters of Iron who have paved the way for so many others such as Lenda Murray, Cory Everson, Bev Francis and Rachel McLish, to name a few.

Thanks for a great magazine. You have helped me reshape and better my mind, body and spirit.

— CJ, VIA EMAIL

Editor's Note: I agree that there has not been enough diversity in Oxygen, and we are working to improve that. This month, in fact, we feature fitness model and Gaspari Nutrition athlete Raven Harrington in "The Perfect Goblet Squat" and in our 20-minute workout. We will continue to represent a more diverse group of women in fitness going forward. As far as the "Where are they now" idea, we love it! The November/December 2017 issue of Oxygen is our 20th anniversary issue, and we'd love to bring together those who have paved the way for current fitness athletes.

# Hey! WHAT DO YOU THINK? TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND.

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#### **MORE L-LEUCINE**

#### MORE MUSCLE & MORE RESULTS'

When we exercise or train with weights, our body goes into a catabolic or "muscle wasting" state. While many people think that we build muscle while we train, the opposite is actually the reality. This can be overcome however by forcing the body into an anabolic or "muscle building" state, via select amino acids; and no amino acid does that more effectively than L-Leucine. L-Leucine increases anabolism and muscle growth by increasing mTOR (Mechanistic Target of Rapamycin) and MPS (Muscle Protein Synthesis). This means that by ingesting more L-Leucine during training sessions, you flip your "anabolic switch" and turn your body in a muscle building powerhouse for your entire workout.



#### MORE L-GLUTAMINE

#### QUICKER RECOVERY & REDUCED SORENESS'

One of the biggest reasons why people don't make improvements in the gym or in their sport of choice is because of how long is takes the human body to recover after intense exercise. Athletes suffer from painful muscle soreness and a lack of strength when they don't give their muscles time to repair and grow, yet elite athletes understand that they need to keep pushing their body further in order to make significant progress. One of the fastest ways to improve your bodies response to training is by taking a large dose of the powerful recovery agent known as L-Glutamine. This amino acid has been shown to reduce recovery times, eliminate muscle soreness, and get you back into the gym faster.



#### MORE L-CITRULLINE

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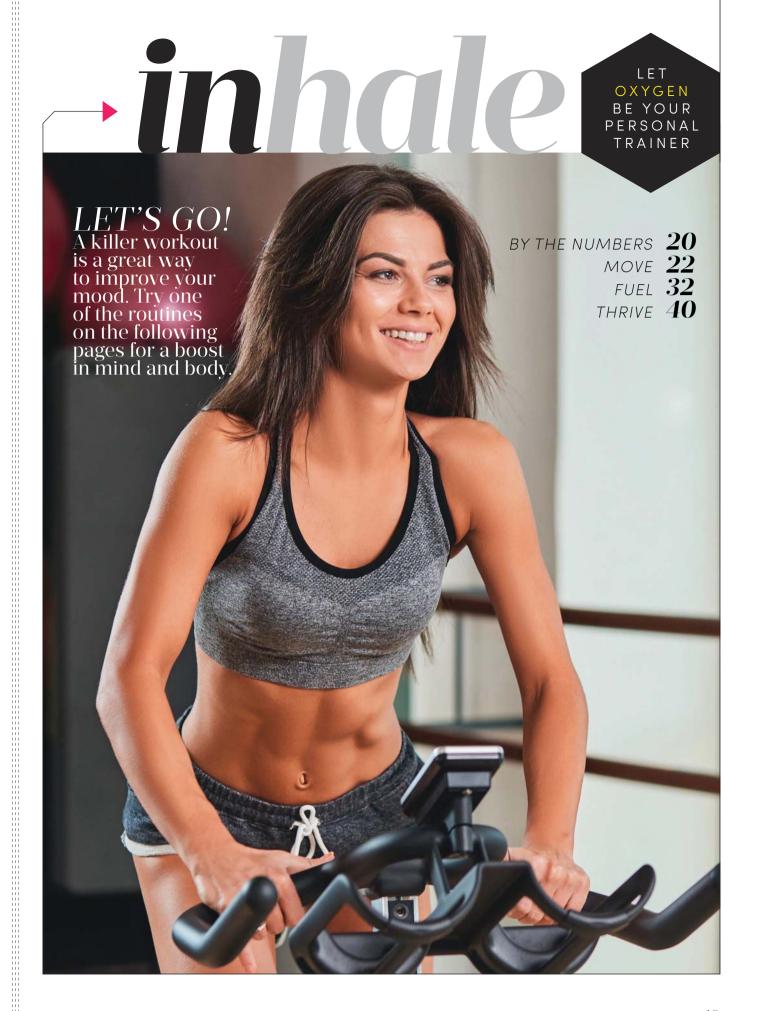












# YOUARE WHAT YOU EAT!

March is **National Nutrition** Month. so we rounded up a few facts about what average **Americans** are putting into their bodies.

#### SUGAR

# pounds

▶ Amount of sugar the average American consumes every year.



The amount of sugar the average American consumes in an entire lifetime.

#### 9.5 teaspoons

▶ The amount of sugar per day the American Heart Association recommends

#### 20 teaspoons

▶ The amount of sugar most Americans actually consume in a day

Sugar is the largest source of calories in the U.S. today. With all the sugar-rich foods on the market, the rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease are reaching unprecedented levels. In addition, eating a diet packed with sugar is linked to a number of abnormal brain functions, including poor memory and cognitive activities.

#### SODIUM

sodium

9 out of 10 Number of Americans who consume too much

#### 3,400 milligrams

The amount of sodium the average American consumes in a day

#### 1,500 milligrams (or less)

The amount of sodium recommended by the American Heart Association for ideal heart health

O

65 PERCENT

Amount of sodium that comes from supermarket foods

# **P**ĚRCENT

Amount of sodium that comes from restaurant meals

#### **OBESITY**

The cost of obesity in the United States

#### 66 PERCENT Amount of adults considered to be overweight or obese

3.3 PERCENT Amount of children and adolescents considered to be overweight or obese

#### 20



















# Competitive edge

Want to exercise more? Get competitive. A study published in the journal *Preventive Medicine Reports* found that competition was a stronger motivator for exercise than friendly support, and, in fact, that friendly support made people less likely to go to the gym. Researchers theorize that, though well-intended, friendly support hones in on those who do not participate or participate less, making them feel exposed and as if they failed, resulting in them being more likely to quit.

In the competitive groups, however, class attendance was as much as 90 percent higher than in the control group. Researchers believe this was because relationships were framed in terms of goal setting, giving participants higher expectations of their own performance.

Push your motivation to new heights: Start a walking challenge with your friends, join a CrossFit box, or get muddy with some pals at an obstacle race such as Spartan (spartan.com) or Rugged Maniac (ruggedmaniac.com).

#### Sit smart

If you're an indoor cycling fan, you know all too well the woes of an improperly adjusted bike. Use these tips from certified Spin instructor and Oxygen expert Erin Calderone, MS, CSCS:

Stand next to the bike.
Adjust the seat up or down until it lines up with your hipbone.

- P Sit in the saddle and put your feet on the pedals so they're level. Move your seat forward or backward until your front knee is over your ankle and you have about a 30-degree bend at the knee.
- Set the handlebars so when you place your hands in the center, you rest comfortably with your shoulders down and elbows slightly bent. Now create your own Spin class. The how-to is on Page 30!



EAT IT, DELETE IT If you've got 99 problems and Peeps are every one of them, you're not alone. In 2016, Americans spent about \$2.4 billion on Easter candy, according to the National Retail Federation. So indulge (a little), then head out for a power walk to ensure those treats don't linger on your legs.

CANDY	CAL	WALK
Peeps (1 piece)	28	7 minutes
Cadbury Mini Eggs (1 egg)	15	4 minutes
Russell Stover Chocolate Bunny (1.5 oz, hollow)	240	62 minutes
Jelly Beans (10 small)	41	11 minutes
Cadbury Creme Egg (1 egg)	150	39 minutes
Snickers Egg	160	41 minutes

WHY NOT YOU?

Ever dream of **becoming a personal trainer?**Turn your dreams into reality with **ISSA education.** 

#### **Meet Lesslee**

"I didn't always live a healthy lifestyle. In my 40s I squeezed in sporadic exercise on the weekends as I juggled the pressures of work and raising kids. I was addicted to sugar and too busy to worry about what I was putting into my body—until a health issue turned my world upside down.

Luckily I found a coach who helped me link health and nutrition. It became my mission to turn my health around. My quest led me to the International Sports Science Association (ISSA). Truly, I was hooked the moment I cracked open the first book! The training I received through ISSA was the catalyst for my remarkable life. Two decades later I am healthy, vibrant and strong. I have a fulfilling career coaching busy women to lose weight, find their own path of fitness, and live empowered lives—all while never dieting again!

Getting certified from ISSA made a monumental difference in my life. I am humbled that I've had the opportunity to assist others feel as awesome in their own skin as I do in mine—to show up in life and fulfill all they are meant to be."

—Lesslee Belmore, ISSA CFT, SFN CoachLesslee.com



The ISSA Your Trusted Source for Fitness Education Since 1988 ISSA's nationally accredited distance education programs provide the education you need to become a Personal Trainer, Elite Trainer, or Master Trainer. Take your certification courses even higher and earn an Associate's Degree in Exercise Science with an Emphasis in Personal Training. TA, MyCAA, and GI Bill approved.

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for me: great energy and

enthusiasm for life as I age:

feeling of joy while moving

increased strength and a

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#### Lifting weights is great;

sprinting on the treadmill — fab. But sometimes you just want to kick the s—t out of something. Numerous studies support the idea that boxing — and kickboxing-style workouts — have a positive effect on mood, helping relieve stress and anxiety while working your entire body from toes to fingertips, making them some of the most calorie-consuming programs around.

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#### FLAT-BENCH DUMBBELL CHEST PRESS

Consistent chest training can give a finished, full look to your pecs, creating upper-body symmetry and carving definition between your shoulders and chest, making your delts appear rounder and fuller.

- Lie on a flat bench with your back arching naturally. You should be able to slide a hand easily underneath your lumbar spine.
- ▶ Place your feet flat on the floor to create hip stability and total-body tension, better enabling you to generate power from the floor through your core to your arms and chest.
- ▶ Pull your shoulder blades together underneath you for stability and increased power. This position also slightly lifts your sternum, helping focus the work onto the chest rather than the shoulders and arms.

- ▶ Hold a set of dumbbells straight up over your chest so your arms are perpendicular to the floor. If they angle toward your head or feet, you'll lose power and control.
- ▶ Squeeze the dumbbells with your hands as if trying to crush them. This helps create tension in your arms, promoting stability.
- As you bend your elbows to lower the weights, keep your wrists stacked over your elbows and your forearms perpendicular to the floor. In this position, the weights will naturally move away from one another as you lower them until your elbows make 90-degree angles or the inner heads of the dumbbells graze your shoulders.
- ▶ Inhale and hold your breath to create intra-abdominal pressure and stabilize your spine, then extend your arms forcefully, simultaneously driving down into the floor

with your heels and squeezing your glutes to produce more vertical drive.

▶ The inner dumbbell heads should touch or nearly touch at the top. Do not slam the weights together.

#### SAMPLE CHEST WORKOUT FOR STRENGTH

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Push-Up Complex	3	12 (change hand position every 2 reps)
Flat-Bench Dumbbell Press	4	10, 8, 6, 4
Barbell Incline Bench Press	3	12, 10, 8
Low-Pulley Cable Flye	3	15

#### TRX PUSH-UP

Your pectoral muscles attach your humerus to your body and work in concert with your anterior deltoids to move your arms laterally, vertically and/or rotationally, making them key players in sports as well as everyday overhead actions such as drying your hair. They also stabilize your shoulder blades, protracting and rotating them as your arms move through space.

This TRX move takes push-ups to a whole new level, adding elements of balance, stability and — above all — control to challenge your chest in all directions.

- Set the TRX loops to knee height or below, depending on your ability. (The more vertical your body angle, the easier the move.)
- ▶ Take a handle in each hand and position your shoulders over your wrists so the straps hang perpendicularly to the floor. This increases balance and helps prevent shoulder strain and/or injury.
- ▶ Because the TRX straps move independently, you have to engage your lats and serratus anterior (the finger-shaped muscles along the sides of your rib cage) to hold the

straps in place, ensuring optimal muscular recruitment while preventing injury.

- Extend your legs straight behind you so your body forms a straight line, and tighten your abs and squeeze your glutes to prevent your hips from sagging.
- Bend your elbows and lower your torso between your hands. Depth will vary according to individual mobility and biomechanics, but don't descend past the handles to protect your shoulders.
- Extend your arms forcefully, but not explosively, to rise to the start; you don't want to swing around on the TRX and break form.
- ▶ Throughout the move, keep your entire spine including your head and neck in a straight, neutral position. Don't drop your chin to look at your feet or raise your head to look forward.
- You can do a TRX push-up with your feet in the cradles rather than your hands, but this becomes more of a core and glute challenge rather than a chest one, so save this version for lower-body days.

#### SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL CHEST WORKOUT

Do these moves in order for one minute each. Rest 60 seconds between rounds, and perform up to five rounds.

TRX Push-Up

Medicine-Ball Chest Pass (against a wall)

Parallel Bar or TRX Dip

Dumbbell Pullover (moderate weight)

Eccentric Dumbbell Flye (light weight)

The instability of the TRX straps requires that you engage more than just your pecs.



# Photos by Cory Sorensen / Hair & Makeup: Nancy J / Model: Cristina Dennis / Pants: Calla / Top: Model's Own / Shoes: New Balance

## Trigger points Untie the knots that are holding you back.

Sometimes I hit a painful spot when I'm foam rolling. What is that?

Though they're not fully understood, trigger points are commonly believed to be mini muscle spasms caused by repetitive trauma to the tissue, either because of poor posture or repetitive movement patterns that, over

time, cause a compensation to occur. That compensating muscle soon becomes overworked and consequently develops a trigger point to express its outrage.

And not only are trigger points painful, but they're also sinister. "Trigger points prevent you from getting a full range of motion, either from pain or tightness or both, which increases your chance of injury during exercise," says Kyle Stull, Ph.D., a licensed manual therapist and an educator for the National Academy of Sports Medicine.

Some areas are more prone to trigger points than others and depend on things such as lifestyle, faulty movement patterns or even footwear (stilettos, anyone?). The most common culprits are the calves, upper back/shoulders, chest, glutes and hip flexors.

#### On the Ball

Your best bet for optimal results is to release those trigger points before and after your workout, increasing range of motion and decreasing risk of injury. "Since trigger points are deep in the musculature, you need something more dense than a foam roller to address them," says Stull, who suggests using a 5-inch massage ball (such as the MB5 Massage Ball, \$25, tptherapy.com).

To use, place it between your muscle and a solid surface, and roll over an area

slowly. When you find a tender spot. hold pressure for 30 to 90 sec-

onds. "That decreases the blood flow to the area, hopefully inhibiting it and releasing it," Stull says. Afterward, do some static stretching to increase the muscle's length and help the tissue heal.

It could take several weeks of consistent rolling to release a trigger point, but it will most certainly come

back if your form or posture is still out of whack. "You can rub a sore neck and it might feel better, but it's not really going to change anything," Stull says. "Figure out the reason and correct it; don't simply release stuff that feels tight." His suggestion: Have a professional assess your posture, and be conscious of repetitive movement patterns and lifestyle factors that might cause trigger points.

Roll over each muscle carefully, and once you find a trigger point, hold and apply pressure for 30 to 90 seconds. Do both before and after a workout.



#### **CALVES** (soleus/gastrocnemius) If you wear heels or are an avid runner or jump-rope aficionado, trigger points can plague your calves

Position the ball under the middle to lower calf and roll slowly up and down until you find a tender area. Note: If your feet turn outward, position the ball higher on the calf and perform.



#### HIPS (rectus femoris, psoas, tensor fasciae latae)

Sitting and quad-dominant activities like cycling or running can cause tight hips.

Lie facedown on your elbows with one knee bent, and position the ball under your extended lea (top photo). Roll slowly up your quad toward the hip, stopping to hold wherever it feels tender.

To hit the tensor fasciae latae, position the ball at your hip, roll onto your side, cross the top leg over the bottom and tip your whole body forward slightly until you find the sore spot (bottom photo).



#### **GLUTES** (maximus/medius)

Overtraining and a weak core can cause a trigger point in your glutes. Sit with the ball underneath the upper glutes of one leg and cross that ankle over your opposite knee. Focus your work on the top part of the aluteus medius near the hipbone.



#### UPPER BACK AND SHOULDERS (levator scapulae/ upper trapezius)

Technology and continual sitting can put a major knot in your neck.

Place the ball between your upper back and a wall, starting at the upper inner corner of your shoulder blade and rolling in until you find a tender spot. (Don't roll over your vertebrae.)

#### CHEST (pectoralis major/minor)

Slouched posture can cause a trigger point in your pecs.

Place the ball between a wall and your chest near your shoulder. Lean forward and roll inward toward the sternum until you find a trigger point. KATHERINE AMPOLINI REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETIST IFRR RIKINI PRO



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# DIY Indoor Cycling Class



#### **Ask** Erin

Q: I love the calorie burn I get from indoor cycling, but I can never make it to a class on time. Can I design my own?

A: I love indoor cycling, too! And with a burn of up to 600 calories per class, it's no wonder this is a favorite fat burner for women worldwide. And, yes, you can absolutely create a great DIY workout, sans instructor. Here's the lowdown on how to keep your wheels spinning and the calories burning while riding solo.

#### **Factor of Four**

There are four class factors to consider when putting together your indoor cycling workout:

- **1. Body position** A good class has a blend of both seated and standing work. When seated, your butt is in the saddle, hands on the bars, shoulders and back relaxed. When standing, you should hover over the seat a couple of inches with your bodyweight distributed evenly between your feet.
- **2. Resistance** Resistance is added or subtracted by turning a knob on the bike frame. Increase the tension for hills or hard sprints, and decrease it for flats or longer intervals.
- **3. Cadence** Cadence is the number of revolutions you complete per minute, and it should increase or decrease depending on your goal: The faster you're pedaling (and/or the higher the resistance), the higher your heart rate will go. Determine your actual cadence by holding one hand above

your right thigh and counting the number of times your thigh hits your palm in 15 seconds. Multiply that number by four to get your revolutions per minute (RPM).

**4. Terrain** The idea of indoor cycling is to replicate the challenges of riding on outdoor terrain (but without the bugs in your teeth!). Choose from these "terrains" when constructing a class:

*Flats:* Imagine the freeing expanse of open road as you set the resistance low while keeping your cadence high (80 to 100 RPM). Riding the flats can be done while seated or standing.

*Hills:* Grinding up a hill is a butt-blasting fat melter. Increase the resistance and slow the cadence to 60 to 80 RPM and grind it out, sitting or standing.

*Jumps*: Challenge your endurance and boost leg strength by adding jumps: Stand for several counts or revolutions, then sit for several counts/revolutions.

*Sprints:* Add sprints to build anaerobic capacity and incinerate body fat: For the sprint, crank the resistance up high and increase your cadence to 90 to 100 RPM for 15 to 30 seconds. Then dial back both resistance and cadence for a 30- to 60-second rest period, then repeat.

#### Form for Function

No matter which terrain you're cycling or how fast you're going, your form should remain the same:

Your feet should be flat at the bottom of every pedal stroke — in other words, don't point your toes down.

- Your knees should be in line with your toes, not collapsing inward or bowing outward.
- ▶ Your hips should be level no wobbling side to side, even when powering up a hard hill.
- ➤ Your hands and shoulders should be relaxed don't lean on them or use them to pull on the handlebars when the going gets tough.
- ▶ Your focus should be forward and slightly in front of your bike as if looking at the road.

#### Pieces in Place

Now that you've got the elements down, it's time to craft your workout according to the goal of the day. If your goal is ...

- ... Endurance, shoot for a longer riding duration (30-plus minutes) and stick to flats for most of the ride. Add in one or two jump segments for variety and to give your legs (and butt!) a break.
- ... Strength, create a moderate-length ride (20 to 30 minutes) dominated by hills, using flats as a warm-up and cool-down and as short recovery bouts in between climbs. (See the chart.)
- ... Fat burning, craft a shorter (10- to 20minute) high-intensity interval training ride that combines hills, jumps and sprints, alternating intense periods with periods of rest on the flat.

#### Music: The Fifth Element

Music can make or break your workout intensity, and the best classes have carefully planned playlists that match beats per minute (BPM) to intensity and terrain. Rather than struggling to match your class elements with tunes to your music library on your own, use one of these apps to pimp your ride:

- ➤ *Cycle Companion:* Preprogrammed and/or customizable rides made with music from your own library (\$3 iTunes).
- ▶ *Tempo Magic:* Changes the tempo of your own music to match your ride elements (\$6 iTunes; \$5 Android app, Google Play).
- RockMyRun: Free music playlists with adjustable BPM (Free iTunes and Google Play).
- ▶ *PaceDJ*: Chooses songs from your library to match your desired BPM (Free iTunes).



ERIN'S 30-MINUTE STRENGTH RIDE - FOCUS: GLUTES

Time	<b>Body Position</b>	Terrain	Cadence	Resistance
0:00-5:00	Warm-up, seated	Flat	80-100	Low
5:00-8:30	Seated	Hill	60-80	Moderate-High
8:30-10:00	Seated (recovery)	Flat	80-100	Low-Moderate
10:00-12:30	Seated	Hill	60-80	High
12:30-15:00	Standing	Hill	60-80	High
15:00-16:00	Seated (recovery)	Flat	80-100	Low-Moderate
16:00-18:30	Standing	Hill	60-80	Moderate-High
18:30-21:00	Seated	Hill	60-80	Moderate-High
21:00-24:00	Standing	Hill	60-80	High
24:00-25:00	Seated (recovery)	Flat	80-100	Low-Moderate
25:00-27:00	Seated	Hill	60-80	High
27:00-30:00	Cool-Down, Seated	Flat	80-100	Low

#### Clip it or skip it?

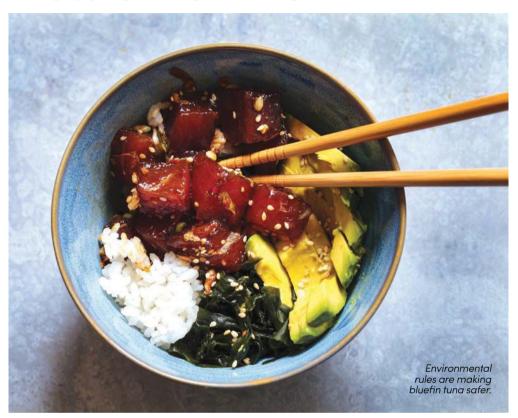
Hey, we all love shoe shopping, but dropping a couple of Benjamins on a fancy pair of cycling shoes might not be so appealing. After all, you can't really clop around in them at work. But if you're a regular rider — indoors or out — there are some valid benefits to having clip—in shoes:

- 1. Your feet are actually attached to the pedals, and they won't slip off to the side or out of the cages.
- 2. They have a very firm sole, so your feet are less likely to get sore or go numb during your ride.
- 3. You can harness the power of your hamstrings on the upstroke rather than just powering down with your quads and glutes, improving speed and efficiency, and giving your rear view a boost!

#### Ready to invest?

Try the new Giro
Raes Techlace, with
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### Less coal, healthier fish

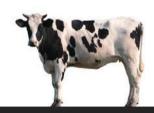


Lowering emissions from coal-burning power plants doesn't just make for cleaner air to breathe. It's making the tuna you eat safer, too. Research published recently in *Environmental Science & Technology* showed a decrease of mercury in bluefin tuna caught in the Gulf of Maine in the last 10 years at a rate of 2 percent per

year, or nearly 20 percent over a decade. Bluefin tuna, which is most commonly served as sushi, still contains high levels of mercury that can be harmful to pregnant women and children, but the research shows the benefits of lowering coal emissions are measurable in the sea, as well as on land.

#### Do alternative milks mean lower levels of vitamin D?

Drinking plant-based milk, goat's milk and other non-cow's milk - such as almond, rice, soy and coconut milk — is on the rise because of several reasons, including an increase in dairy allergies and perceived health benefits. But vitamin D fortification of non-cow's milk is voluntary in North America, whereas cow's milk is required to contain 40 IU of vitamin D per 3.4 ounces. A recent study from Canada found that healthy children who drank only noncow's milk were at higher risk of having low levels of vitamin D than children who drank only cow's milk. If your household prefers non-cow's milk, seek out brands that fortify with vitamin D to promote bone health and ward off deficiency-related diseases.



PERCENT increase of Americans who consumed yogurt at least twice a month in this decade compared to last decade, according to consumer research firm The NPD Group. Other foods that increased the most in American diets over the last decade? Bottled water, pizza, poultry sandwiches, Mexican food and fresh fruit.



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#### **Ask** the Nutritionist

#### **Q:** Which is better to drink to replace fluids: water or a sports drink?

**A:** To avoid extreme fatigue, nausea and extra strain on muscles, it's essential that you replace fluids lost through sweat. You can do that with water most efficiently but also with sports drinks and water-dense foods, such as soups and fruits. As a general rule, water will suffice as a hydration replenishment for workouts less than 90 minutes. For exercise longer than that, you'll benefit from the carbohydrates in a sports drink. (Look for sports beverages that contain 15 to 18 grams of carbs per 8 ounces.) Mostly, however, you should choose the beverage that you'll drink the most, whether it's water or a sports drink, and drink it before, during and after workouts.

#### Nutrition Myths BUSTED

True or False? Athletes aren't at risk for osteoporosis.

False. You know the drill: Both cardio and loadbearing exercise strengthens your bones, lessens joint pain and helps you maintain bone density as you age. True, exercise is one of the best ways to grow and keep strong bones. But female athletes can be at high risk for osteoporosis if they enter dangerous territory called the female athlete triad, a condition caused by overtraining, calorie restriction and loss of a menstrual cycle. The risk of bone loss is high with the female athlete triad and can't be treated with calcium or exercise. Avoid it by maintaining a nutrient-dense, balanced diet while you train.

#### THE BUZZ ON ...

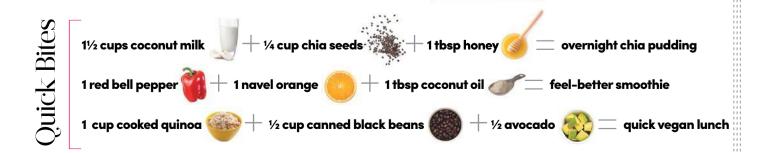
#### COLLAGEN

▶ WHAT IS IT? Collagen is the most abundant protein in the body, found mostly in your skin, connective tissue and muscles.

#### ► WHAT'S THE BUZZ ABOUT?

As you age, your body's natural production of collagen begins to slow and the cell structures of vour skin, hair, joints and bones become fragile and less elastic — that's when you can experience symptoms of aging, such as wrinkles, changing hair color and loss of flexibility. Eating collagenboosting foods (salmon, tuna, bone broth, gelatin, citrus, eggs and grass-fed meat) or taking a collagen supplement (available in powders, gummies, liquids and capsules) can help you maintain the health and regeneration of skin, hair, nails, tendons, cartilage, bones and joints.

► WHAT TO KNOW: It can take up to eight weeks to notice results from upping your collagen intake. Find the right balance — not too much, not too little. An excessive intake of collagen could result in hypercalcemia (too much calcium in the blood), which can cause constipation, fatigue, kidney stones and abnormal heart rhythms. Too little collagen can accelerate protein degeneration and joint pain. If starting a collagen supplement, follow dosage directions on the package — most recommend that you take powders and capsules with a full glass of water on an empty stomach or before bedtime.







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# Improve your No matter what your goals, these six supplements can help you build lean muscle, burn fat and even fight aging.



n the last 25 years, the number of women who go to the gym to pump iron has consistently increased — and with good reason. Experts say that even two strength-training workouts weekly can improve your body composition, boost your mood, burn fat and even fight against aging. For instance, noted exercise researcher William Kraemer, Ph.D., points out that women who lift weights possess better muscle tone and can turn back the clock by reducing the 5 to 10 percent of muscle strength that untrained individuals lose each decade after age 30.

Resistance training also promotes bone density, increases your caloric-burning metabolism (which helps you stay leaner), and has a dramatic effect on body shape and appearance.

But just committing to pumping iron isn't enough. Even the best training program will not achieve the greatest results without the right fuel for your muscles. This starts, obviously, with the basic macronutrients: carbs, protein and fats. You need a good balance of these in order to get the vitamins, minerals, enzymes and other nutrients necessary for health and recovery. But there are specific performanceenhancing supplements you should be using to get the absolute most out of your time in the gym. Check out the following list.

**Protein.** Protein provides the building blocks (amino acids) of muscle tissue. The best choice immediately postworkout is whey, which digests quickly. A combination protein containing whey, casein and soy is even better because it digests slower and provides amino acids for an extended time. (Whey digests within two hours of ingestion, while soy breaks down within two to four hours and casein within four to six.) Casein is great taken at night to help you avoid catabolizing your muscle tissue as you sleep. Your daily protein intake should

be between 1 to 1.5 grams per pound of bodyweight daily, divided so that you don't consume more than 25 grams at any one sitting (for greatest absorption). About 20 percent of this could be taken immediately postworkout.

Multivitamin. Vitamins are the catalysts for all the processes in your body, including anabolic muscle building. For instance, B complex helps derive energy from food, which helps you stay energized. Vitamin C is critical for immune function and antioxidant muscle protection while sparing nitric oxide from free radicals so it's available for muscular endurance. Vitamin D boosts gene activation for improved muscle strength and recovery, plus it is essential for calcium absorption, which promotes bone remodeling and better muscle contractions. This is only the tip of the iceberg. Find a performance multi for athletes and take it daily.

Creatine. This amino acid-like compound helps extend the ATP-PC cycle that fuels all activity. Its use improves muscular endur-

ance and strength while drawing water into muscle tissue to promote increased size, fullness and growth. Don't worry about stomach bloating, either — after about 30 minutes following ingestion, fluid follows creatine into the muscles and makes you look better. For best results, take 2 to 5 grams of creatine monohydrate postworkout.

**BCAAs.** These three amino acids (leucine, isoleucine and valine) are unique from other aminos because they can be burned as fuel within muscle tissue, allowing for increased muscular endurance and faster recovery. Leucine is the anabolic trigger for growth, so it helps build new muscle tissue. Plus, it also may increase growth hormone and reduce cortisol. When supplementing, use a branchedchain amino acid with at least 5:1:1 ratio (leucine to isoleucine and valine) and take 5 to 10 grams before training.

**NO Boosters.** Nitric oxide is a signaling molecule that stimulates vasodilation (opening blood vessels). By increasing blood flow, you get better amino-acid and other nutrient delivery to muscles, which signals cells to grow bigger. NO also may promote lipolysis, which releases fat from fat cells so it is burned for energy. The best NO supplements include arginine, citrulline, GlycoCarn or Nitrosigine. Choose one and take 30 minutes before exercise.

**Beta-Alanine.** This nonessential amino combines with histidine in the body to form carnosine, which is shown to increase muscle strength, endurance and size. Beta-alanine is the limiting factor in this equation, so supplementation is critical for improved performance. You can find this amino in preworkout supplements or take it on its own. Ingest 1 to 3 grams before and after workouts.











Asparagus

Asparagus contains glutathione, an antioxidant and oxifying compound that bréaks down free being researched as a way to destroy breast cancer cells.

Make the most of this iconic spring veggie with these recipes and preparation ideas.

ven though it makes your pee smell funny, asparagus should headline every health-conscious woman's grocery list. Asparagus is super high in key vitamins and minerals and low in calories (less than 30 calories per cup), earning it a top spot on the ANDI (aggregate nutrient density index) scale, which measures vitamin. mineral and phytonutrient content in relation to calories. Try these five great ways to inte-

grate asparagus into your daily diet and reap all the benefits it

has to offer.

It takes about three years from seed to first harvest, but then asparagus plants can last up to 15 years!





#### The amino acid asparagine found in asparagus is a natural diuretic, which helps the body release excess fluid and salts and maintain the health of your kidneys.

#### 1. As a Soluble Side

Just a cup of asparagus contains 18 percent of your Recommended Daily Allowance of vitamin E, which is known to be a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, removing free radicals from the body, according to the Harvard School of Public Health. Because vitamin E is fat-soluble, you should saute your asparagus spears in a little olive oil to help transport that E into your cells, tout suite.

## 2. As a (K)ey Salad Inaredient

One cup of asparagus contains 70 percent of your RDA for vitamin K, which aids in the absorption of calcium. Calcium is important for keeping bones strong and dense, powering muscular contractions and maintaining nerve health. Shave raw asparagus into a salad made with high-calcium veggies such as arugula, spinach, edamame, fennel and artichoke. That way the K and Ca can better meet, meld and do their thing.

## 3. As a Double for Dip

With 3 grams of fiber per 1-cup serving, asparagus is a satisfying sub for avocados in rich dips such as guacamole. And while we adore the heart-healthy fat found in avocados, it's easy to get carried away and blow your calorie quota for the day. Instead, try our delicious Asparagus Guacamole (recipe at oxygenmag .com). Serve with veggie spears or baked wholegrain pita corners for a filling snack.

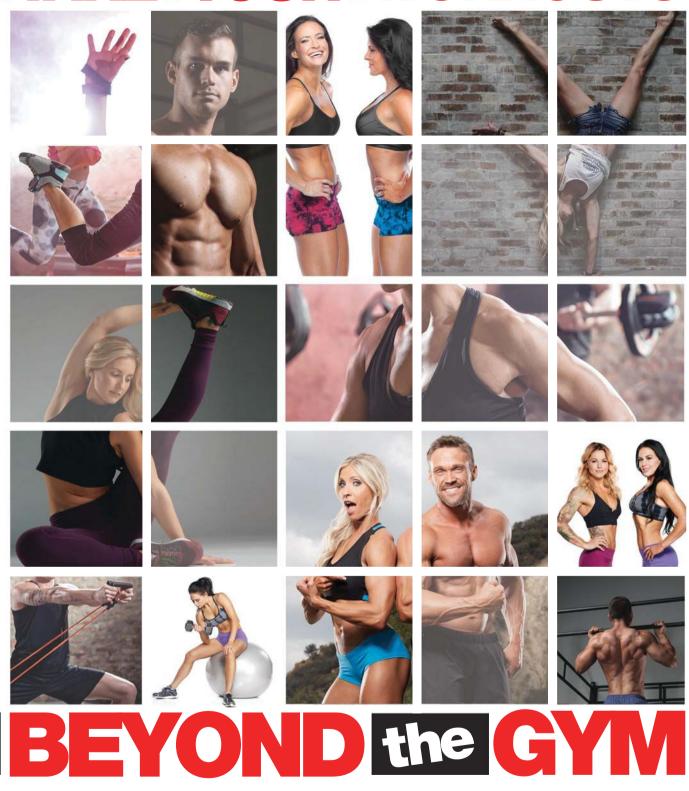
## 4. As a Brain-**Boostina Breakfast**

Combine fiber-rich asparagus with proteinrich eggs and you have a brain-boosting breakfast. Asparagus is high in folate, which helps prevent cognitive impairment, according to a study out of Tufts University. Folate has also been shown to protect against neural tube defects and miscarriage as well as many cancers. Go to oxygenmag.com for our Asparagus and Sun-Dried Tomato Frittata Recipe!

## 5. As a Satiating Soup

Numerous studies endorse eating soup as part of a weight-watching program: Soup is low in calories in relation to servina size, and accordina to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, those who eat clear or broth-based soups have a better chance at controlling their weight. The theory is that because soup takes longer to eat, it gives your brain and digestive tract more time to register satiety.

## TAKE YOUR I WORKOUTS



Online challenges that you can follow inside and outside the gym.

#AimFitness AimFitnessNetwork.com

## Not feeling it?

When to train, when to rest and how to know which option is right for how you feel.



## Alternative Route

If your planned strength workout is causing more grief than it's worth, it might be time for plan B. Remember, something is better than nothing. Try one of the activities below to reset your mind for tomorrow. Who knows, maybe afterward vou'll be ready to give that workout another go.

- A long stretch session
- A ride on the bike with new music blasting A handful of yoga
- A walk outside

o matter what shape you're in, or even how often you hit the gym, there will be days when you feel like you just can't push anymore — the weights feel really heavy, you can't get into the groove or you're just plain hurting. Hey, it happens. But how should you handle it? Give in and try again tomorrow, or push through, getting in a workout regardless?

## When to Push Through

Perhaps the most important factor in this dilemma is to listen to your body. Monitoring everyday aches and knowing the difference between them and more serious twinges or pains is key. If you're indeed just struggling, but not hurt, what can you do?

Sports psychologist Caroline Silby, Ph.D., author of Games Girls Play: Understanding and Guiding Young Female Athletes (St. Martin's Press, 2001) suggests that on the days you're feeling overwhelmed by your workout, you can turn the obstacle into a challenge by testing how much you can get accomplished when feeling out of your rhythm.

"You almost have to view these days as separate workouts from the ones when you are feeling good," she says. "Eventually, you'll be able to increase the intensity you put forth on days when you're feeling lousy and have stellar workouts regardless."

#### **Tactics: Boosting Your Mind**

As active women know, mental strength is just as important as physical strength when it comes to training consistently. What mental techniques can you implement to push through the notso-stellar days? Silby suggests putting appropriate filters on the "noise" in your head. For instance, she says, if you're running on the treadmill, be sure to do things that help you to stay loose, fluid and on your rhythm. Some athletes use a mantra like "down" every time their foot hits the ground, while others use motivational self-talk.

NPC bikini competitor and personal trainer Heidi Waselich says that planning out not only her workout but also her whole day helps her develop her plan of action for the gym. For her, the mental side of training is 80 percent of the battle. "Once my plan is set, I try to take at least 10 minutes in the morning to meditate (I use the app Calm) or take myself through a short yoga flow; both always help clear my headspace and bring me a sense of peace to carry with me through the day," she says.

Silby also recommends knowing what's important. "Maybe you feel tired or frustrated," she says. "Now what? It's up to you to process this information and figure out if it's really important. Most often, you can feel tired or frustrated and have everything you need to be successful. So carry on."

But if you just can't break through the block, don't throw in the towel completely. Some exercise is better than none at all, and don't beat yourself up. Remember that fitness is a lifelong journey. Identify why your workout didn't go according to plan and get back to said plan tomorrow — even superwomen have down days!

# Crafted for a Healthy Life







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# lin4

That's how many vacationers wind up in emergency rooms during their trips, according to a survey by Orlando Health, a nonprofit health organization in Central Florida. Here are the organization's safety steps to add to your to-do list while planning your next trip:

- Consider travel insurance Your insurance plan might not cover international health expenses.
- Don't throw caution to the wind Sure you want to indulge and have a good time on vacation, but drinking too much alcohol and overeating heavy or exotic foods can lead to gastrointestinal distress that could land you in the emergency room; ditto for overdoing sun exposure. Carry sunscreen and a water bottle with you to remind you to stay hydrated and healthy.
- ▶ Take photos with your phone
  Snap shots of your prescriptions,
  a list of allergies, X-rays and EEG
  readings for handy referral in case
  of an emergency. Also, make sure
  someone knows your phone password so the photos can be shared
  with health-care providers if you're
  unable to pull them up yourself.





**People who put away sodas** and energy drinks on the reg are more likely to get inadequate sleep, researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, concluded in a survey of 18,000 adults. In their paper published in the journal *Sleep Health*, they noted that participants who usually slept about five hours a night, which is considered "short sleep," drank 21 percent more caffeinated, sugary beverages than survey respondents who get seven to eight hours of shut-eye. Why is short sleep so bad for you? Previous studies have linked it with higher blood pressure and increased levels of stress and inflammation in the body, and recent research at the University of Illinois at Chicago also suggests that chronic abbreviated sleep can result in poorer kidney function.

Although the UCSF researchers noted an association between sugary beverage consumption and short sleep, the research team isn't sure which causes which. They suspect that there's a cyclical effect, however — drinking sugary beverages makes sleep more difficult, creating a need for more energy drinks to get through the following day and more trouble sleeping at night. Another caveat: The survey data regarding sleep patterns was self-reported, so it might not be super accurate, the authors noted. Sleep monitors or electroencephalograms would give scientists a clearer picture about sleep duration and quality and help them figure out how to help people get better sleep — and subsequently help curb their reliance on sugar-bomb beverages.

## **Breathing Away Depression**

Yogic breathing could help people for whom antidepressants don't work well enough, suggests a recent study. Two months of Sudarshan Kriya yoga, a breathingbased meditation practice, significantly lessened symptoms of severe depression and anxiety in subjects compared to a control group that experienced no changes, wrote the authors of the paper published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry.



# IT'STICT CHEATING, ITJUST TASTES THATWAY.

WheyTech Pro 24 by BodyTech® now comes in mouthwatering mocha and red velvet flavors. Support muscle recovery and growth with 24g of high-quality protein in every delicious scoop.

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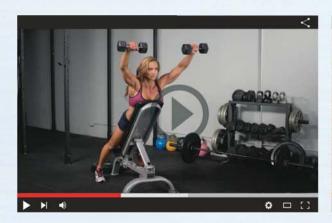
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The artist sees her masterpiece before the first chisel or sweep of the paintbrush. She learns the nuances of her medium and sculpts with deliberateness — always with the end goal in mind. You are the artist, and the weights are your medium. Create the masterpiece in you, following the techniques in

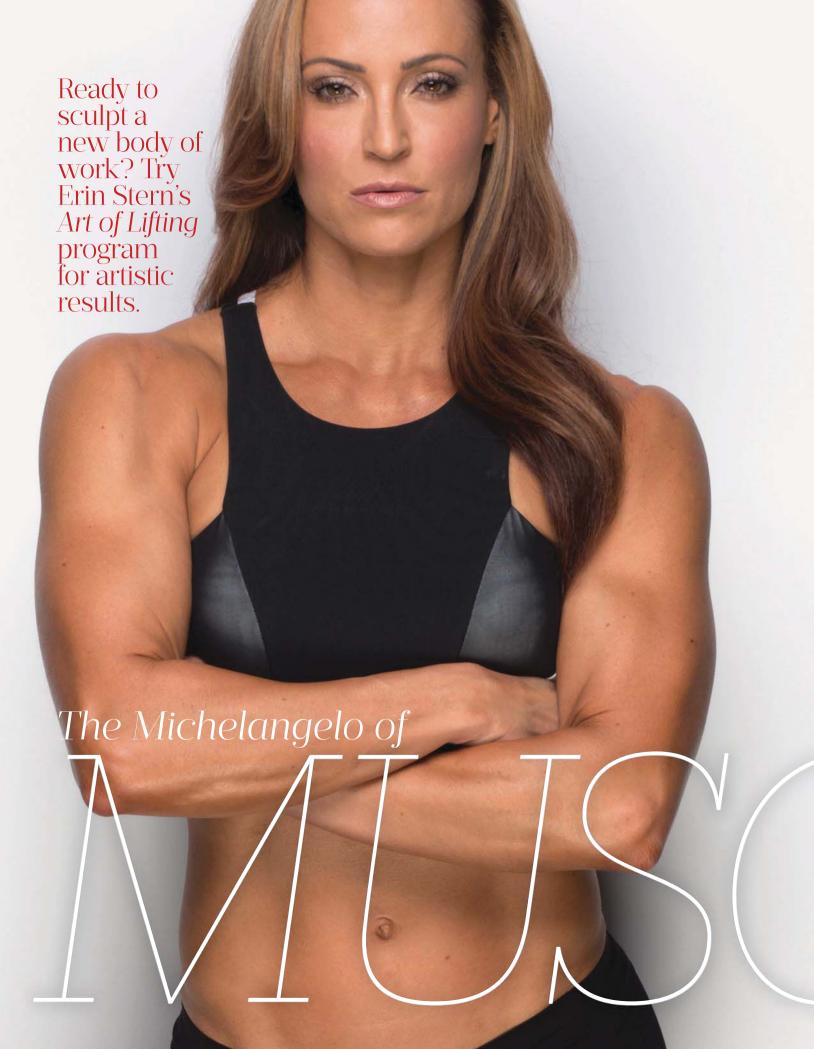
## THE ART OF LIFTING WITH ERIN STERN.

## SIGN UP TODAY!











an you relate to this story? Your dad wanted a boy, but he got you, and even though he was thrilled you were you, he encouraged you to be sporty. See how fast you can run! See how high you can jump! See how many people you can beat!

Your story is also Erin Stern's story, and due in no small part to her father, Stern excelled at sports. She started lifting weights as a kid, knocking about on her father's old Universal multi-station in the garage (which incidentally, she says, he still has and it still works!).

"I remember being very pleased with myself that I could max out on that leg press when I was a kid," says Stern, who spent almost a decade lifting for performance as a track athlete, focusing on drills to make her faster, stronger, explosive, a winner. But once track was over and she transitioned to figure competition, Stern knew she had to focus more on aesthetics.

"It wasn't until 2008 when I stepped onstage and saw what I looked like in comparison to other women that I realized the improvements I needed to make," she says. For example, her right leg — her takeoff leg for the high jump — was bigger than her left, as was her right arm, which she used for throwing events in the heptathlon and pentathlon. "I had the basics of lifting; I just needed to learn about aesthetics."

Combining her track training with traditional bodybuilding moves, Stern spent hundreds of hours

on trial-and-error training until she sculpted a nearly perfect symmetrical physique, one that earned her 11 titles in her career as a pro, including two wins as Figure Olympia champion.

#### Self-Sculpt

"This is the same kind of training I do now and the kind of work I recommend to anyone wanting to bring her physique to the next level," says Stern, who created an online education program called *The Art of Lifting* (see sidebar), which details the exact training techniques and exercises that brought her physique to that winning level. "Once you get to a certain point with your training, it goes beyond the basics," she continues. "It becomes an art. And each day you go to the gym, you strike with the chisel, and each strike with the chisel brings you closer to your ideal."

These five moves, borrowed from *The Art of Lifting* program, are ones Stern suggests adding to your regular rotation to begin your sculpture. "They are unique, effective and use minimal equipment," she says. "They combine function with aesthetics and can target a specific area that needs attention."

Parcel these moves throughout your workout week, depending on the bodypart you're working. Use Stern's insider tips to make each move that much more effective and you're on your way to becoming a selfmade sculpture.

#### IRON CROSS

3 sets, AMRAP

## "YOU CAN DO THIS MOVE WITH DUMBBELLS OR PLATES. I USE IT AS A SHOULDER FINISHER."

Stand with your feet hipwidth apart and hold a set of light plates in front of your thighs, arms extended. Keeping vour arms straight, do a front raise to bring the weights to shoulder height, then open your arms to the sides in line with your shoulders. Lower them to your hips, then immediately lift up again in a lateral raise back to shoulder height. Bring them back together in front of you, then lower to the start to complete one rep.





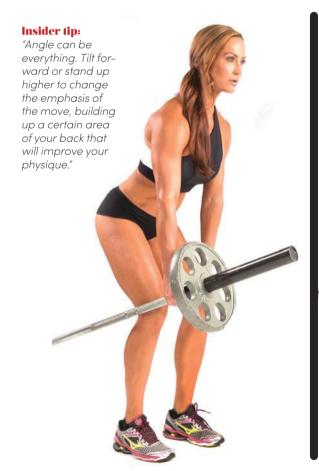
## "A LANDMINE GIVES YOU THE STABILITY OF A MACHINE BUT ALLOWS FOR A GREATER RANGE OF MOTION WHILE CREATING BODY AWARENESS AND IMPROVING BALANCE."

## LANDMINE BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

3 sets, 15 reps per leg

"UNILATERAL MOVES LIKE THIS REQUIRE MORE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT AND GREATER FOCUS, SO I PUT THEM TOWARD THE BEGINNING OF MY WORKOUT."

Stand with your back to a flat bench and extend one leg behind you on top of the bench, laces down. Hold the end of a landmine bar in the hand opposite of your extended leg and shift your weight into your standing leg. Bend your standing knee deeply, lowering until your thigh is roughly parallel to the floor, then drive through your heel and rise powerfully back to the start. Do all reps on one side before switching.





## LANDMINE ONE-ARM ROW

3 sets, 8 to 15 per side

"I LIKE TO DO THIS MOVE ONE ARM AT A TIME, BECAUSE WHEN I USE THEM BOTH TOGETHER, MY RIGHT ARM (WHICH IS STRONGER) TENDS TO TAKE OVER."

Stand to the side of the loaded bar facing away from the landmine anchor point. Hold the bar with one hand near the collar and stand with your knees slightly bent, back straight, torso angled forward about 45 degrees. Drive your elbow up and back to pull the bar toward your rib cage, keeping your arm in close to your side and your shoulders level. Slowly lower to the start. Complete all reps on one side before switching.

#### DRAG CURL

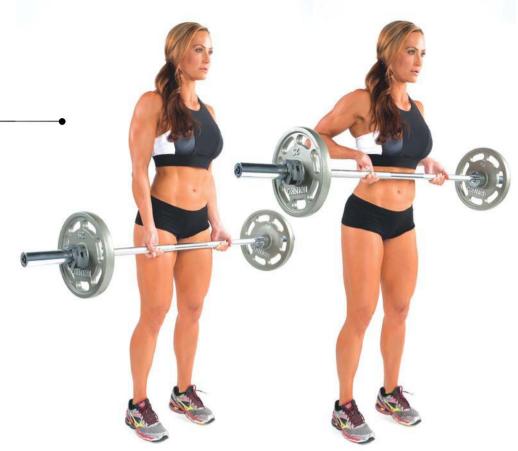
3 to 5 sets, 8 to 15 reps

#### Rarbell

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and take a shoulder-width underhand grip on a barbell, arms extended. Drive your elbows back and squeeze your shoulder blades together to drag the bar up along the front of your body as high as you can. Pause, then lower to the start.

## **Dumbbells**

Perform the same motion as with a barbell, but consciously keep the dumbbells the same distance apart at the bottom as at the top and resist the urge to curl them rather than to drag them.



"THIS MOVE CAN BE DONE EITHER WITH A BARBELL OR A DUMBBELL. I WOULD BEGIN WITH A BARBELL, AND ONCE YOU GET THE HANG OF THE MECHANICS AND HOW IT SHOULD FEEL, TRY THE DUMBBELLS."



#### **Insider tip:**

"This is a move that can help with symmetry. For instance. if one arm is a lot stronger than the other and therefore larger, doing the move with dumbbells can help balance them out, since they have to work independently."

## BARBELL ALTERNATING STEP-UP

3 to 4 sets, 5 to 8 reps per leg

"I LOVE TO USE A BARBELL FOR STEP-UPS BECAUSE IT ELIMINATES A LOT OF THE MOMENTUM SO THE FOCUS BECOMES MORE ABOUT LIFTING THE WEIGHT. PUT THIS TOWARD THE BEGINNING OF YOUR WORKOUT."

Stand facing a flat bench and balance a barbell across your upper back and traps and hold it with your elbows down. Step onto the bench with one foot and extend that leg to come to standing on top of the bench. Bring your rear knee through to the front, raising it to hip height and hold, balancing for one count. Reverse the steps to return to the start and continue, alternating sides.

Y

See more at aimfitnessnetwork.com/oxygen.



## THE ART OF LIFTING

Want to take your physique to the next level? Then check out Erin Stern's The Art of Lifting. Just as a sculptor uses her chisel to carve every detail out of stone, so will Stern teach you how to use weights to carefully sculpt your own physique into a work of living art. Stern breaks your body into 10 parts – shoulders, quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes, biceps, triceps, back, chest, calves and abs. For each part, she gives advice, advanced techniques, mental strategies and targeted exercises to help you shape and sculpt that part exactly how you want it. Using her insider secrets, you can craft your own best physique by summer! aimfitnessnetwork .com/oxygen





Medicine balls have been around (almost) forever, and even Hippocrates is said to have fashioned his own by stuffing animal skins with sand, then using them to rehab injured patients. Today, medicine balls remain one of the most diverse pieces of equipment around, and they could very well be the perfect prescription for improving strength and performance while burning scads of fat.

## That's the Way the Ball Bounces (or Doesn't)

There are two standard kinds of medicine balls: reactive and nonreactive. (See chart on Page 55.) Which kind you employ depends on the activity you're doing. For instance, if you're doing fast, explosive movements or exercises that require rebounding, choose a reactive medicine ball, which will return to you quickly. If you're focused on strength and power or are doing catching and/or throwing exercises, a nonreactive medicine ball is your best bet.

Both kinds of balls come in varying weights, and although strength is typically equated with the amount of weight used in an exercise, heavier is not always better when it comes to medicine balls. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, you should not choose the heaviest ball you can heft; instead, pick one that is just heavy enough to slow the pace of the exercise without reducing your ability to control the ball. With medicine balls, your power comes from accelerating a load and then releasing it, not from decelerating it as it returns.

Here are six great medicine-ball moves to try, three for each kind of ball. Do them in a circuit or a metcon together, or parcel them out during your workout week to throw your body a curveball (pun intended!).

## REACTIVE MEDICINE-BALL MOVES



Note: How far you stand from the wall depends on your strength and the weight of the ball you're using. Do a couple of test throws to gauge your distance so you don't hit yourself (or someone else!) in the head.

## SIDE-TOSS TOUCHDOWN

Stand sideways to a wall and hold the medicine ball with both hands at your chest. Pivot on your feet toward the wall quickly, using that momentum to extend your arms and throw the ball against the wall. Catch it as it rebounds, returning to the start position, and bend both knees to touch the ball down to the floor between your feet. Stand and repeat immediately, trying to establish an even cadence. Do all reps on one side before switching.

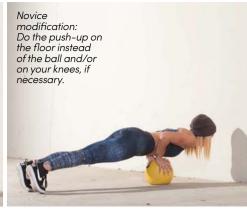


Novice modification: Eliminate the touchdown and focus on the mechanics of the side toss.









#### CHEST-PASS PUSH-UP

Hold a medicine ball at your chest with both hands, elbows down, and face the wall. Explosively throw the ball forward against the wall, catch it as it rebounds and then place the ball on the floor, hands on top. Jump your feet out behind you and do a push-up on top of the ball. Jump your feet back underneath, grab the ball, stand and repeat.

## OVERHEAD THROW LUNGE BACK

Face a wall and hold the medicine ball overhead. Throw the ball forward forcefully against the wall, using your whole body, including your abs and hips, to generate power. Catch it as it rebounds, then hold it straight up overhead as you do a reverse lunge with each leg, dropping your knee toward the floor and keeping your weight centered between your feet.

## AS THIS KIND OF BALL RETURNS TO YOU, YOUR CORE HAS TO WORK DOUBLE TIME TO CONTROL ITS MOMENTUM.





Throwing drills

## NONREACTIVE MEDICINE-BALL MOVES

10

What you need:

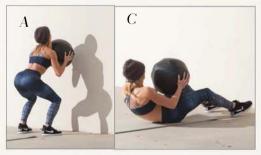
→ An open,
empty area

→ Light- or
moderate-weight
medicine ball

Note: These balls are slightly larger, giving them more surface area and making them easier to catch. They're also softer and absorb impact, meaning they rarely rebound more than half the distance back to you, if at all.

## WALL-BALL ROLLBACK

Stand a few feet away from a wall and hold a medicine ball at your chest, wrists stacked over elbows and elbows pointed toward the floor. Drop your hips and squat down as low as you can, then explode upward to standing, extending your arms and throwing the ball as high as you can on the wall. Catch the ball as it returns, then hug it to your chest, sit on the ground and roll backward along your spine, knees tucked. Use the momentum of your legs and the ball to roll back into a crouch, then go right into your next toss.



Novice modification: Instead of the rollback, hold in a V-sit for 10 to 20 seconds with the ball on your chest.









#### **SQUAT-THRUST-SLAM**

Stand with your feet shoulderwidth apart, toes turned out slightly, and hold a medicine ball at your chest, elbows down. Kick your hips back and squat to parallel or below, then extend your legs and hips powerfully, reaching your arms and the ball overhead as you come to standing, rising up onto your toes. Then slam the ball down to the floor, dropping your hips and contracting your abs to execute the movement. Pick the ball up, bring it to your chest and repeat.

BECAUSE THIS KIND OF BALL DOES NOT BOUNCE, YOU MUST RELY SOLELY ON STRENGTH TO MOVE IT.



Stand with your back to a large, open area and hold the medicine ball with both hands in front of your thighs, arms extended, feet shoulder-width apart. Hinge from your hips with a flat back and swing the ball back between your legs. Explosively snap your hips forward and swing the ball up over your head and behind you, going for height and/or distance with your toss. As soon as the ball lands, crouch and touch the floor in front of you, then turn and sprint to the ball. Grab it and run back to your starting line.













leanness — the problem could lie with your accessories. No, not your training shoes or your gym bag but the exercises you implement in your workout programming.

An accessory movement is a lift that targets muscles that provide vital assistance during the larger lifts that get you the most bang for your buck. For example, the lats are the primary movers in a chin-up, but they can't perform without the assistance of the traps. Adding a kettlebell angled press to your workout to strengthen the lower and middle traps will enhance the performance of the lats, enabling you to do more chin-ups with better form in the long term.

Accessory moves help promote muscular balance and overall strength, and when programmed properly, they also help prevent injury. Add these moves into your workouts, scheduling them after your big movement patterns, and seal up those weak links in your movement chains once and for all.



# accessorize

#### COSSACK SQUAT

- Accessory muscles worked: Adductors, obliques, quadratus umborum
- Muscles assisted: Quads, glutes
- Exercises enhanced: Squat, deadlift

#### How-To

Stand with your feet double shoulder-width apart with your toes turned slightly outward. Bend your right knee and shift your weight to the right, tracking your knee over your toes until your left leg is completely straight with your heel on the ground, foot flexed, chest lifted. Pause, then return to the start and continue, alternating sides.

## ← note

You can either touch your fingers lightly to the floor for balance — making sure your chest stays lifted — or if you have good balance, hold your hands in front of your chest.



## √ note

This move should be done with control; don't just swing back and forth as if at a playground.





2

#### **BODY SAW**

- Accessory muscles worked: Core (rectus abdominis, erector spinae, transverse abdominis, intercostals)
- Muscles assisted: Total body
- Exercises enhanced: Overhead press, squat, deadlift, bent-over row

#### How-To

Adjust the straps on a TRX or suspension system to midshin level. Get into a forearm plank with your feet in the loops, head, hips and heels aligned and elbows underneath your shoulders. Engage your glutes to prevent your lower back from sagging. Using your forearms as leverage, push your body backward, straightening your arms until your ears come over your elbows. Pause, then slowly return to the start.



↑ note

Do this with a light kettlebell so you can maintain the proper pressing angle.

## 4

#### PETERSON STEP-UP

- Accessory muscles worked: Vastus medialis oblique ("teardrop" quadriceps muscle)
- Muscles assisted: Remaining three quadriceps muscles
- Exercises enhanced: Squat, plyometric jump, deadlift

#### How-To

Stand on top of a small box with one foot off the edge, foot flexed, leg straight. Bend your standing knee slowly, lowering your flexed heel toward the floor until it touches down lightly. Pause, then push through the standing foot to extend back to the start. Do all reps on one side before switching.







Secure a light- to moderate-weight resistance band around a stable object such as a squat rack. Stand a few feet away from the base of the machine and hold the band at shoulder height, arms straight, and pack your shoulder blades. Drive your elbows out and back to pull the band apart and toward your forehead, attempting to get as much distance between your hands as possible. Slowly return to the start.



## note

Make sure you're opening your arms as you're pulling to best engage the proper muscles, especially the rear delts.

## < note

It's OK if the heel of your standing leg comes off the box.







#### **PULL-THROUGH**

- Accessory muscles worked: Glutes, hamstrings
- Muscles assisted: Lower back, abdominals
- Exercises enhanced: Romanian deadlift, squat, good morning

#### How-To

Secure a resistance band low on a stable object and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, facing away from the anchor with the band between your feet. Keeping your back flat, hinge at the hips and grasp the band with both hands, arms long, and allow the band to pull your hands between your legs toward the anchor. Keeping your back flat, drive forward with your glutes and hips, pulling the band up and through your legs until you're standing up completely. Slowly return to the start and repeat right away.



Your arms are only an anchor for the band as your glutes and hips work, similar to a kettlebell swing, so do not pull with them when performing this exercise.

Bret "The Glute Guy"
Contreras breaks down
the benefits of this mustdo move. By Jerry Kindela, MA, DHS

The

s co-founder of Strength & Conditioning Review and owner of a private facility called The Glute Lab, Bret Contreras, Ph.D., CSCS, is world famous for his butt-building know-how. "The Glute Guy" relies heavily on science and research as well as his own practical experience to create what many consider to be among the most grueling and effective programs for building the glutes. With this kind of unique pedigree, Contreras was the natural choice to go to for this article on the goblet squat.

## A Goblet a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

If Contreras had his way, everyone in the world would be on a strict diet of once-a-day goblet squats. "The goblet squat ... can bridge the gap between bodyweight and barbell squatting [for beginners]," Contreras says. Intermediate lifters can use medium to high repetitions to incite hypertrophy, and advanced lifters should goblet squat as part of their warm-up to raise their core temperature and pre-engage the nervous system. They also should perform heavy goblets as part of their leg workout, he adds.

He notes that frequent goblet squatting keeps your ankles flexible, your quads and glutes firing, and your back muscles strong and stable. This builds solid squatting mechanics that effectively prepare you for weighted squats, allowing you to engage more muscle and build better glutes while reducing the stress on your lower back. When performed correctly, the goblet squat also can help prevent valgus collapse, which occurs when the knees cave inward during a squat, according to Contreras. This reduces the benefits of squatting and could lead to injuries such as ACL strains and tears and iliotibial band syndrome. Practicing perfect goblet squats can, over time, correct this problem, since your elbows move in between your legs at the bottom and you can actually use your elbows to force your knees outward as you rise.

## **Goblet Squat Done Right**

Perfect execution is imperative when doing this exercise in order to gain its full benefits. Here, Contreras gives the blow-by-blow on how to goblet like a pro.



# goblet squat

PLUS! Exclusive Glute Workout!

#### DESCENT

Bend your knees and hips simultaneously and squat straight down; don't angle your hips back like in a traditional barbell squat.

Track your knees over your toes as you descend. You may even need to press them outward a bit so they stay in line. Descend as low as possible while maintaining the natural arch in your lower back. Squat depth will differ from one person to the next because of individual variations in hip anatomy and lower-body mobility.

At the bottom, your elbows should be inside your knees, hips low and torso as upright as possible.



3

#### ASCENT

Keep your chest up and your weight in your heels and outer edges of your feet as you rise explosively out of the bottom to full extension. Squeeze your glutes at the top to lock out your hips and serve as a reminder to activate the glutes for each and every rep.

## "THE GLUTE GUY" WORKOUT

One run through this exclusive workout created for *Oxygen* by Bret Contreras, Ph.D., CSCS, and you'll understand why he's known as "The Glute Guy." Do the warm-up as prescribed and then get into the meat of the program. Beginners should start with three to four sets of eight to 12 reps using 15 pounds. Once you can complete four sets with that weight using proper form, increase the weight by 5 pounds. Advanced lifters can use as much as 70 pounds.

Exercise	SetsxReps
Warm-Up: Light Goblet Squat Walking Knee Hug Mini-Band Lateral Walk	3x10 3x10 (each leg) 3x10 (each leg)
Barbell Hip Thrust	1x12, 1x10, 1x8, 1x6
Heavy Goblet Squat	3x10
Alternating Reverse Lunge	2x8 (each leg)
Bodyweight Back Extension	2x30
Standing Cable Hip Abduction	2x10 (each leg)

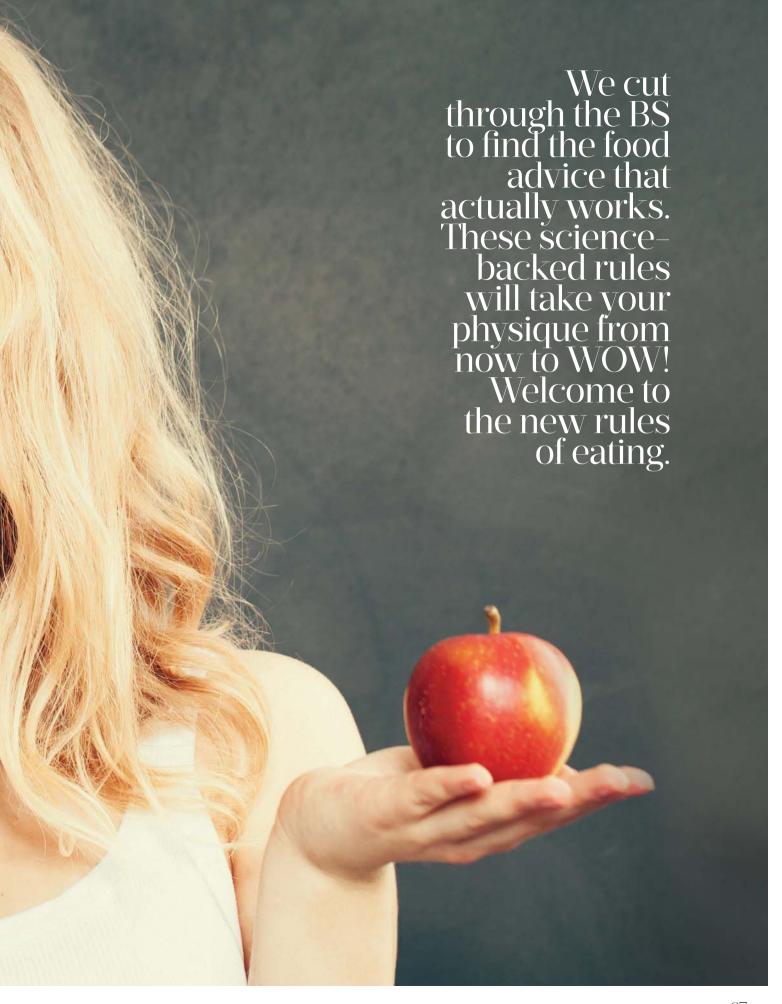
## HOW LOW DO YOU GO?

Going deep on the goblet squat is a goal worth pursuing, Contreras says. It engages a greater amount of muscle tissue and affords maximum efficiency and benefit. But as a scientist and realist, he advises: "Maximum squat depth is highly influenced by individual differences in hip anatomy and not everyone can squat past parallel."

Use these tips to achieve greater squat depth and amplify your assets.

- Play with your stance width and foot flare to see which positions enable the deepest squat.
- At the bottom, actively push your knees outward to improve mechanics and mobility.
- ▶ Wear squat shoes or place plates underneath your heels to increase your range of motion.
- ▶ Perform hip and ankle mobility drills, as well as some glute activation drills before the squat workout to get the appropriate muscles firing. 😝







**L**. Skip a meal or two.

Science says intermittent fasting, as in eating 500 calories one or two days a week or going 12 to 18 hours in a day without food, can help you lose weight and decrease your risk for disease. Heck, skipping meals can even amp up the production of growth hormone and satiating hormones to protect your hard-earned muscles and keep your stomach from grumbling. For best results, work your way up, gradually increasing the hours you fast from 12 to 14 (up to 18).

## 2. Let them eat salt!

That sweaty workout can have you craving chips, wings and fries, oh my! When sweat happens, so does sodium loss — as much as 5,000 milligrams an hour. Skip the deep-fried salt bombs and sprinkle the white stuff on airpopped popcorn, Persian cucumbers, baked kale chips and even strawberries for a healthier salt fix.

## **3.** Ditch the one-note diet.

Broccoli for breakfast, lunch and dinner isn't doing your appetite any favors. A study published in *Physiology & Behavior* found that food monotony could lead to cravings. Mix it up to keep from getting bored.

4. Imagine cravings away.

Close your eyes and picture a colorful rainbow and watch your food hankerings disappear. A McGill University study showed that picturing something pleasurable engaged the imagery section of the brain to cancel out cravings.

Trick your sweet tooth.

Healthy sweets are not an oxymoron. Instead of nutrientvoid cookies and cupcakes, reach for sweets that satisfy your sweet tooth and nutrient needs: Dark chocolate delivers antioxidants, fruit gives you fiber, and Greek yogurt with honey provides protein and calcium.

**6.** Get your magnesium fix.

Craving chocolate? You could be low in magnesium, a key mineral for muscle contractions and energy production that most of us are lacking. Yes, chocolate is chock-full of it, but healthier bets are almonds, beans, sunflower seeds, fish and leafy greens.

## **7.** Flex

Firming up your muscles could strengthen your resolve. In a *Journal of Consumer Research* study, participants who tightened up their muscles made better food choices.

8. Hack your microbiome.

The microbial makeup of your gut could determine whether you reach for a soda or a salad, suggests a review in *BioEssays*. Stack it in your favor by eating fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchee, probiotic-packed yogurt and a variety of veggies.

**9.** Be a sleeping beauty.

Sleep not only does a body good, but it also can work wonders on your appetite. Being sleep-deprived can blunt your frontal lobe, your brain's decision-maker, meaning you're more likely to crave junk and eat more calories the next day — an average of 385 more, according to one study.



10. Surf the urge.

Cravings usually go one of two ways: We white-knuckle through them or give into them. But there is another option: Ride out the craving. Picture the urge like a wave in the ocean that builds and eventually crashes — and it will pass.

**II.** Tetris, anyone!

Playing a computer game, like *Tetris*, for as little as three minutes could get your mind off food, says a study in *Addictive Behaviors*. Take that, pizza!

**12.** Exercise away cravings.

When mental fatigue hits and has you reaching for a cookie, hit back with exercise. A study published in *Medicine* & *Science in Sports* & *Exercise* found that the lactic acid produced during exercise can feed a tired brain and turn off the urge to overeat.

## BLOAT, BE GONE!

Fermented foods are bloat busters.

13. Farewell, FODMAPs.

Move over gluten, the real bloating culprit could be FODMAPS (fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols). These tough-to-digest small-chain carbs, found in foods like garlic, yogurt, asparagus, beans and barley, aren't unhealthy, but if you're sensitive, too much of a good thing can mean cramping, constipation and gas. The solution: Go low-FODMAP and watch your belly deflate.

14. Get fermented!

Kombucha, kimchee, sauerkraut, kefir and even probiotic-spiked protein powders can increase good gut microbes to help digest food, absorb nutrients and un-tent your tummy.

15. Down with fructose.

An apple a day could keep the skinny jeans away. Fructose, a naturally occurring sugar in apples, watermelon, mango, honey and agave syrup, can ferment in your colon to cause abdominal pain, gas and bloating if you're intolerant. For flat-tummy results, cut down on the culprits and skip fruit as a solo snack.

16. Potassium, please!

Retaining water? Potassium can help flush extra fluid from your system, but bananas aren't your only (or best) bet. Sweet potatoes, avocado, tomato sauce and blackstrap molasses have more.

17. More salmon and sun.

A study published in the *British Medical Journal* found that 82 percent of participants with irritable bowel syndrome weren't getting enough vitamin D. Bonus: The sunshine vitamin, which is also found in eggs, milk and tuna, is linked to a boosted immunity and better mood.



## DIET MYTHS DEBUNKED

Three a day is OK.
You don't have to eat every three hours if that doesn't

work for you. Need proof? A study published in Obesity found that the three-meal-a-day group reported feeling more full than the six-meal group.

19. Suit yourself.
The best diet is the one you follow. Paleo, gluten-free, Weight Watchers, low-carb ... so which way of eating wins? A meta-analysis published in the journal JAMA says the best diet is the one you stick with.

• Time is on your side.

Eating after 8 p.m. doesn't make you fat. But there is a downside to late-night noshing: Willpower is lower when you're sleepy (enter donuts), and before-bed calories could interrupt sleep, causing you to overeat the next day.

> Calories can't tell time.

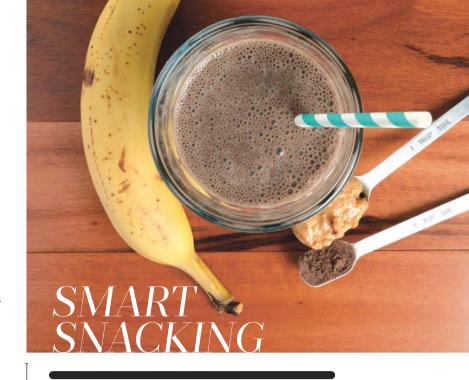


Enough protein, already!

Protein helps you stay full longer and preserves muscle mass (win-win!), but going hog-wild on, well, hog, is pointless. Researchers from the University of Texas found that consuming 90 grams of protein at one meal provides the same benefit as eating 30 grams. The take-away: Spread out your protein intake across the day.

Coconut oil is overrated.

The tropical oil may be touted as the latest superfood (and its high levels of lauric acid could suppress your appetite), but just adding one food to your diet won't magically make the weight fall off.



23. Refuel the right way.

If you think of your postworkout snack as a guilt-free pay-

ment for your sweat session, you could be eating back all the calories you just burned — and then some. Forget reward, think recovery. Eating a healthy 200-calorie snack containing carbs and protein within 30 minutes (chocolate milk, banana and peanut butter, crackers and cheese) can replenish glycogen stores, repair muscle and prevent the dreaded postworkout pigout.

Rethink your snacks.

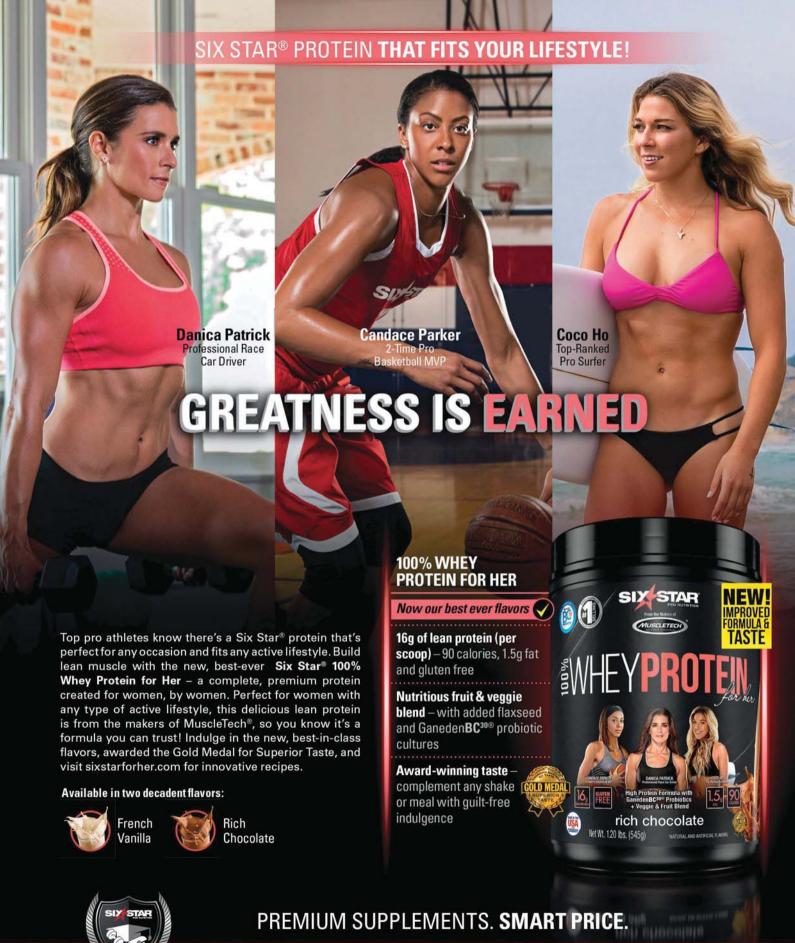
Researchers found that when office workers were sitting near a clear dish of Hershey's Kisses, they ate 71 percent — or 72 calories a day — more than they did when the chocolate was kept in white dishes. Even better, a stash of protein- and fiberrich snacks like pumpkin seeds or dry-roasted edamame can keep you satiated, productive and away from the temptation of communal candy.

• End mindless snacking.

Turn off the television (it can cause you to eat 45 percent more) and tune into your food. Eating with your nondominant hand, slowing down to savor your food and smaller plates helps, too.

Let We're most likely to binge at night, but knowing is only

half the battle. Stocking healthy go-to snacks with built-in brakes — frozen fruit for sweet cravings and pistachios in the shell for salty — can keep you from diving headfirst into a bag of cookies.





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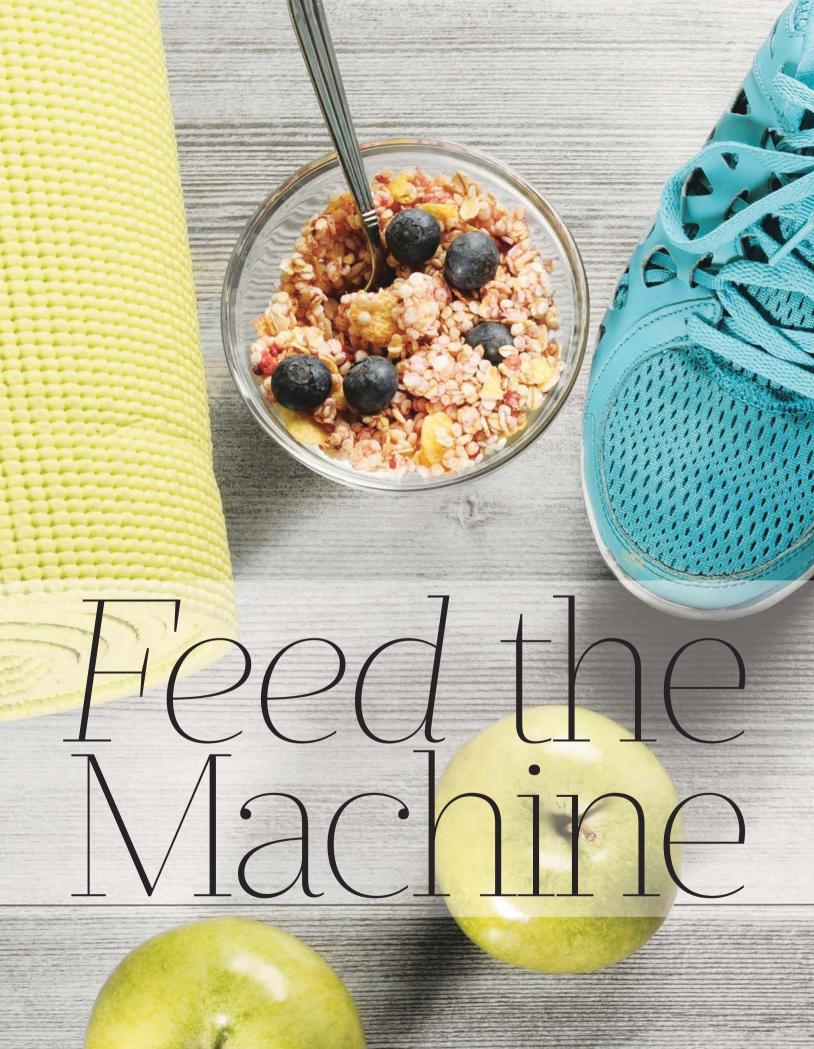
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KNOWING WHAT YOU EAT AND WHEN to eat it can make all the difference in your physique goals. Here, we break it down for you.

You've undoubtedly heard the old adage that your body is similar to your car when it comes to fuel and performance: If you fill up a Maserati with low-grade gas or dump a little water in the petrol tank to squeeze in as many gallons as possible, the automobile will be sluggish and perform far from optimally.

Your body is exactly the same. So if you're investing countless hours working out, you better pay attention to the food you eat if you want to look and feel your best.

#### **How Much Should You Eat?**

Before you can consider what to eat and when, you must first assess how many calories you should be consuming daily. The Institute of Medicine recommends that active women ages 19 to 30 should eat about 2,400 calories daily. That sounds like a lot, but when divided into four to six small meals of precise nutritional balance, it makes more sense. Women older than 30 should eat about 2,200 calories for the same activity level.

You can personalize this requirement by calculating your basal metabolic rate (amount of calories needed for subsistence). A good rule of thumb is 10 calories per pound of bodyweight for women. So if you weigh 135 pounds, that's 1,350 calories needed to survive. Multiply this by 1.55 if you exercise three to five times a week and the total equals about 2,100 calories. You can find more detailed calculators online that factor height, weight and age.

#### **Know Your Macros**

Each of the three macronutrients — fat, protein and carbohydrates — plays an essential role. Carbohydrates power exercise and movement as an energy source, plus fuel brain function, metabolism, anabolic growth, recovery and operation of the organs. (About 60 percent of your carb intake is needed by the brain.) Correct timing of carbs around exercise promotes anabolic hormone activity and reduces that of catabolic hormones.

By Steve Downs, CSCS





Protein is needed to build muscle, but it's also critical for cell structure, regulation of the body's organs, enzymatic stimulus, hormone creation, healing and more. Some proteins, such as the peptide hormone insulin, transmit messages to other cells to signal activity, including anabolism. Protein is actually the second most prevalent substance in the body behind water.

Finally, fat is a critical energy source that's also needed for hormone regulation, and it provides insulation for maintenance of the body's core temperature. It also helps the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins. Be sure to include unsaturated fats, plus omega-3 fatty acids for heart and joint health in your diet.

#### **Nutritional Balance Made Simple**

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 recommends that women consume 45 to 65 percent of their daily diet in carbs, 10 to 35 percent in protein and 20 to 30 percent in fat. These are rather wide ranges, especially in the protein category.

Following a 45:35:20 ratio of carbs, protein and fat (also known as the Macrobolic Nutrition Diet) will have far more beneficial effects for exercise enthusiasts. Based on the estimates of necessary calories from above, a woman taking in the aforementioned 2,100

calories would require 945 calories in carbs, 735 in protein and 420 in fats. Because carbs and protein comprise 4 calories per gram, this would entail 236 grams of carbs and 184 grams of protein. Fat equals 9 calories per gram, so that equals 47 grams.

If you divided these macro quantities into six meals, each would consist of 39 grams of carbs, 31 grams of protein and 8 grams of fat. The important part — creating a meal plan — becomes a math game for you to figure out. But realizing that a 4-ounce serving of chicken breast equals 35 grams of protein, a baked sweet potato (with skin) is 38 grams of carbs and 14 whole almonds contain 7 grams of fat, you can see these aren't big meals.

#### **Meal Timing**

A little-understood aspect of nutrition is meal timing and its effect on performance. There are three basic phases of exercise nutrition. The first is the *energy phase*, which provides the glycogen needed to fuel your activity. Carbohydrate consumption is critical in order to super-compensate glycogen levels, prevent protein breakdown and enhance anabolism while reducing catabolism. Eating 30 to 35 grams of carbs in a fast-glycemic carb meal (such as fruit, white

rice or oatmeal), along with 10 to 15 grams of protein high in leucine (lean beef, salmon or soybeans), will do the trick. (Remember, leucine helps with protein synthesis.) It's OK if your protein source also contains a few grams of fat, such as low-fat cottage cheese or Greek yogurt. For convenience, a quarter scoop of whey protein mixed with a bottle of Gatorade, plus a handful of raisins and almonds, can substitute. Consume this meal about 30 minutes before your workout.

The anabolic phase covers the 45-minute window immediately post-exercise. Here, your body is starved for glycogen and requires amino acids for muscle repair. Carbs are critically important because they are protein sparing — meaning they prevent muscle degradation. Take in 50 to 65 grams of high-glycemic carbs and 20 to 25 grams of protein at this meal, plus 4 to 5 grams of fat via almonds or something similar. Eat this meal as soon after training as your appetite will allow (within 15 to 20 minutes is best). A good recommendation is .3 to .5 grams of carbs per pound of bodyweight at a 3:1 carbs-to-protein ratio.

Finally, the four hours after training constitute the *growth phase*. For your next meal, about one hour postworkout, reduce your carb intake and increase your protein



#### STUDIES SHOW THAT AS LITTLE AS 5 PERCENT OF DEHY-DRATION IS LINKED TO DECREASES IN ATHLETIC OUTPUT.

and fat. Try a 2:4:1 carbs-to-protein-to-fats ratio, with protein equal to about .3 grams per pound of bodyweight. This would equate to 15 to 20 grams of carbs, 35 to 45 grams of protein and 10 to 12 grams of fat. Fortunately, protein sources such as lean red meat, fish and sushi also contain creatine, another important postworkout requirement to replenish ATP stores in muscle.

Later meals (and those earlier in the day before the workout) should follow the 45/35/20 balance using complex carbs, lean protein and unsaturated fats. These meals can be adjusted slightly to account for preworkout and postworkout consumption.

#### **Water: Critical Performance Fuel**

Hydration is important for health and performance. As you sweat, your body loses fluid and electrolytes. Studies show that as little as 5 percent of dehydration is linked to decreases in athletic output, and the less hydrated you become, the worse it gets. The recommended intake of water is about half your bodyweight in ounces. So for a

female weighing 135 pounds, that would be just over a half-gallon of water (68 ounces) daily. Thirst is often slow in indicating dehydration, so be sure to imbibe at regular intervals. Drinking an 8-ounce glass of water every two hours is more beneficial than large amounts drank less often.

Consume water before, during and after each workout in even greater amounts. A 2012 study showed that drinking small mouthfuls of water repeatedly while training improved performance by 17 percent.

#### **Final Considerations**

Your dietary intake should always be goal specific. The plans laid out here are for a highly active fitness enthusiast performing a routine entailing 60 percent strength training and 40 percent cardio. If increasing muscle mass is your goal, increase your caloric intake by 10 to 15 percent, but use the mirror to monitor any weight gain. For strength, slightly decrease carbs and increase protein. If you're looking to lose weight, reduce overall calorie intake and

reverse the ratio of carbs to protein (less carbs will enhance thermogenesis), plus reduce fat intake slightly.

Be sure to map out your daily diet based on caloric intake, macro ratios, and activity levels and schedule. If you plan ahead, it becomes less daunting and you will not sweat the details. Give your body the fuel it needs and feed the machine right!





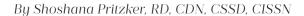
# Macronutrient Timing Meal Plan 45% Carbs/35% Protein/20% Fat

MEAL	CARBS (g)	PROTEIN (g)	FAT (g)
Meal 1	39	31	8
Meal 2	39	35	8
Preworkout	30-35	10-15	3-4
Postworkout #1	50-65	20-25	4-6
Postworkout #2	15-20	35-45	10-12
Meal 6	39	33	10
Totals*	237	184	47

\*Be sure to adjust meals 1, 2 and 6 based on the Preworkout and Postworkout meals. If on the lower end of those ranges in your workout-focused meals, increase the outside feedings accordingly to equal the proper macro totals. Avoid overeating or under-eating for best results.









ear after year, you decide vou want to lose weight and get serious about clean eating. Your kitchen gets a makeover and you ditch every morsel of food that is "bad" for you or will "make you fat." Then, finally, you reach the magic number on the scale, flash your brand-new abs for a few weeks and let your guard down to relax a bit – hey, you deserve it, right? Before you know it, you've gained it all back and then some. You've done it again - you've fallen victim to diet cycling.

Instead of reaching for the latest contestprep meal plan or trendy quick fix, consider turning your back on yo-yo dieting for good. Didn't think that's what you were doing because you're following a competition diet, not a fad diet? Think again. Yo-yo dieting is the cyclical loss and gain of weight, regardless of the diet source. And guess what? It's pretty hard on your heart and body. According to a recent report from the American Heart Association, weight cycling may put you at a greater risk of heart disease or dying from a heart attack.

If that's not enough to deter you, researchers from the U.K. determined that repeated dieting may lead to weight gain because your brain interprets the diets as short stints of famine, resulting in your body storing fat in preparation for a future "famine." This compensatory mechanism may explain why you end up overeating after coming off a low-calorie diet. While this is only a small factor contributing to weight gain post-diet, it's something to consider.

Your best bet for weight loss is to keep your diet consistent year-round. Taking in only a few hundred calories less than your body needs and exercising regularly is a much better way to lose and maintain your weight than by going on and off low-calorie, restriction-type diets.

Finding a sustainable diet that provides your body with the nutrients it needs without leaving you feeling bored and deprived will help you be successful on your fitness journey for the long term. Start with this seven-day meal plan that's based on a balance of macronutrients and designed to jump-start your metabolism to burn fat and provide energy for tough workouts and long days. If you feel it's lacking calories for your body type, simply increase the calories of each macronutrient (protein, carbs and healthy fats) at one or a few of the meals and snacks. On the flip side, if this is too much food for you (remember, fit girls need more calories than our couch-potato friends!), go ahead and eliminate the carbs from one of your meals every day.

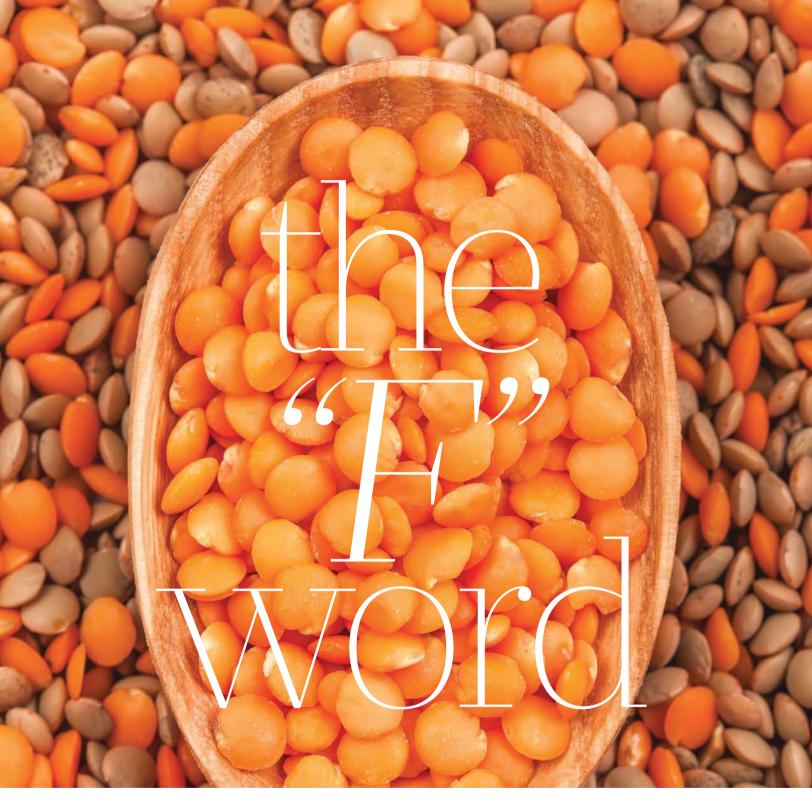
Diet fact: A study published in the November 2016 issue of *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that low-carb and high-carb/low-fat diets resulted in similar weight loss; that's why we went with a balance of macronutrients. That means we get to eat our carbs and lose weight, too!

Remember to allow yourself one to two treat meals per week.

your perfect 7-day meal plan

9001	PENE		<u>aug</u> i	MEGI	PIUIL	
DAY1	DAY 2	DAY3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY7
Breakfast  2 hard-boiled eggs + ½ cup oat bran cooked in ½ cup nonfat milk	Breakfast  2 slices Ezekiel bread (toasted) + 1/4 avocado + 4 egg whites	Breakfast  2 rice cakes +  2 tbsp natural peanut butter +  1 container plain nonfat Greek- style yogurt	Breakfast  1 light multigrain English muffin + 4 scrambled egg whites + 1 slice provolone cheese	Breakfast  2 Ezekiel waffles + ½ cup ricotta cheese + ¼ cup sliced strawber- ries	Breakfast  ½ cup oatmeal (cooked in water or nonfat milk) + ¼ cup blueber- ries or sliced banana +1 tbsp chopped wal- nuts +1 scoop whey protein	Breakfast  1 container plain nonfat Greek-style yogurt + 1 tsp honey + ½ cup sliced fruit of choice + 2 tbsp sunflower seeds or chopped
Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	snack	walnuts Snack
1 string cheese + 1 small apple	100-calorie pack nuts of choice	2 hard-boiled eggs	celery slices + 2 tbsp natural peanut butter	1 container plain nonfat Greek-style yogurt	1 string cheese + 1 small apple	1 medium banana + 2 tbsp natural peanut butter
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2 cups lentil soup + 2 tbsp shelled sun- flower seeds	1 cup cooked quinoa + ½ cup diced grilled chicken breast + 2 tbsp crumbled feta cheese + diced cucumber and tomato	2 slices Ezekiel bread (toasted) + 1 slice provolone cheese + 4 slices deli turkey meat + 1 cup fruit of choice	1 low-calorie whole-grain tortilla + 1 (4-oz) can tuna drained and mixed with ¼ avocado and season- ings of choice + lettuce and tomato	3 oz grilled filet mignon or sirloin steak +1 medium sweet potato + 1 tbsp butter + 1 cup steamed veggies of choice	1 cup diced grilled chicken breast + 1 cup cooked brown rice + 1 cup steamed broc- coli + ¼ cup low-fat shred- ded cheese	2 slices Ezekiel bread (toasted) and topped with ¼ avocado and 2 poached or sunny side up eggs + salt and pepper, to taste + ½ medium grapefruit on side
Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack
¾ cup 2% cot- tage cheese + ½ cup diced pine- apple	1 container plain nonfat Greek- style yogurt + ½ cup fresh ber- ries of choice	¼ cup guacamole + fresh sliced veg- gies of choice	1 scoop whey protein powder + 1 cup brewed coffee (blend with ice)	100-calorie pack nuts of choice	2 hard-boiled eggs	1 scoop whey protein powder + 1 cup brewed coffee (blend with ice)
Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
zucchini noodles + 6 jumbo shrimp sauteed with 1 tbsp butter and chopped garlic, salt and pepper and tossed with ¼ cup cannellini beans	3 oz grilled or broiled salmon + 1 medium sweet potato + 1 tbsp butter + 1 cup steamed veggies of choice	Cheesy Chicken Quesadilla: 1 low-calorie whole-wheat wrap filled with ½ cup grilled chicken + 2 tbsp low-fat shredded Mexican-style cheese + salsa and sauteed peppers and onions on side	1 (3-oz) 90-93% lean ground beef burger + 1 whole-wheat hamburger bun +1 slice cheese of choice + grilled veggies of choice and 1 ear of corn on the cob	3 oz grilled or broiled tilapia or cod + 1 cup cooked brown rice + ¾ cup green beans	3 oz grilled chopped chicken breast + 1 cup spaghetti squash + ¼ cup tomato sauce + ¼ cup shred- ded mozzarella cheese +1 cup steamed broc- coli and side salad	3 oz grilled filet mignon or sirloin steak + 1 cup roasted potatoes + asparagus spears + side salad
Nutrition facts: calories 1,384, total fat 55 g, saturated fat 18 g, protein 108 g, carbs 126 g, fiber 27 g, sugar 51 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,397, total fat 52 g, saturated fat 16 g, protein 115 g, carbs 121 g, fiber 22 g, sugar 23 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,396, total fat 58 g, saturated fat 19 g, protein 119 g, carbs 110 g, fiber 24 g, sugar 30 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,386, total fat 57 g, saturated fat 17 g, protein 124 g, carbs 99 g, fiber 26 g, sugar 16 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,411, total fat 60 g, saturated fat 25 g, protein 90 g, carbs 130 g, fiber 20 g, sugar 24 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,432, total fat 44 g, saturated fat 16 g, protein 143 g, carbs 117 g, fiber 15 g, sugar 23 g	Nutrition facts: calories 1,425, total fat 55 g, saturated fat 12 g, protein 109 g, carbs 131 g, fiber 25 g, sugar 47 g





Dietary fiber can boost your metabolism, give you energy and help in the fight against fat.

We love the "F" word! Get your mind out of the gutter: In the nutrition world, the "F" word represents good old-fashioned fiber. It's not sexy but it's important. While most women are familiar with fiber, many of us don't fully grasp why it's as important as our protein, carbohydrate and fat intake. Put simply, fiber can be a healthy diet game changer. Knowing what fiber-filled foods to eat and when to eat them can boost your energy levels and optimize performance. Prepare to find out all you ever wanted to know (and perhaps a little more) about eating fiber-rich foods for gut health,

#### Fiber 101

metabolism and fat loss.

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate that the body can't digest, and because of that, it's vital to your health.

The body relies on a balance of two types of fiber — soluble and insoluble — for proper digestion. Soluble fiber, which dissolves in water, is found in beans, oats, fruits like apples, and some vegetables. Soluble fiber slows digestion, controls blood sugar from spiking, and can help lower "bad" LDL cholesterol to promote a healthy heart. Insoluble fiber, which does not dissolve in water, can help move food through your digestive system. This type has a laxative effect; remember it by thinking INsoluble fiber puts you IN the bathroom (wink, wink!). Boosting of this type of fiber may come in handy to alleviate a bout of constipation, but a moderate amount each day can help with regularity. Good sources of this type of fiber include wheat, brown rice, fruit skins and nuts.

No matter which type of fiber you eat, they both help you feel fuller longer, which is ideal for sustained energy levels and maintaining a healthy weight.

There's actually a third type of fiber, a trendy category of fiber known as functional fiber. Instead of being part of a healthy food, these are isolated fibers that are added to foods to boost the fiber count per serving. These fibers are typically soluble and may possess some of the same health benefits but lack the nutrients that come along with whole foods like grains, legumes and fresh produce. Too much of these supplemental fibers also can lead to stomach upset, so there are numerous reasons to focus on the whole-food sources.

FIBER CAN SLOW DIGESTION, CONTROL BLOOD SUGAR AND PREVENT HEART DISEASE.

#### **Breaking It Down**

Popular questions surrounding fiber include: How much do I need? How much am I currently getting? The recommendation for women is 25 grams per day, which can be difficult to accomplish. In fact, data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture published in 2014 revealed that most women ages 20 to 39 are falling short of their needs, taking in only about 15 grams per day.

#### **Weight Loss**

Don't discount the hunger-fighting superpowers of fiber. Cutting calories is a lot easier if you aren't starving. Because fiber delays digestion, high-fiber foods help curb appetite for the long haul. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health discovered that increasing intake of fiber-rich foods could be used as a tool to fight obesity. The report revealed that women who increased their fiber intake over 12 years were half as likely to become obese as those that decreased their intake.

#### **Digestive Health**

The slower digestion rate of fiber also benefits the health of your intestines. As fiber travels through the digestive tract, it's allowed to ferment in the intestine, promoting healthy bacterial to flourish. The increased amount of healthy bacteria (or improved microbiome, if you want to use the trending terminology) has been linked to improved nutrient absorption and immunity. While this is desirable, people with gastrointestinal conditions or those who just take in too much fiber too quickly may be at risk for stomach discomfort along with other unpleasant tummy troubles. The take-home lesson here is to always increase fiber intake gradually.

#### **Cancer Prevention**

Several studies have connected fiber intake with a reduction in cancer risks throughout the body. Research published in the March 2016 issue of the journal *Pediatrics* found that eating a higher fiber diet in adolescence and early adulthood significantly reduced the risk of developing breast cancer later in life.

#### The Best Sources of Fiber

Really, the best way to get enough fiber in your diet is through dietary foods because they also offer other nutrients your body needs. If you are eating enough fiber-rich foods, you shouldn't have to supplement. In fact, many doctors believe some of the health benefits of fiber are attributed to the other vitamins, minerals and antioxidants found in whole-food sources.

# What does 25 grams look like?

Do you need more fiber in your life? If you are one of the many gals who need to increase their daily fiber quota, reach for some of these healthy options. F word warning! If you're currently a fiber underachiever, increase intake gradually to keep you and your bowels on good terms. A few extra grams each

day is a great place to start.







2 tablespoons almond butter = 3 grams



1 slice whole-wheat bread = 3 grams



1 cup cooked oatmeal = 5 grams



1/2 cup cooked black beans = 12 grams



1 cup raspberries = 8 grams



1 medium sweet potato = 6 grams



1 cup cooked lentils = 15 grams





#### NO MATTER HOW DILIGENT YOU ARE with warming up,

proper form and recovery, if you're a regular exerciser, you're going to get sore. "Our bodies are well-designed machines created to take an overwhelming amount of punishment and keep moving forward," says Eraldo Maglara, NSCA-CPT, a New Jersey-based personal trainer. "However, even machines have a breaking point, and when you push your body beyond its limits, you put yourself at risk for injury."

But differentiating between an everyday ache and a more complex injury isn't always easy. "If you're not a little bit sore after a workout, you're not doing enough," says Jordan Metzl, M.D., a sports medicine doctor in New York City and author of the new book *Dr. Jordan Metzl's Workout Prescription* (Rodale Books, 2016). "But soreness that lingers and changes the way you move is a big red flag."

Clearly, if your knee goes right when it should go left, you're ER-bound, but if your knee has a niggling little tweak or dull, nebulous pain, it's time to tap the experts. Read on to see what Maglara and Metzl had to say about common aches and pains — identifying their cause, remedy and prevention.

# The Second of th

#### **KNEE KNOCKS**

Your knee is the insertion point for muscles on both sides of your leg, and the push/pull action of these opposing forces can wreak havoc on this joint.

A pinching on the outside of the knee is likely caused by a tight iliotibial (IT) band, which runs down the outside of your thigh from your pelvic bone to your shin. Inflammation here is caused by a combo of overuse and/or repetitive motions and improper recovery, as well as a weak hip complex.

A pinching on the front of your knee where the kneecap attaches to the shinbone is more likely patellar tendinitis, aka "runner's knee," an overuse injury common in all athletes who jump a lot or who perform repetitive stop/start motions.

#### YOUR RX

- RICE (rest, ice, compression, elevation), a change in training protocol and time off are solid remedies for minor knee pain.
- Do leg swings and walking lunges for mobility preworkout, and stretch your hips, hamstrings and calves to improve range of motion postworkout.
- Foam-roll your quads, calves, hamstrings and glutes preworkout and postworkout to break up adhesions and alleviate pain, Metzl advises.
- Strengthen the supporting muscles with squats, **step-ups** and deadlifts, and perform bridges to target the glutes and hip complex.

#### MOVE:

#### Step-Up

Stand in front of a box that is knee height or less. Step up onto the box with one foot and extend your leg to stand on top. Reverse the move to return to the start, and continue, alternating sides.

#### **QUICK-FIRE QUESTION**

Knee Brace or No Knee Brace?

Answer: Only if recommended by a doctor or specialist, and then only on a temporary basis. "If a brace is worn on a continual basis (beyond the recommended recovery time), the knee may become dependent on the brace and, consequently, weaken the area instead of strengthening it," Maglara says.





#### LOWER-BACK LAMENTATIONS

According to statistics, eight out of 10 Americans suffer from some form of back pain, which can be caused by anything from simple muscular strain to degenerative disks and everything in between.

If you've got some general stiffness in the lower back, however, don't panic, Metzl says. If it goes away when you start working out, it's probably just tightness because of inactivity or poor posture. However, if you experience sharp or shooting pain that radiates down your leg and/or numbness or weakness in that limb, call your doc because it could be a herniated disk.

#### YOUR RX

- Use heat/cold therapy and over-thecounter meds to help with minor pain.
- Warm up your hips, glutes and lower back with foam rolling, distractions and trigger-point work,\* Metzl says. Maglara recommends **knee rolls** to increase range of motion.
- Avoid potentially compromising exercises such as good mornings, and strengthen your hips, lower back and core with planks and knee raises, Maglara advises.
- Practice good posture in the gym and out to relieve pressure on your lumbar spine.

\*See Page 28 for the 411 on locating and releasing your trigger points!

#### MOVE:

#### Knee Roll

Lie faceup with your knees bent and raised above your hips, arms extended out to the sides. Slowly lower your knees side to side, keeping your core engaged and your shoulders pressed into the floor.

#### **BACK IN ACTION**

Sore lower back? Add a little extra cardio to your routine: As little as 25 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise twice a week can increase blood flow to the soft tissues in the back and nix stiffness and pain, according to research from the University of St. Mark and St. John in England.

#### HIP HURTS

Your hips move in multiple planes of motion as well as in rotation, and because of that, they can experience impingement.

"Pinching on the front of the hip, especially during a deep squat, is pretty common among people who strength train," says Metzl when describing the feeling of a hip impingement, which can be caused by improper form or tightness in your hip flexors.

However, if you feel a dull pain on the outside of the hip or deep in your glutes, it could be bursitis, an inflammation of the fluid-filled sacs that cushion the bones, tendons and ligaments, caused by repetitive movements or overuse. If that pain is accompanied by clicking or if it increases with prolonged sitting or walking, it could be a torn labrum, another overuse injury, which requires surgery.

#### YOUR RX

- Use RICE and heat/cold therapy for minor aches and pains.
- Avoid high-impact activities until your pain subsides.
- Stretch the hip flexors preworkout with moves like **Pigeon**, and Metzl recommends adding clamshells and hip thrusts to your warm-up to mobilize your hip complex.
- Strengthen your hip extensors your glutes with bridges, step-ups and lunges.

#### MOVE:

#### **Pigeon**

Get into a low lunge and place both hands on the floor on either side of your leg. Drop your front knee to the side so the leg lies flat on the floor with your shin perpendicular to your body (or your knee bent to about 45 degrees), hips level. Your other leg is extended behind you. Hold and breathe for 60 to 90 seconds on each side.





Just like the hips, the shoulder is a complex joint, working in multiple planes of motion as well as in rotation. All this range of motion means a higher potential for injury.

Pinching felt when reaching overhead usually signals the impingement of a nerve or tendon, which is typically caused by an imbalance or tightness in the muscles of the shoulder, according to Metzl. When not addressed, an impingement can worsen, morphing into bursitis or — at worst — a tear in the rotator cuff, which manifests as pain and/or weakness that radiates down your arm.

#### YOUR RX

- Use RICE and over-the-counter antiinflammatories to quell minor pain.
- Avoid moves that put your shoulder in a compromised position, such as behindthe-neck presses and upright rows, Maglara says.
- Strengthen your shoulder stabilizers with seated cable rows, YTI raises and the **medicine-ball alphabet**, as prescribed by Maglara.
- Take extra time to warm up and stretch your shoulders in all directions — up, down, side to side and around.

#### MOVE

#### **Medicine-Ball Alphabet**

Hold a light medicine ball with both hands straight out in front of you at shoulder height. Draw the alphabet from A to Z in the air.



ROTATOR-CUFF STABILIZATION EXERCISES (such as this one) were shown to reduce pain and improve shoulder function in people with impingement syndrome in just four weeks, according to research published in the International Journal of Sports Physical Therapy.



#### **ANKLE ACHES**

Your ankle is another tricky joint, and excessive exercise on unforgiving surfaces such as pavement combined with repetitive motions can cause a strain — a dull ache that can occur anywhere on your ankle. But if that tenderness is in a specific spot and abates when you're at rest, it could be a stress fracture, which is also a result of the aforementioned conditions.

An ache in the back of your leg or above your heel after activity could indicate Achilles tendinitis, which is typically caused by overuse or by a sudden increase in training intensity or duration.

#### YOUR RX

- Use RICE and over-the-counter antiinflammatories to treat minor aches and strains.
- Limit your training to upper body only, or choose isolation exercises such as leg extensions or leg curls to work your lower half.
- Strengthen your ankles with **weighted calf raises** and squat jumps, Maglara says.
- To improve mobility, draw the alphabet with each foot while sitting in a chair preworkout, or even on a lunch break.
- Once healed, replace long, repetitive cardio sessions with short, intense high-intensity interval training workouts.

#### MOVE

#### **Weighted Calf Raise**

Stand on a small box with your heels hanging over the edge and hold a dumbbell in each hand. Sink down into your heels as far as you can and get a good stretch, then rise up onto your toes as high as you can and pause before repeating.



# Sprains us. strains

Sprains affect your ligaments — the tissues that connect bone to bone — leading to pain, inflammation, bruising and limited mobility. They happen when excessive force is placed on a joint, such as when you roll your ankle or twist your knee, and you might hear a popping sound at the time of occurrence.

Strains affect tendons (the tissues that connect muscle to bone) and occur when a joint is overstretched, either acutely — such as landing badly from a box jump — or chronically — from repetitive motions during sports or work. Both types cause pain, instability, swelling and soreness as well as limited range of motion in a muscle.

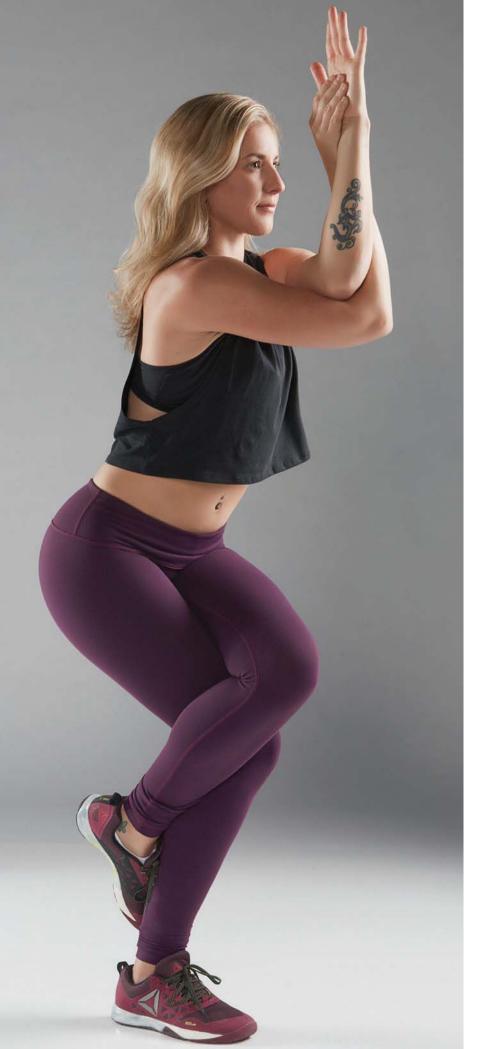
Treatment for both: Use RICE and over-the-counter meds, and take some time off from training.

#### Five surefire ways to prevent that pain

- Devise a 10- to 15-minute warmup routine consisting of light cardio, mobility drills and movement prep that specifically targets the muscles you're going to work that day.
- Learn and practice impeccable form. When in doubt, ask a trusted professional for advice. (Yeah, YouTube is not the answer when it comes to form.)
- Be mindful during your workout, focusing on each and every repetition, and buffering distractions as best you can.
- Always cool down and stretch postworkout to increase your range of motion and flush the metabolic wastes from your system.
- Take time off when you're fatigued or run down. Better 48 hours off than 48 days in rehab.

#### **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:**

- The pain is intense and comes on suddenly during activity or a fall
- The injury is accompanied by a popping or snapping noise, followed by swelling
- The joint looks deformed
- The injured area cannot bear weight or has a limited range of motion &



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## Blessed with a curse

Mackenzie Agnew overcame an unhealthy addiction to exercise and saved her own life.



ne day, after showering,
Mackenzie Agnew went to brush her
hair, only to find that most of it came
out with a single brushstroke. She
then knew that what her family and doctors had
been telling her was true — that she needed to
seek help immediately.

"Someone with an addiction has to want to change, and though my family did what they could to help, it wasn't until I wanted the change myself that things started to happen," says Agnew, who estimates she was 88 pounds at that time and on the verge of heart failure.

She was addicted to exercise, and though it had begun as a healthy habit to relieve stress, working out had become her prison. "I was killing myself, I felt trapped and owned by the gym, and I did not know how to stop," she says.

#### The Reason

Like many with an eating or exercise disorder, her addiction had a lot to do with control. "I had an unrealistic desire to be perfect," she says. "I based my self-worth on numbers such as grades, the scale, how many minutes I did on the treadmill. I had to control every aspect of what was put into my body or the activity that was put out by my body." And if she didn't live up to her own expectations, she would push herself even more — if she did 40 burpees one day, she had to do 45 the next and 50 the next and so on and so on. Soon she was doing fourhour workouts.

Agnew was also super controlling of her diet and ate the same roster of foods every day for years, and she never, ever allowed herself to deviate or to have a treat of any kind. As a result, her social life took a nosedive, further isolating and alienating her.

#### The Reset

Agnew opened up to her mother and a counselor about her obsession, and she began

to work her way back out of it. First and foremost, she switched gyms, joining one where she could start fresh, and then changed her training style, swapping supersets done with little or no rest for straight sets done with longer rest.

Slowly, she began to heal, incrementally adding 30 lifesaving pounds back onto her body, a gain that she has maintained for more than two years.

"I feel so strong now, in the gym and in all areas of my life," she says. "These curses have become my biggest blessings because I know what it feels like to be skinny, sick and ready to fall over. And now I know what it feels like to wake up with energy, laugh and run and enjoy life. I love how I feel in this body now."

#### stats

Mackenzie Agnew/ Okotoks, Alberta, Canada

age: 21 height: 5'2" old weight: 88 lb current weight: 115 lb occupation:

Naturopathic medical student

#### Mackenzie's top tips for others struggling with an eating disorder:

- ▶ Uncover the root cause of your issue. Once you identify that, you can begin to heal.
- ▶ Your thoughts create your reality, so think loving and positive thoughts and that is what you will manifest.
- You are far more loved than you realize. The people in your life want you to be healthy, and their love will help you make that transition.
- ➤ Your eating disorder does not define you. You are not the "gym girl" you are a beautiful soul.
- As scary as change is, it is worth it. You are missing out on life by avoiding social situations because of food. Life on the other side is beautiful and you are worth it.



Before photo of Mackenzie

Y

Want to share your story? Email us at successstories@oxygenmag.com!



# Being fit saved my life

**Twenty-three.** That's the number of surgeries Priscilla Farrar underwent after being in a massive car accident in 2011, the magnitude and violence of which essentially broke her body in half. After the Jaws of Life pried her out of the wreckage, Farrar's heart stopped three times in the helicopter on the way to the hospital, and once admitted, she was given 24 pints of blood and a 5 percent chance to live.

After a one-month medically induced coma, Farrar awoke. She had no memory whatsoever of the incident, and she was told by her medical team that the only reason she had survived was because she was in such great shape.

#### Rewind

Farrar describes herself as being of average weight before college, but she gained during her school years. In 2001, she landed a full-time job and was finally able to prioritize her health. She ditched the fast food, joined a gym and instantly discovered that she loved lifting weights — the power, the strength and even the soreness. By 2003, Farrar had dropped 50 pounds and was able to maintain that weight for several years. She started taking *tang soo do*, a Korean martial art, and in 2010 even considered entering a figure competition as a future goal.

But in 2011, it all changed.

# Priscilla Farrar learned that strength training really can prepare you for anything – even life or death situations.

#### Rehab

When Farrar awoke from her coma, she was in massive pain from her surgeries, and the first thing she heard was that she may never be able to walk again.

"I knew in the back of my mind that they were wrong, but still I was devastated," she says, remembering the injuries she had sustained: fractured vertebrae, a crushed pelvis, a crushed ankle, bladder injuries, broken ribs, a lacerated liver, a pulmonary embolism — and the list goes on. "I was in a dark place for several months, and I asked why they had let me live."

But she persevered, beating the odds by walking using parallel bars just two months after her accident. She soon transitioned to a walker and then to a cane, and by 2013, she could walk without any assistance at all.

#### Reclaim

Farrar then hired a personal trainer and began to reclaim her body and her sense of self. She had new physical challenges, but wherever there was a roadblock, she rerouted her technique: Highimpact activities hurt her necrotic ankle, so she used the elliptical and the treadmill instead; she was partially paralyzed on her left side, so she did her strength training while standing to work on her balance; she added yoga once a week to improve her mobility; and she maintained a healthy, highprotein diet to keep her weight on point.

Today, Farrar continues with this adapted exercise routine. Of course, not everything is sunshine and roses, and Farrar admits she still has her fair share of dark days. "But I was given a second chance at life for a reason — perhaps mine is being an inspiration to others." ▶

#### stats

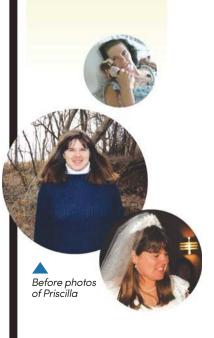
Priscilla Farrar/ Ravenna, Ohio

age: 40 Height: 5'6" Old weight: 195 lb Current weight: 145 lb Occupation: Senior meteorologist at National Weather Service

#### Priscilla's Shoulder Routine

Farrar's favorite bodypart to train is shoulders, and she does three sets of eight to 12 reps of each of these moves once a week. "I do these exercises standing so I can work on my balance," she adds.

- ▶ Standing Military Press
- ▶ Dumbbell Front Raise
- ▶ Dumbbell Lateral raise
- ► Arnold Overhead Press
- ▶ Upright Row



#### CALLING ALL FIT WOMEN

Think you have what it takes?
Send your story to futureoffitness
@oxygenmag.com.



Jennifer McArver

Houston

Stats: 31 • 120 lb • 5'2"

Gig: Project coordinator

- ▶ Taking a stand: Jennifer McArver began working out in 2012 after dealing with divorce and the short sale of her home. "After suffering from depression and anxiety, I decided to do something positive for myself," she says. "I love the sheer determination it takes to plug into your headphones and focus so greatly on the lift, and then the sense of success after the lift is completed."
- Full force training: McArver trains legs twice a week (one workout focused on quads and the other on hamstrings/glutes), trains back twice a week (one workout dedicated to adding width and the other to depth), then has one day for shoulders and another arms. "Sundays are reserved for a full-body pump day," she says. She also does cardio daily and makes time for sauna sessions and other relaxing activities. "Balance is key in order for me to maintain the intensity in the gym."
- Killer sessions: "I enjoy training alone or with my coach, Joe Cantu," McArver says. "Joe and I really focus on the mindmuscle connection. I'm highly focused during my weight training." On days when she wants to quit, she talks to God. "I ask him for strength to keep going, and he hasn't let me down yet," she says.

- ▶ Workouts everywhere: Paralegal
  Jen McEnery has a busy schedule, but
  she always figures out a way to get in her
  workout. "I have two gym memberships,
  and we also made our garage a home gym,
  so depending on the day and what our
  schedule looks like, I choose what is most
  convenient," she says. She usually trains
  alone but enjoys working out with her husband, Jason McEnery, when possible. "It's
  great bonding time," she says.
- Pump it up: "I love the kind of workout that it takes to grow muscle," McEnery says. "Those last forced reps are important." Her favorite training move? "Anything that involves biceps," she says. "I love to watch them work." She works out with weights five or six times a week and does cardio every day, as well.
- Chasing dreams: "I strive to inspire women to begin their fitness journey. So many women don't have a clue how amazing they can feel if they take better care of themselves," McEnery says. Also, surround yourself with positivity. "Personal development, positive quotes and positive people! That is what will help you push through when you are tired, unmotivated and doubting yourself," she says. "With the right support, we can do anything!"



Jen McEnery New Port Richey, Florida Stats: 35 • 140 lb • 5'6" Gig: Paralegal Photo by Jason Oliphant / Photo by Donnie Jones Photography



Lisa Zizzari Coquitlam, British Columbia Stats: 46 • 116 lb • 5'3" Gig: Homemaker

- ▶ Surgery prep: A diagnosis of Crohn's disease and the need for bowel resection surgery was the trigger for Lisa Zizzari to start exercising. "Before my first surgery, my surgeon said it would be in my best interest to get as healthy as possible to give myself the best chance for a good recovery," she says.
- Overcoming obstacles: Her disease has brought Zizzari some tough times, but with the help of her husband, she keeps pushing forward. "Life is more beautiful when you're doing your best to be as healthy as possible," she says. "My husband, David, has stayed by my side through every surgery and held my hand as I searched for a better way of life."
- Don't whine: Zizzari likes to work out alone so she can stay focused, which she considers the key to success. "Use the mirror during your workouts and focus on what you are sculpting, and don't whine about problem areas," she says. "Instead, work on creating a better you with each workout." Her last piece of advice is to keep at it. "Take one step at a time, and eventually you will be standing at the top of the staircase, looking back at how far you've come."

- On her toes: Brady Lynn Dougherty has a background in dance, which led her down a road that resulted in her discovering weight training. "I hurt my back while dancing in college and was introduced to Pilates, which helped me rehabilitate my back," she says. Eventually, she became certified to teach Pilates, then earned her personal training certification. After working as a professional cheerleader for the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles, she moved to New York City, where she teaches at Physique 57 and works with private clients. "I am happiest when I'm working out, and I love that my job keeps me on my toes," she says.
- ▶ Little bit of everything: "Treadmill, weight work, Pilates, yoga and barre are all on my schedule weekly," Dougherty says. "I love the unending variations you can do with weights, so I never get bored!"
- ▶ Training advice: Dougherty says her best fitness tip is to find a workout that you love. "That way it doesn't feel like a chore and you will always look forward to going," she says. Also, push yourself a little further than you think you can go. "I always tell myself, You are stronger than the burn, and that inspires me to keep going," she says.



Brady Lynn Dougherty New York, New York Stats: 29 • 125 lb • 5'8" Gig: Personal trainer



**Leona McLeod**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,
Canada
Stats: 40 • 120 | b • 5'4"

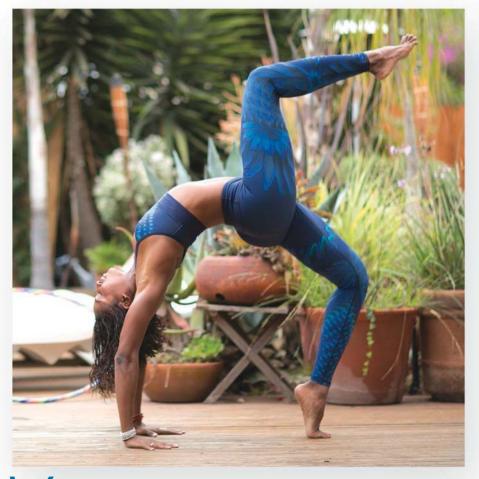
Gig: Teacher

- ▶ Inspired by injury: Leona McLeod started out in school sports and then became a long-distance runner.

  Eventually, her running led to a tendon pull in the glute/hamstring area, and she hired trainer Sarah Maduck to help with her recovery. "Ever since Sarah introduced me to weightlifting, I can't get enough," she says. McLeod, a teacher and mother of three, weight trains five or six days a week early in the morning and also tries to fit in 15 to 20 minutes of cardio two or three times a week.
- No cheating: "I am not one to veer too far from my diet," McLeod says. "I like consistency, so I always have cooked chicken breasts in my fridge." She explains that she doesn't always eat the same meals that her family eats, but she plans ahead for everyone to have good food choices. "I find time to meal prep not only for myself but also for the rest of my family so we're eating a well-balanced diet," she says.
- ▶ Her rock: McLeod credits her husband, Darin McLeod, with supporting her throughout her fitness journey. "Darin has been my rock," she says. "The obstacles I've faced have been lessened because he has been there supporting me, and he constantly reminds me that I'm beautiful inside and out!"

## All-around love

Koya Webb travels the world teaching a lesson of harmony, trust and wellness.



#### KOYA'S WORKOUT SCHEDULE:

- ► Monday, Wednesday and Friday: Two to three rounds of the totalsculpting workout (below)
- **Every day:** 30 minutes of yoga and 10 minutes of meditation

#### Koya's total sculpting workout

Do three sets (with 30 seconds of rest between sets) and you'll be done in less than 10 minutes.

**Upper body:** Push-ups (as many as you can do in 30 seconds)

**Lower body:** Malasana squats. Start with your feet a little wider than hipwidth apart, then squat all the way down, until your pelvis is almost behind your heels. Your elbows can go inside your knees for support. (Do as many as you can in 30 seconds.)

**Abs:** Bicycle crunches (30 seconds) **Glutes:** Fire hydrant. From all fours, lift your right knee to the side and pulse it up, then do the same with your left knee, 30 seconds on each side. (Don't do more reps on one side than the other!)

oga instructor Koya Webb wants to spread a message of love across the world. And not just any kind of love but perhaps the hardest kind of all: loving yourself. "I teach a program called Get Loved Up," she explains. "I travel and teach all over the world talking about self-love, heightened consciousness and eco-friendly living. I believe that loving the planet is an extension of loving yourself."

Acro yoga, a combination of acrobatics and yoga, plays an important part in Webb's

training programs. "Support and trust are so important. With acro yoga, we can simulate our relationships so we can practice letting go and supporting each other," she says.

With her hectic international teaching schedule, Webb knows the importance of keeping nutrition a top priority. She relies on her phone to give her reminders of when to drink water, when to eat and when to take her multivitamin. "Otherwise, time can get away from me," she says. "Keeping my schedule on my phone helps me stay focused."

Webb, who is sponsored by Sunwarrior, is based in Los Angeles but still has ties in Tennessee, her original home. "I enjoy hanging out with friends and family in Tennessee and California, just playing charades, watching movies or whatever," she says. "My sister just had a baby girl named Tanzi, and I love spending time with her and all my other nieces and nephews, as well."

## WHY KOYA LOVES SUNWARRIOR'S SOL GOOD PROTEIN BARS:

"I love the Sol Good protein bars because I'm always on the go, and it's really important for me to get a balanced amount of protein every two to three hours. My favorite flavor is the cinnamon swirl. It tastes like a cinnamon roll, and it's absolutely delicious. I've been practicing a vegan lifestyle for 11 years, and these bars help me get my plant-based protein."



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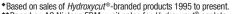




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# Goal getter IFBB Bikini pro Jennifer Ronzitti stays upbeat with positive plans for the future.

ennifer Ronzitti loves setting goals for herself, and she makes sure that they vary in magnitude. "A mixture of goals helps keep me motivated, especially when I hit smaller goals along the way to the larger ones," she says. Her first season as an IFBB Bikini pro was the realization of a big goal. "I placed in the top five at the 2016 Bikini Olympia in my rookie season as a professional!" she explains.

Ronzitti, who is sponsored by AllMax Nutrition, owns and operates nutrition stores with her fiance, Tyler Handley, in Maryland. "Tyler started Total Athlete Nutrition three years ago with one store and now we have three. His drive is contagious," she says. "It's hard not to stay motivated when I'm surrounded by people who are constantly wanting to improve themselves and build a better future."

She says that seeing her customers succeed is another great form of motivation. "I get so excited when they come in and share how they bettered their race time or hit their goal weight. Knowing how hard they work to reach their own goals — that gets me fired up, and I use that energy in my own life," she says.

A compartmentalized cooler keeps Ronzitti on track with her foods. "I dedicate time on Sunday afternoons to cooking and weighing out my meals for the week ahead. I portion out the protein, veggies and carbs in colored meal containers so it's easy," she says. "I also like to keep healthy snacks like almonds and cut-up raw veggies in my cooler. My tip is to always be prepared!"

Jennifer's favorite AllMax products:

- ▶ NovaForme PreCharge: "This preworkout drink improves performance, boosts endurance, decreases fatigue and has as much antioxidants in one serving as 11 glasses of red wine! The exotic fruit punch flavor is great."
- ▶ AllMax H:Vol: "I add this to PreCharge to increase blood flow to the muscles."
- ▶ AllMax IsoFlex: "I take this postworkout or as part of a meal. It's a super-clean protein that comes in more than 10 flavors, and they all taste amazing! Each serving is 120 calories or less."
- ▶ AllMax AminoCore: "I sip this BCAA drink during training to aid recovery."
- ▶ VitaFemme: "My daily multivitamin."



AllMax

products



## JENNIFER'S SAMPLE ONE-DAY MEAL PLAN:

Meal 1: 1/2 cup oatmeal with 1/4 cup berries, 1 tbsp ground flaxseed, 4 egg whites

Meal 2: 1/2 cup nonfat Greek yogurt or cottage cheese with 1 scoop of IsoFlex cookies n' cream, small handful of almonds Meal 3: 4 oz ground turkey, 4 oz sweet potatoes and green

**Meal 4:** 4 oz sirloin, 4 oz sweet potatoes, green vegetables Meal 5: 4 oz chicken, large salad with 1 tbsp vinaigrette dressing **Pre-bedtime snack:** 1 scoop of IsoFlex chocolate peanut butter with unsweetened vanilla almond milk and 1 tbsp peanut butter

"MY TIP IS TO ALWAYS BE PREPARED."

# product talk

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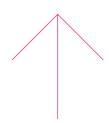




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sixstarpro.com



#### The Super Hi Pro TKO Boxer Shoe

Item: #M/F2001 – \$144 Sizes: 6–14 Colors: red/black trim, white/black trim, camouflage

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All Day
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with a moderate reduction in calories while also boosting thermogenesis for faster, better, long-term body-fat reduction.

Here's more about how this product will help you achieve your fat-loss goals:

#### The new formulation includes additional supplements.

Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals has added new ingredients to its popular original Fastin product. Primarily, they've included DMAA, known more formally as 1,3 dimethylamylamine, an extract from geranium. DMAA mimics norepinephrine, a neurotransmitter that drives thermogenesis and energy levels. DMAA is a sympathomimetic amine, which not only encourages fat loss but also reduces appetite. Another new ingredient in Fastin-XR is 5-methoxytryptamine HCl (5-MOT), supporting the activity of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which influences the hunger centers in your brain so that you feel full while reducing calorie intake.

## The new formulation provides all-day extended-release technology.

The updated version of Fastin now includes an advanced delivery system. This technology provides a time-released effect, driving fat burning of the product's active ingredients for longer. In fact, that's why Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals has named this version Fastin-XR — for its extended-release benefits. While the formulation has also been improved, another advance is the effectiveness of how the product

works throughout the day. The XR version improves mood and energy levels for longer when you're cutting calories, critical for preventing hunger while your body burns stored fat.

#### The new formulation also increases supplements you love.

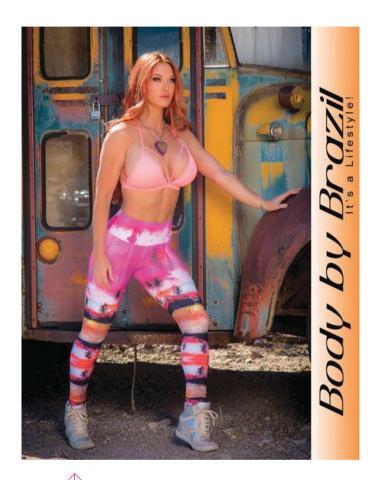
Fastin, the original formulation, contains many ingredients that provide extraordinary fat-loss results, and these supplements are all retained in Fastin-XR. These individual supplements include a unique phenylethylamine alkaloid blend from the Acacia rigidula plant; the new version includes 130 milligrams more of these alkaloids in the product's Thermo-Rx blend, pumping up stimulant activity and supporting mood while you're reducing body-fat levels. In addition, Fastin-XR adds 50 milligrams more of caffeine, one of the most effective fatloss ingredients. Caffeine supports the release of body fat from storage and helps provide energy while decreasing appetite, among other benefits.

### Sometimes the sequel is even better than the original.

The new formulation, Fastin-XR, provides multiple fat-loss advantages over original Fastin. For best results, you should take one to two tablets of Fastin-XR in the morning and one tablet after lunch. Do not exceed four tablets daily, and do not use the product for more than eight weeks without taking a break. Also, make certain to keep the bottle sealed because the product is sensitive to heat and moisture.

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL FAT LOSS IS TO BOOST METABOLISM, ENCOURAGING THERMOGENESIS WHILE YOU REDUCE CALORIE INTAKE MODERATELY.

# product talk







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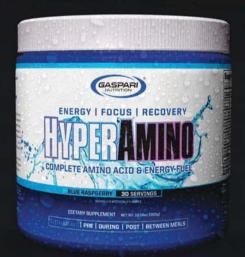
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## BETTER AMINO ACIDS. BETTER ENERGY.

Not all Aminos are created equal. Whether you're looking for a way to increase lean muscle, become a better athlete, or just make sure each workout is giving you all the results you need, there is one common denominator that everyone who works out needs more of, amino acids. Amino acid products are everywhere these days, but don't for think for a second that all amino acid products are created equally. If you want to get the most out of your training, make sure you look for an amino acid supplement which includes high levels of the following amino acids.†



HYPERAMI	NO° vs. AMINO ENERGY™	% INCREASE
L-LEUCINE	HYPERAMINO® - 818mg	24.3%
L-ISOLEUCINE	HYPERAMINO® - 622mg	43.6%
L-VALINE	HYPERAMINO® - 520mg	0.4%
L-GLUTAMINE	HYPERAMINO® - 1,298mg	35.3%
L-TAURINE"	HYPERAMINO® - 614mg	-101.6%
CAFFEINE	HYPERAMINO® - 127mg	0.8%
L-CITRULLINE	HYPERAMINO® - 159mg  AMINO ENERGY** - 115mg	38.3%

is is a sulfur-containing amino acid that does not belong to the group of 20 Proteinogenic Amino Acids. L-Taurine is also the cheapest amino acid available in manufacturing and is why m any compa

†These statements have not been evaluated by the Food & Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease HYPERAMINO\* is not manufactured or distributed by Optimum Nutrition.











