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What's so magical about doing 10 reps?

Strength gains are all about progressive resistance

By Michael Boyle

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Who decided on ten reps? Why not nine? Why not eleven? Is ten some kind of magic number?

Why did Delorme and Watkins (the original researchers in the area of sets and reps) choose ten? The truth is the three-sets-of-ten idea is based on some very old research that actually established and defined the idea of progressive-resistance exercise and the concepts of repetition maximums.

In case you care, the term repetition maximum (RM), that we see so often referred to in the literature, is the maximum amount of weight you can lift for a specific number of repetitions. In other words if you can bench press (And, boy, do I hate using bench press as an example) 135 five pounds ten times, then your ten-repetition maximum (10 RM) is 135 pounds.

Progressive resistance is the simple concept that forms the basis for strength training. Basically, you are supposed to try to lift more weight or do more reps every time you do an exercise.

Why does this matter?

Repetition maximums matter because they allow us to track our progress. I would encourage you to keep a journal of your five-repetition maximum (5RM) and ten-repetition maximum (10 RM) for most exercises in your program.

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Knowing these numbers allows you to gauge your progress. From time to time try a new ten-repetition maximum or a five-repetition maximum. If you are not increasing either, you haven't been consistent with your workouts, or the workout program you are using is not working.

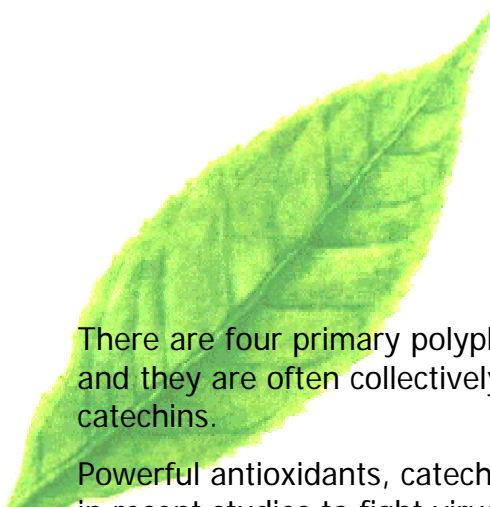
Here's an amazing thought, courtesy of a writer named Stuart McRobert, author of a book called *Brawn*. If you are not getting stronger, your program doesn't work. I don't care how often you train. The point of lifting weights is to be able to lift heavier weights. Without progressive increases in resistance, the body will not respond with the visual changes many of us desire. Whether you want to get stronger or look better, or a combination of both, progressive resistance is the key.

Quick note: Please don't confuse sets and reps. Nothing identifies you more as a novice than to juxtapose sets and reps. You do three sets of ten reps. I can't tell you how often I hear someone describe three reps of ten.

Wrong.

The bottom line: Increase the weight or reps each week. You can do three sets of nine or three sets of eleven, it makes absolutely no difference. What matters is effort and progressive resistance. Just think about the words, progressive resistance. We need to progressively increase the resistance if we want changes in appearance or performance.

Benefits of Green Tea



There are four primary polyphenols in green tea and they are often collectively referred to as catechins.

Powerful antioxidants, catechins have been shown in recent studies to fight viruses, slow aging, and have a beneficial effect on health. Clinical tests have shown that catechins destroy free radicals and have far-reaching positive effects on the entire body.

Free radicals are highly reactive molecules and fragments of molecules that can damage the body at the cellular level leaving the body susceptible to cancer, heart disease, and many other degenerative diseases.

EGCG is a potent antioxidant.

Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), an antioxidant found in green tea, is at least 100 more times more effective than vitamin C and 25 times more effective than vitamin E at protecting cells and DNA from damage believed to be linked to cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses. This antioxidant has twice the benefits of resveratrol, found in red wine.

Special Benefits of Green Tea

- **Reduces high blood pressure.** Drinking green tea represses angiotensin II which leads to high blood pressure.
- **Lowers blood sugar.** Green tea polyphenols and polysaccharides are effective in lowering blood sugar.
- **Fights cancer.** There have been many studies that have shown that green tea catechins are effective at preventing cancer.

Green tea also boosts the immune system because of its high concentrations of polyphenols and flavonoids.

Green tea antioxidants have been shown to lower cholesterol.

Matcha

When you drink matcha you consume the leaves, unlike other green teas. For this reason matcha contains, by volume, higher concentrations of catechins and vitamins.

There are 2 types of matcha- koicha and usucha. These are chanoyu (Japanese Tea Ceremony) terms and literally translate as "thick" and "thin" tea.

Usucha comes from the leaves of tea plants that are less than 30 years old. Koicha comes from the first harvest of plants that are a minimum of 30 years old.

In tea ceremony koicha is brewed with less water than usucha. Koicha has a naturally mellower and sweeter taste and the tea is made thicker for that reason..

Matcha preparation is personal, and there are no rules outside of Tea Ceremony. Well, there is one rule- don't use boiling water. That's all!

If you are new to green tea it may take you 2 or 3 attempts to find the concentration that is right for you. Koicha when prepared in tea ceremony is very thick, like syrup. If you use usucha for this the tea would be somewhat bitter.

To prepare quality matcha you will need 2 items- a matcha bowl and a bamboo whisk. For strong (thick) tea use one level teaspoon for 4 to 6 ounces of water. For medium (thin) tea use half or one quarter that amount. First put the powdered tea in the bowl. Then pour hot (not boiling) water over the leaves.



Workplace health is being recognized by employers as having a measureable impact on business performance.

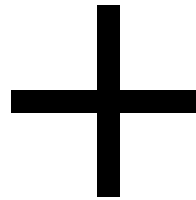
The Mercer/Marsh Survey on Health, Productivity and Absence Management Programs 2007 surveyed 611 companies ranging in size from 100 employees to those with more than 10,000 employees in the United States.

The results indicate that nearly 39 per cent of respondents "strongly agreed" that improving employee health is a core business value, and another 41 per cent "agreed."

The survey also found that absenteeism is up and that the incidence of short term disability (STD) claims rose between 2005 and 2006.

"It comes down to maintaining productivity as well as management health care cost," Sue Willette, head of Mercer's health and productivity management group, says. "It's clear that if your employees are not a work, or are at work but not 100 per cent healthy, productivity suffers."

With the increase in absences related to stress, depression, and other behavioural health disorders, employers also found it useful to better integrate the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with their disability and health management programs. Employees on STD are often at risk for stress or depression.



Study: Eating Slowly Inhibits Appetite

For more than 30 years, dieters have been told to eat slowly to reduce their intake of food. But until now, there has been no scientific evidence to support the theory.

"It started in about 1972 as a hypothesis that eating slowly would allow the body time for the development of satiety [fullness] and we would eat less," said Kathleen Melanson, assistant professor of nutrition and food science at the University of Rhode Island. "Since then we've heard it everywhere and it has become common knowledge. But no studies had been conducted to prove it."

In a recent study, 30 women made two visits to the lab, and each time they were given a large plate of pasta and told to eat as much as they wanted. When they were told to eat quickly, they consumed 646 calories in nine minutes, but when they were encouraged to pause between bites and chew each mouthful 15 to 20 times, they ate just 579 calories in 29 minutes.

"Satiety signals clearly need time to develop," Melanson concluded. "Not only did the women take in fewer calories when they ate more slowly, they had a greater feeling of satiety at meal completion and 60 minutes afterwards, which strongly suggests benefits to eating more slowly." The women also judged themselves as having enjoyed the meal more when they ate slowly than when they ate quickly.



CURTIS CORNER

CHANGE AS AN OPPORTUNITY

Life presents infinite opportunity for achievement and personal growth. Embracing these opportunities helps us realize our potential, build self-confidence and self-respect. These opportunities all come about through the process of change.

Choosing change is ultimately a decision and a commitment. It means taking a leap of faith, facing your fears, moving breaking out from the "status quo" and into the quality of life you deserve. Take a moment right now to consider your most positive vision of yourself. Connect with your values and beliefs. See yourself as the person you already are and the person you want to become. See the change you want to occur.

People change only when the pain of not changing becomes greater than the pain of changing. Recognizing that parts of your life are not working and committing to a proactive approach to change is one of the surest ways to improve the overall quality of your life.

The inescapable need to change is usually accompanied by great pain and fear. These are natural emotions that are imbedded in the change process. Continued compassion and loving patience towards yourself will honor and respect the journey you are on.

A positive self-image and clear goals keeps us on a path of continued self-fulfillment. When we value ourselves, we take care of ourselves in the best possible way. This translates into making healthy lifestyle choices. Choosing to exercise regularly, eating in a consistently healthy way, getting the sleep you need and creating balance allows us to achieve our emotional and physical best.

This workbook is designed by individuals who have worked for years as consultants in this field. Working with real people with real challenges, we have discovered what works with the general population, not in a lab setting. Our vast experience and practical view of life will help you recognize the areas in your life in need of change, whether they are lifestyle, addiction or relationship related issues. It will also help you find the tools you will need to make the positive shifts you desire. By embarking on this path of change, you show deep gratitude and respect for your life and its possibilities.

Change is one of life's most powerful processes. Change is a celebration of life.

- Mary Roncarelli



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