

Women and Resistance Training: “The Bulk-Up Concern”

Q & A with Mike Pellegrini – Team Trainwithmike

Q: I am a 32 year-old woman. I have recently started exercising with aerobics classes and the treadmill. A male friend of mine who works out was telling me that I should also do some weight training. My goals are to lose some fat and tone up. Even though I heard otherwise, I still have the fear of getting too bulky and that is not what I am looking for. What is the right answer?

A: Over my ten years of being a professional trainer between 30-50% of my clientele have been female. In fact, I am presently training more women than I ever have. Honestly, most women’s goals are the same as yours, and most of the women that I have trained have asked me the same question. The answer to “will resistance training make a woman bulky” (i.e. too muscular looking) is: not if you’re on the right program for your body. Note that women do have specific needs when it comes to weight training. In general females have looser joints and are weaker muscularly speaking. This being said, they also have different postural corrective needs than the average male. So don’t merely follow your male friend on his bodybuilding-oriented program, seek out dynamic exercises that will strengthen you both functionally and aesthetically.

To formalize my opinion on this topic, I firmly believe that every woman should be engaged in some form of strength training program as a part of her overall exercise regime. In fact, the argument has been raised that resistance training is even more important for women than men, due to the aforementioned body composition. Other issues such as osteoporosis, and other structural degenerative diseases that touch women, are conditions that can be prevented or slowed down through resistance exercise.

I can just hear the gals that are reading this and saying “but all I need is cardio, I just want to burn fat”....WRONG! Weights can raise your metabolism for longer periods than cardio alone and in the short/long run having more lean muscle tissue (which cardio won’t get you), will burn even more fat and keep it off.

So yes, go seek out a qualified trainer and get on the right program for your body!!

TIP OF THE WEEK:

Tighten You’re your Tush With This Dangerous Trio

BOOTIE BUSTER: 1 leg Romanian deadlifts - 10 reps on each leg (picture)

Swiss-Ball Prone Hip extension – 15 reps (picture)

Catlifts – 10-15 reps on each side (picture)

Perform these exercises in a tri-set, 3 movements executed one after another without rest. Not only are you blasting those buns, but you are also working on your core and balance. Do the above-specified reps for each move. Rest 90 seconds after the last exercise, and repeat two to three times.

Recipe:

[Low Fat Tofu Burger – Recipe by Santemobile](#)

Slices of frozen tofu provide the "chewiness" associated with a truly good burger. The dark marinade lends a "meaty" flavor and moist juices. This "burger" has the chewy texture and juiciness associated with a truly good hamburger. Serve on whole-wheat buns with all the trimmings.

2 lbs. medium-firm or firm tofu (NOT silken tofu), frozen at least 48 hours

Marinade:

1 1/2 cups water
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons ketchup
2 teaspoons Marmite, Vegemite or other yeast extract (gives a "beefy" flavor) or 4 teaspoons red miso
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon fresh finely chopped parsley
1/4 teaspoon onion powder

1. Thaw out the tofu. Slice each pound block into three thick slices. Place the slices on a cookie sheet covered with a couple of clean, folded tea towels. Cover the slices with more tea towels and another cookie sheet. Weigh this arrangement down with something heavy for about 15-20 minutes. Now the tofu slices are ready for marinating.

2. Mix the marinade ingredients together and pour over the prepared tofu slices in a shallow container in one layer. Cover and let marinate for several hours or days.

3. Just before serving, pan-fry on a lightly oiled heavy skillet or nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until browned on both sides. Or cook on an indoor grill. Serve on buns with all the trimmings.