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PHOTO PAUL BUCETA

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Get a grip on better results.

YOUR EXPERT

LEE BOYCE, CPT



You Asked: “How does grip strength make a difference in my lifts?”

Grip strength is a major player in lifts, especially larger movements like chin-ups and deadlifts. Simply put, you can only lift as much as you can hold, and the strength you can display in your grip lends itself to better connection and bracing through the forearms, elbows, and shoulders. Think about it this way: How hard would you have to squeeze a 3-lb dumbbell to do a set of curls or rows? You can probably get away with a fairly loose grip. But you’d need to squeeze that dumbbell a lot harder for your set of curls or rows if it weighed 50 lbs.

Your ceiling for performance gets higher the harder you’re capable of gripping. During pulling exercises, this can promote better back engagement, but it matters during pressing exercises, too. Squeezing the heck out of a barbell or dumbbell when performing bench or overhead presses can be a game changer to recruiting more muscles to help you out. And during lower-body movements like back squats, a firm grip on the barbell can aid your performance and keep your total body engaged for your set. More engagement equals better reps. And better reps equal faster results.



Got a question for our experts?

Email us at submissions@strongfitnessmag.com.

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SCAN ME



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MARTA USTYANICH
FREELANCE WRITER
“THE DOCTOR IS IN,”
pg 34

Marta kicked off her writing career at *Oxygen Magazine* 10 years ago and has been writing about health and fitness ever since. When she’s not working on a cover story for *STRONG*, she’s getting her hands dirty at her local community garden, where she also volunteers as a coordinator. Though heavy lifting and yoga are her fitness go-to’s, post-pandemic, she’s excited to get back to dancing and flying trapeze.



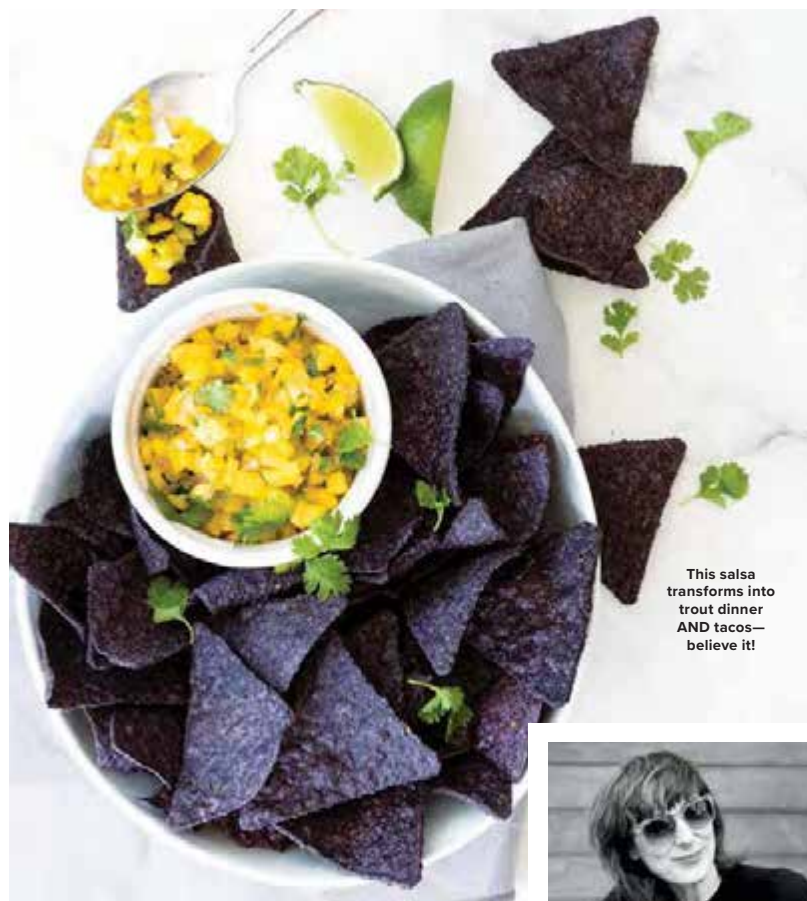
NATASHA BRAR
SENIOR DESIGNER

Natasha is a University of Toronto Communications and Art History and Humber College Graphic Design graduate with a knack for weaving modern concepts with editorial design. Though often wrapped up in layouts, she also finds time to spice up her painting skills or sample fruits of labor at local wineries.



RACHEL DEBLING
FREELANCE WRITER
“COMPLETELY DRAINED,”
pg. 46

Rachel is a writer and editor from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, with a passion for recreational sports, board games, and HIIT. When she’s not arguing with her cat, she can be found writing her version of the great Canadian novel which, at this rate, she anticipates being complete by 2065.



This salsa transforms into trout dinner AND tacos—believe it!

CAROL DUDAR,
RECIPE DEVELOPER & FOOD STYLIST



“Double-Duty Dinners,” pg 38

Toronto-based food stylist Carol’s work reaches far past nutritional density. “What initially drew me to food styling was the combination of my love of food and art. I love composition, form, and using food as a creative medium,” she says. Her artful eye and careful skills have taken her across Canada and Europe, and she’s built up an impressive clientele that’s rooted in advertising, editorial, packaging, and motion.

For this issue, Carol developed dinner recipes that could be transformed and given new life as an alternate dish—a meal-time jigsaw that benefitted from her expertise. “It was a bit of a puzzle varying amounts of ingredients to create new ideas,” she says. “I liked the concept of having groceries bought for meal prep, but that doesn’t mean having leftovers or eating the same thing repeatedly.” She’s planning to keep the salsa recipe she developed in her regular rotation for a quick and delicious dinner or snack.

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"It may have taken me until the age of 51 to finally change my perspective and body image, but I'm there, folks! Never too late."

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"From enjoying fall weather temperatures to scrambling in the mist and rain through giant rocks, hiking to Delta Lake was something special."

@iron_tica

Post your **#mystrongmoment** wins and connect with us at **@strongfitnessmag**.

Our
Favorite
Moment

@rinagthomas

Rina Thomas,
37, MONTEREY, CA

After serving as a Marine and experiencing the pressures of height and weight standards (along with the misinformation to achieve them), Rina was determined to find a more sustainable way to exercise and fuel her body.

Now as a mother of two, Level 2 CrossFit trainer, and certified nutrition coach, she views fitness as a lifestyle rather than a quick fix.

"Fitness is a pillar of my life as I try to keep up with my active family and young kids, and extend my life," says Rina, who shares this passion at First City Fitness, a CrossFit gym focused on community.

In this photo, Rina had just finished up a training session with her teen athletes, who she hopes will find confidence along with new strength in CrossFit Teens, a program intended for teens ages 13-18, which focuses on safety and efficiency in fitness rather than weight and speed. "I loved witnessing these teens begin their journeys," she says. "For some of them, it was the first time they had ever lifted weights."

AT LAST!

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COMPETITIVE
CHAOS,
pg. 62



COMPLETELY
DRAINED,
pg. 46



DOUBLE-
DUTY
DINNERS,
pg. 38



ENERGY
RESTORATION,
pg. 30



You Do You

It seems like we're always chasing hacks to have more energy.

We're guzzling coffee while Googling quick-fix ideas to put some pep in our step so we can make it through the day. But instead of quantifying foods, learning this 10-second tip, or reaching for your caffeinated beverage of choice, what if there's another side to this story? What if your energy levels are just fine, but you're wasting it on things that seriously don't matter?

It's easy to go through the motions and get caught up in our own lives, while forgetting to take a beat to figure out if we're actually living in a way that feels good. We're inundated with images of beautiful people, beautiful places, beautiful things, and it's human nature to want those things too. But if you're expending your bandwidth climbing the ladder, keeping pace in the comparison race, or complaining that it's just never enough, it's no wonder you're out of energy. I'm exhausted just thinking about it.

You know the feeling when you're doing something that speaks to your soul? Maybe it's paddleboarding at the beach, or baking the day away, or playing guitar for an audience that consists solely of your cat. The hours fly by; you're in the zone. These are the real energy givers. The things that don't feel like work, the things that get you out of bed in the morning, the things that feel like freedom. And I get it, we can't paddleboard at the beach all day every day, we have to make a living after all, but maybe it's possible to inject those energy givers into your week just once or twice—something to look forward to that's just for you.

With that in mind, this issue revolves around releasing the junk you don't need so you can tap into the energy you already possess. Ditch the jealousy and competition with our exposé on page 62, identify sneaky energy zappers in your life on page 46, double up on dinner in a snap on page 38, and calm your body and mind with the restorative yoga routine on page 30. Then, leave this issue on your coffee table and go do the things that feel fricken' amazing.

In energetic purpose,

C. Clarke

CHELSEA CLARKE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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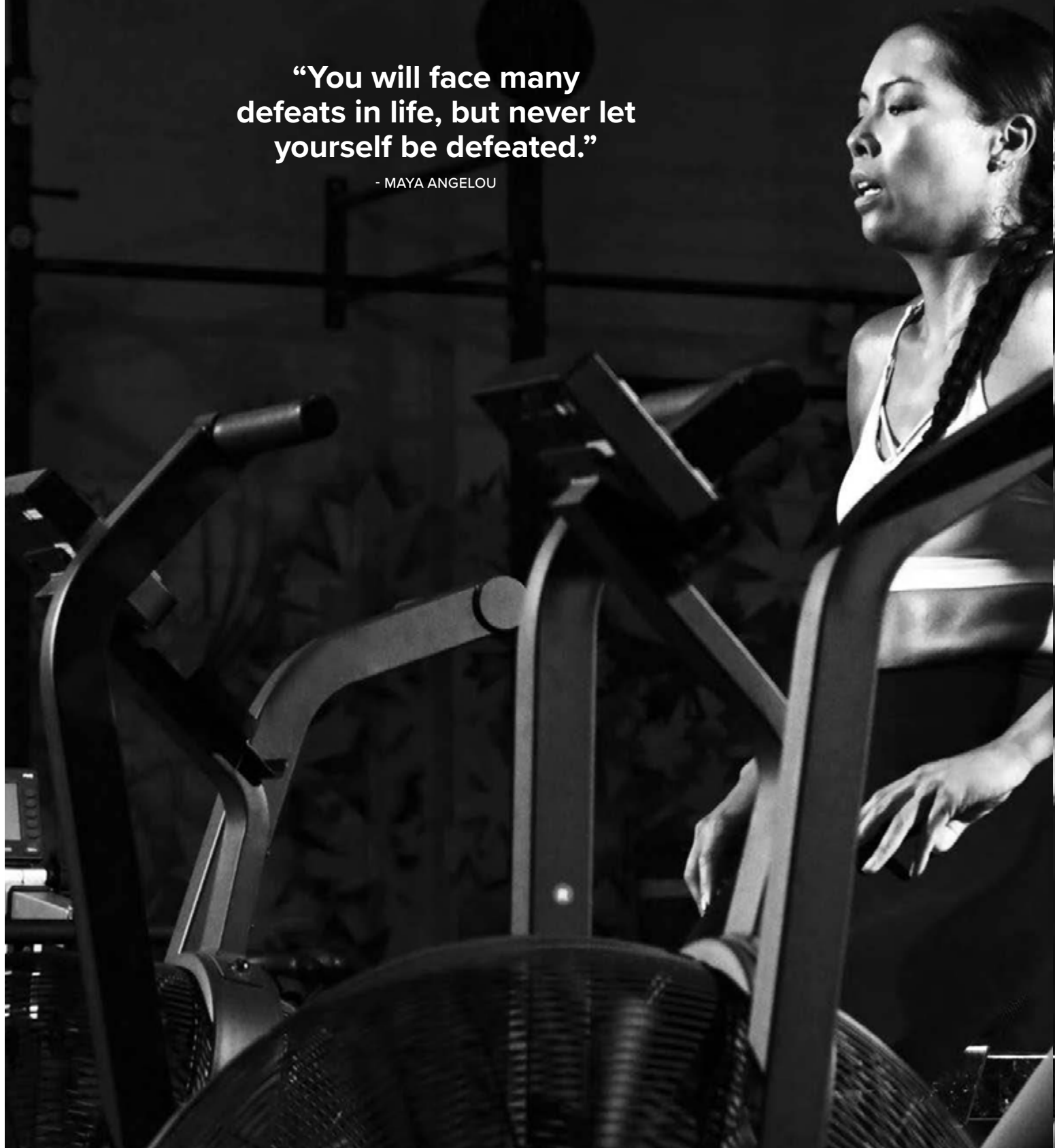
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defeats in life, but never let
yourself be defeated.”**

- MAYA ANGELOU





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Keep It Clean

We all got a crash course in hand-washing 101 at the onset of the pandemic: Scrub for 20 seconds, sing “Happy Birthday,” make sure each finger is included in an all-over scrub, etc. But science is explaining why it’s important to adhere to these rules, and it’s become the physics lesson we didn’t know we needed. According to researchers, bacteria burrows itself into the rough layers of your skin—we liken it to debris sitting at the bottom of a well. To be removed, bacteria must be excavated with a particular force and flow. Scrub your hands together too slowly and the force won’t be rigorous enough to get the job done. Even if you are scrubbing with all your might, anything under 20 seconds likely isn’t long enough to remove the bacteria, so don’t skimp on time. Pandemic or not, as we enter the thick of cold and flu season, hand washing remains a vital tactic to keeping the spread of illness at bay.





Stop Resisting Resistance Training

Though many people pigeonhole resistance training as being “just for building muscle,” your body (and science) says otherwise. Resistance training has unique benefits for fat loss and regulates fat cell metabolism at a molecular level, according to a new study published by the University of Kentucky. Researchers found the muscle cells release a signal during resistance training that gives the go-ahead to enter fat-burning mode. If you’re looking to lean out, step away from the cardio machines and mix in some resistance-focused workouts.

Sweat Etiquette

As the majority of Americans head back to the gym, here are a few etiquette reminders for not ticking people off:

Wipe down and return your equipment (can’t believe we have to say it, but please don’t be *that* person).

Don’t hog the equipment if you’re not actually using it.

Keep the grunting and talking on the phone to a minimum. Remember: You’re no longer in the privacy of your own home.

Mind your business. Unsolicited advice or overly long stares are likely not appreciated—especially for those just getting used to being out of their home gym again.

PERFECT YOUR FORM:

The Deadlift

Deadlifts are a power move and strengthen everything from your posture to that booty. That being said, without the proper form, the “king of lifts” can quickly become the “king of injury.” Check your form with these expert tips.

PRO TIP:

While deadlifts can be performed with a variety of equipment, remember to start light and perfect your form first before challenging yourself with a heavier weight or fancy variation.



WRITTEN BY MIKALA KUKURUDZA PHOTOS BY PAUL BUCETA



Fill Your Cup

Menstrual cups are all the rage lately. Feeling a bit squeamish about them? Here's what you need to know.

What It Is:

A bell-shaped medical grade silicon, rubber, or latex cup that's inserted into the vagina to collect menstrual blood. It can be worn for 4-12 hours at a time before needing emptying and sanitizing. It's reusable for up to 10 years.

Pros: Less money spent on period products, reduced plastic waste, fewer changes per cycle, fewer instances of leakage, less likely to alter vaginal pH than tampons.

Cons: Learning curve to figure out how to use it (most women report becoming an expert by the third cycle). Other reported drawbacks include infections caused by improper cleaning, and difficulty removing if an incorrect size is selected.

Let's Get Physical

Have you ever clocked exactly how much time you're spending sitting down? An American Heart Association study found that adults younger than 60 who reported more than eight hours of sedentary time and low physical activity were seven times more likely to experience a stroke than those who reported under four hours of sedentary time and higher levels of activity. Sedentary activities included reading, watching TV, and cruising the internet, so if these are some of your favorite things, make sure you're balancing them out with regular physical activity.



TWO-SECOND STUDY

Staying sufficiently hydrated could reduce your risk of developing heart failure.

Source: European Society of Cardiology

11,000
—
16,000

The average woman uses this many tampons in her lifetime.

Source: CNN





A colorful breakfast could help keep your mind sharp.

Color Your Plate

Good on you if you make the effort to diversify the foods you consume, reports *Neurology*, in a study that confirmed that colorful foods can reduce your risk of cognitive decline. In their findings, foods high in flavonoids, particularly red, orange, and purple foods, contributed to the greatest brain support. Researchers recommend regularly topping your plate with vibrant picks selected from the entire antioxidant rainbow.



Editor's Pick

Come for the flavor, stay for the quality ingredients in this vegan protein powder from Women's Best. With four flavors to choose from (we're stacking our a.m. oats with Cookies & Cream), your protein game will be anything but boring, and you'll suffer no sugar crash—promise. **\$60 for 30 servings;** [womensbest.com](https://www.womensbest.com)

67%

The percentage of calories that teens and adolescents are consuming from ultra-processed foods such as takeout and ready-to-eat meals.

Source: JAMA



Plant-Based Benefits

Two studies concluded that young adults and postmenopausal women experienced fewer heart attacks and were less likely to develop cardiovascular disease when they ate more plant-based foods.

Source: American Heart Association



One-Minute Mindfulness

Come back to the present moment any time of day with these quickie exercises.

1. Yawn and stretch
2. Clench and release your hands
3. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach, and breathe into both hands
4. Close your eyes and pick out all the sounds you can hear
5. Write down five things that brought you joy today

34%

This percentage of people say they typically receive more kindness from strangers during the holiday season.

Source: AARP Foundation



Sleep It Off

If you're struggling to find motivation lately, it could be a sign that you need a nap. Researchers from the University of Birmingham discovered that motivation wanes when you're feeling fatigued, even if there's an enticing reward for you at the end.



More Memes, Please

Y'know when you're in the zone at work and then a co-worker interrupts you? Turns out there are benefits to those disruptions. *The Journal of Applied Psychology* found that while interruptions at work increased stress levels and lowered energy, they also helped employees feel a sense of belonging that led to higher job satisfaction. So take pleasure in indulging your colleague by viewing her latest cat photos—it's good for your well-being.



Supplement Spotlight:

Magnesium

What It Is:

A mineral that plays a role in over 300 enzyme reactions in the body. It aids muscle and nerve function, regulates blood pressure, supports the immune system, and can even reduce symptoms of migraines, PMS, and anxiety.

Where to Get It:

The recommended daily allowance for women ages 31-50 is 320 mg. Sources include nuts and seeds, dark green vegetables, and legumes. Many Americans are deficient in this mineral and would benefit from supplementation.

Too Little/Too Much:

Common deficiency symptoms include loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting, and fatigue. Magnesium overdose is unlikely since excess is excreted through urine.

Oh, So Trendy

Stay ahead of the curve with these top 5 predicted supplement trends for the new year:

1. **Gummy vitamins**
2. **Mushroom coffee**
3. **Alternative sources of collagen**
4. **Synergistic vitamin combos**
5. **Gut and lung probiotics**

B Less Stressed

Supp companies are touting B vitamins as a stress reducer, but can they really alter your mood? The experts at Examine.com studied the research, and they found that B vitamins can in fact decrease your stress levels, but don't expect to depend on them if you're looking to manage anxiety or depression.

34%

Participants who ate diets rich in vitamin K lowered their risk of heart and blood vessel related conditions by this much.

Source: Edith Cowan University



LEAD: TAMARA LEGER SWISS CHARD: ANNA SEDNEVA/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Caloric Breakdown

We're beyond counting calories as a means to fuel or manipulate our bodies, but that doesn't mean we should forgo understanding the mechanics.

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE KEWIN

Not so long ago, diet culture ruled that in order to change your body composition, cutting calories was mandatory. What followed was a ton of misinformation, resulting in calorie mystification and, for so many of us, stress. While the basics of changing body composition haven't changed—what you consume needs to be in line with the goals you set to achieve—there's so much more to consider for great health and retaining muscle. Even so, it's still essential to understand the mechanics of how calories work so that you can use this knowledge to your advantage, and ensure you nourish your body properly while working towards getting the gains you're after.

Calories in Macros

In his blog post “Calories Explained: Nutritional Information Everybody Should Know,” founder of the Nutritional Coaching Institute Jason Phillips says, “[Calories are] the amount of energy that we consume from food. It's also the amount of energy we expend during physical exercise. The definition is straightforward. But when discussing calories, we also have to cover the macronutrients.”

When we say macronutrients, we're talking the big three: Carbohydrates,

protein, and fat, and each macronutrient contains a particular number of calories. Carbs and protein contain four calories per gram, while fat contains nine calories per gram. And even though alcohol isn't technically its own macronutrient, it also doesn't fall under the others, and amounts to a substantial seven calories per gram.

Resting Metabolic Rate

The first step in properly assessing and demystifying caloric energy needed at rest or during activity is understanding resting metabolic rate. Says Jason, “When you wake up and lie in bed doing absolutely nothing, the amount of calories needed to keep you in that state is your resting metabolic rate. However, many factors can affect an individual's resting metabolic rate. For instance, a person's amount of lean tissue, is one.”

Thermic Effect

Then, there's the thermic effect to consider. Thermic effect simply being the caloric expenditure above a resting metabolic rate from processing food. Translation: How many calories it takes for your body to metabolize particular foods. For example, lean protein has

a high thermic effect, thanks in part to the energy it takes to digest as well as its ability to keep blood sugar levels stable during and after consumption, aiding satiety and preventing hunger pangs. Jason notes the numbers, “As for macronutrients and their thermic effect on feeding: Fats and carbs: 5-15 percent thermic effect. Proteins: 20-35 percent [thermic effect].”

He goes on, “But what does this mean for dieting? When somebody is trying to get leaner, we know the calories are getting lower. Critically, there's a floor that we don't want to go beyond, so we choose foods that have a high thermic effect.” This being one of the many reasons high protein diets are often touted as being so beneficial for fat loss.

Jason acknowledges that in firmly grasping these most basic concepts, we're just scratching the surface of fostering better understanding, but it's still a great jumping off point for demystifying caloric energy and expenditure. With this imperative knowledge in mind, we can begin to wring out the all-too-common fear and residual stress from the topic of calories, and instead recognize the value in educating ourselves to use this information to our benefit.

Holiday Gift Guide

'Tis the season to spoil your fit bestie. From self-care to home workouts, we've got you covered when it comes to gifting the latest and greatest in fitness gadgets and goodies (from all price points).

Splurge

**SKY'S
THE
LIMIT**

Pent Fitness Colmia Dumbbells

This luxury workout gear doubles as artwork in your home, but you'll earn major brownie points for gifting anything from this high-end fitness brand.

\$367; pentfitness.com



**Sculpture or
fitness equipment?
News flash:
It's both!**



Tonal Workout Machine

This home workout machine is probably the smartest one we've seen yet. It's both a personal trainer and a strength training machine, all in one. It's at the top of our list this year!

\$2995; tonal.com

Sleep Ring

Track your health and sleep with this sleek and fashionable ring. It also reveals recovery stats, and recommends how much sleep is optimal for your unique bod. A great gift for him or her! **\$399; ouraring.com**



Mid-Range

**UNDER
\$150**

Bala Beam

Sculptural, ergonomic, and perfect for at-home presses, curls, rows, squats, or lunges. This sleek 15-lb bar can give you a full-body workout, plus will look just as good wrapped up under the tree. **\$99; shopbala.com**

On Running - Cloud Nova

These sneakers live up to their name. They truly feel like clouds when walking, running, or picking up the kids. **\$149.99; on-running.com**



Sarah is loving this maternity friendly, ultra-buttery set from Beyond Yoga. **Legging \$97, Tank \$66; beyondyoga.com**

Stocking Stuffers

UNDER \$75



Therabody Wave Roller

The newest innovation in foam rolling is here! This Bluetooth® enabled vibrating foam roller allows you to connect to the Therabody app for personalized recovery routines, releasing tension and increasing mobility where you need it most. **\$149;** therabody.com

Sweaty Betty Everyday Backpack

Sporty, durable, and ready for anything. This backpack can take you from the office, to the gym, or even on your next getaway. **\$108;** sweatybetty.com



Like a Cloud Sports Bra

Meet the most comfortable sports bra on the market. After trying this bra, you won't want to go back to your others. Makes a great gift too! **\$68;** lululemon.com

Classic Tumbler

These water bottles are the best because they fit in any cup holder when you're on the go, plus they look chic and keep your drink super cold. **\$22;** simplemodern.com

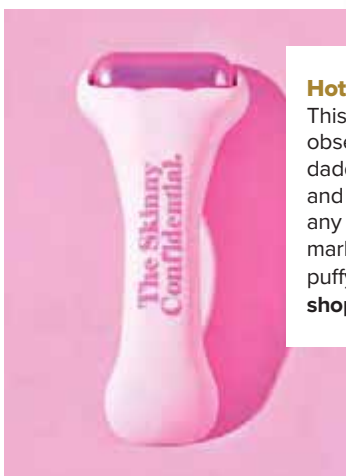


Seeker Fanny Pack

Still loving on the fanny pack trend because they are so darn convenient! This one is classic and won't break the bank. **\$68;** aloyoga.com

Hot Mess Ice Roller

This one is for the beauty obsessed! This is the mac daddy of all face rollers and gets colder than any other roller on the market. Say goodbye to puffy morning skin! **\$69;** shopskinnyconfidential.com



Face Gym Skincare Set

We love this skincare set because the harder you work out, the better the formula penetrates your skin. Perfect for the equally obsessed skincare and fitness guru in your life. **\$75;** net-a-porter.com



Free for the Holidays

Diet culture has done a number on our society, and it can be some murky territory for women who are invested in health and fitness. For decades, we've been preached to that "smaller is better," reminded to count every calorie that we consume or expend, and we were taught tricks to ward off our hunger. It's no surprise we've got a complicated relationship with food as a result. And for the woman who's actively working to heal herself from this negative rhetoric, the holidays, and abundance of decadent meals and drinks mixed with stress and overwhelm that can go along with it, can be an emotionally charged time of year.

As we hold fast to flipping diet culture the bird and continue to work through these conditioned feelings of guilt, shame, and fear surrounding eating, we can arm our emotional and mental toolkit with ways to remind ourselves that food is for fuel and nourishment—and it's also for enjoyment. This is the perfect time of year to flex that enjoyment muscle, and turn some of the following helpful pieces of advice into the season's mantras to find food freedom and preserve the healthier mindset you've been working to cultivate.

The festive season can be a tricky and triggering time to navigate if you're working to build a healthier relationship with food. These simple tools can help.

WRITTEN BY SAMANTHA GLADISH, RHN, HOLISTICWELLNESS.CA

Transformation Isn't Linear

Your health, wellness, and healing require deep commitment and patience, along with the understanding that things will go wrong. If we were able to flip a switch and have a healthier relationship with food, we would. But that's not real life. So if feelings of guilt creep in over the holidays, remind yourself first that you're human, and that this is all part of the path to healing. Accepting that the ups and downs will come is an important step in freeing yourself from letting old habits get to you, so give yourself a break.

Enjoyment and Pleasure

Diet culture would have you believe that being "healthy" means you eschew the gravy or extra slice of pie, but we know now that this restrictive mindset is damaging to the psyche. Keep in mind that nothing is off limits—and we mean nothing. Having the freedom to choose your meals and tune in to how they make you feel so that you can listen to your body when it tells you that it's satisfied is one of the most important factors in ditching the diet mindset. Learn to re-trust yourself so that consuming these holiday foods doesn't feel naughty. Allow yourself to enjoy it, and pay attention to when you feel satiated.

Create Abundance

Your health, wellness, and healing require deep commitment and patience, along with the understanding that things will go wrong. If we were able to flip a switch and have a healthier relationship with food, we would.

But that's not real life. So if feelings of guilt creep in over the holidays, remind yourself first that you're human, and that this is all part of the path to healing. Accepting that the ups and downs will come is an important step in freeing yourself from letting old habits get to you, so give yourself a break.

Enjoyment and Pleasure

Self-care has been in the spotlight in recent years, and the mundane basics of it are at the heart of feeling good in your body: Things like staying hydrated, moving your body daily, and stacking your plate with colorful whole foods. These factors are key all year, but especially over the holidays when scheduling and emotions run high. So instead of leaning on old habits such as restricting or over-exercising, instead, shift your mindset to one of abundance. Enjoy the snacks and drinks at holiday parties, and also continue going to your favorite fitness class. Revel in the Christmas cocktails, and also add an extra glass of sparkling water into your hydration line-up. Adding more rather than taking away can be a healing practice for a body and mind that are used to scarcity.

While the holidays can be the most wonderful time of the year, they can also bring stress, uncertainty, and sometimes even negativity. But what doesn't have to change is your commitment to yourself. You're in control, and you get to decide how you're going to show up for yourself. Your wellness journey won't always be perfect, but continuing to be your own ally in whatever weather comes your way can renew your sense of courage and pride in yourself.



Snack Attack!

We conducted scientific research and scrutinized the data to round up the tastiest snacks of the year.

WRITTEN BY MIKAILA KUKURUDZA

Savory

1. Keepin' the Heat

If you're a fan of Flamin' Hot Cheetos, LesserEvil's **Fiery Hot Power Curls** are bound to be your go-to for afternoon cravings. This protein-packed snack is coated in fiery spices and is only 130 calories per serving. **\$4.99;** lesserevil.com



2. Eggcellent!

PECKISH Peck Packs are everything we didn't know we needed. These snackable, non-GMO eggs are perfectly paired with flavored crispy dip (our fave is Rancheros). Each pack comes with two eggs and contains approximately 12-14 g of protein. **\$3.99;** perfectypeckish.com

3. What the Chip?!

In an effort to upcycle salmon skins sustainably sourced from Alaska, **Goodfish** has created the hand-me-the-bag chips you wouldn't expect. These Crispy Salmon Skins are nutrient-rich and sans that fishy taste (instead, each bag is packed full of flavor, such as Miso Teriyaki). **\$25/8 Pack;** goodfish.com

4. Simply Delicious

Made with only five ingredients, **KunaPops** by **LiveKuna** are as nutritious as they are delicious. Snack on superfoods such as chia and quinoa in three mouthwatering flavors: White Cheddar, Spicy Chili, and Tomato Basil. **\$3.99;** livekunashop.com

5. Super Convenient Superfood

Stay satisfied with **Bada Bean Bada Boom Crunchy Broad Beans**, a plant-based crunchy snack that packs 5 g of fiber and 7 g of protein into each individual bag. Along with the savory flavors of Nacho Cheeze and Sweet Sriracha, you can also find drool-worthy sweet flavors like Sweet Cinnamon. **\$24.99/24 Bags;** badabeansnacks.com



Spreads

6. Smooth Satisfaction

Nomz Pistachio Butter contains just one ingredient per jar: Dry-roasted pistachios. Packed with healthy fats, fiber, and potassium, this is a spread you (and the environment) can feel good about. One tree is planted for every jar sold through Nomz's One Tree Planted partnership. **\$24; nomz.com**



7. No Blues Here

The **Blue Dream Nut Butter** by **Butterfly** is organic, vegan, and totally photo worthy. Along with looking almost too good to eat, the blue spirulina giving this spread its artistic flair is high in antioxidants, vitamins, and nutrients to sustain your workouts. **\$14.95; butterflysuperfoods.com**



8. Split Decision

Combining the best of both worlds, each individual **Split** pack contains a nut butter and fruit spread. Our fave? The Almond Butter & Strawberry Spread combo, the perfect purse-snack for when those hangry moments sneak up. **\$24.95/10 Packs; splitnutrition.com**



Sweet

9. Bites of Goodness

Enjoy the best of what mother nature has to offer with the **Almond and Sea Salt Date Bites** by **Bisou Dates**. The natural sweetness of Medjool dates coated in 70 percent dark chocolate provide that well-deserved energy boost we need mid-afternoon. With two perfect bites per package, this on-the-go snack is bound to be your new go-to. **\$3.99; bisoudates.com**

10. Good Morning

Purely Elizabeth's first-ever single serve packets of **5 Grain + Seed Oatmeal** take all the stress out of busy mornings. Jam-packed with plant-based proteins such as chickpea, chia, and flax, this crunchy blend of oats comes in two delicious flavors: Classic Cinnamon and Banana Nut. **\$5.99/6 Pack; purelyelizabeth.com**

11. Handful of Happy

Every day can be your birthday with **Lesserevil's Birthday Cake Mini Cookies**. These keto certified, gluten-free bites of goodness don't skimp on flavor (or rainbow sprinkles). If you're looking for a different kind of party in your mouth, try the decadent Fudge Brownie flavor. **\$5.99; lesserevil.com**

12. Grown-Up Candy Bar

Vegan, gluten-free, and full of flavor, **Gigantic Sortasweet Candy Bars** make answering your sweet tooth's demands simple. Each bar contains just 7 g of sugar and is heavy on the good stuff, light on the sweet stuff. Salted Peanut and Almond Horchata are our top flavor picks so far. **\$27.99/8 Pack; giganticcandy.com**



YOUR EXPERT!

JACLYN PHILLIPS,
MASTER TRAINER,
RYT300, PNI

Energy Restoration

Take a load off! This restorative yoga sequence is guaranteed to calm your body and mind.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

It might be hard to hear this if you're a grade-A overachiever, but it's important to slow down sometimes. When you're constantly operating on all systems go, you're at a higher risk of burning out, injuring yourself during workouts, or even developing cognitive and cardiac ailments, according to several studies. Setting boundaries around how much media you consume, how you schedule your work hours, and how hard you'll go in the gym can all add up to ensuring you've carved out some meaningful self-care time that'll increase your energy when it's

needed, while decreasing stress and making you an overall nicer human.

This restorative yoga sequence is the perfect self-care routine to ease in to slowing down. A restorative yoga practice is typically made up of 5-6 poses that are held anywhere from 5-10 minutes each, with the goal of entering a physical state of relaxation so that the mind can follow. But the benefits don't stop there. This style of yoga also improves sleep and mood, reduces body pain, and can provide a gentle stretch. So take your foot off the gas and give this routine a go to restore your energy levels.

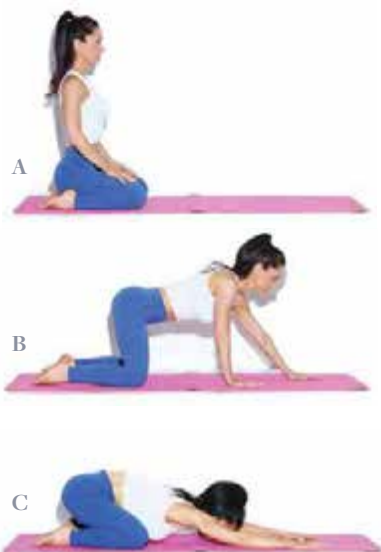
THE WORKOUT

HOW TO: Settle into each pose, using props for support. On each exhale, sink deeper into the position. You can use a timer with a gentle sound to notify you when it's time to change positions. If you're new to restorative yoga, aim for 3-5 minutes per pose; if you're familiar with it, aim for 5-10 minutes.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Yoga props such as a block, bolster, pillows, and blankets



MODEL: BARB TALDS HAIR & MAKEUP: MONICA VALRA



Child's Pose

Start in an upright kneeling position, with knees spread wide, sitting back against your heels (A). Slowly walk your hands forward (B), bringing your chest toward the ground while sitting on your heels. As you inhale, reach your fingertips forward and press your hips back, sinking deeper each breath (C).



Supported Bridge

Lie on your back with knees bent. Gently reach your fingers toward your heels, then lift your hips off the ground. Slide a yoga block under your lower back to support the pose (A). Your arms can stay outstretched on the floor, or reach them over your head, whichever is more comfortable. To come out of the pose, lift your hips up off the block, remove the block, and lower the hips down. Gently hug your knees into your chest and rock side to side (B).



TRAINER TIP:
This should be a comfortable position. If the pose causes your back to hurt, remove the block and come down.

Legs Up a Wall

Scout your hips up close to a wall, supporting your lower back with bolsters or pillows and blankets. Extend your legs up the wall and rest your arms beside you. Your legs should feel relaxed and comfortable, so they may bend.



TRAINER TIP:
This pose calms nerves, relieves low-back pain, and releases tension.

Supine Spinal Twist

Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor, arms resting at your sides or out in a T-shape. Draw the knees to your chest (A), then extend your left leg, continuing to grasp the right knee (B). Gently guide the right knee across your body towards the floor, so you feel a twist in the spine. Extend the right arm beside you to keep the shoulder grounded (C). To release, come back to center, hug the knees, then change sides.



Use your exhales to gently deepen each stretch. When the timer sounds, slowly reawaken your body with deeper breaths, wrist circles, and wiggling toes.



Sleeping Pigeon

From hands and knees (A), guide your left toes towards your left hand, aiming to keep the thigh parallel to the side. Gently inch your left foot forward until you feel a stretch (B). Slightly slide the right leg back so you can ease the hips down to the ground. Walk your arms forward, just as far as is comfortable, and lower your upper body (C).



“Balance is not something you find—it’s something you create.”

— JANA KINGSFORD

Balancing Act

Going full tilt is so passé. Here’s how setting healthy boundaries in your training can optimize your fitness, and your life.

There’s a delicate balance to achieving positive energy. I’m talking that uplifting, light-as-air feeling you get when things are clicking and feeling just right. Here’s how I do it.

I’m a goal-oriented, driven person. And in order to achieve the things I’m striving for, it’s essential I maintain positive vibes and high energy on every level. So when it comes to fueling my body with the energy I need to perform in the gym, and most importantly, in my family life as well as professionally, I go by the 80/20 rule.

This means that 80 percent of the time I consume high quality, nutrient-dense foods and 20 percent of the time I enjoy comfort foods that might not be as high quality as desired, but that soothe my soul in an intangible way.

This balance allows me to feel satisfied and never deprived, which is my key to maintaining peak physical shape. And emotionally, this rule keeps me on an even keel. Another key? Checking in with myself after eating to see how certain foods make me feel. There’s an intuitive

side to eating that many of us can lose sight of, and I think it’s so essential to keep that top of mind.

Another area I strive for balance in is my training. Long gone are the days when I could train full-out with no thought for recovery time. The moment they wake up, my two little men are go, go, GO—I have no choice but to keep up! I can’t be lagging behind with excruciatingly sore muscles from a workout the day before (DOMs is literally a pain in the butt!). So, my solution for this is balance in my workouts. There’s a delicate tipping point between training with purpose and intensity vs. training with free abandon. My sessions are organized and purposeful, but I know my limits and stay within them so I can function in all areas of my life, unhindered.

Last (but so far from least) is sleep. As a new mama, there’s almost no way around sleep deprivation. But as my boys have grown, I’ve luckily been able to find more balance around sleep. I strive for 7-8 hours nightly and that’s the sweet spot for me to wake up feeling like I can take on the day with energy and a positive mindset. Enough sleep also makes me feel like I can make good food choices because I’m not exhausted or feeling unmotivated.

All things considered, my key to achieving optimal energy is balance. Whether it’s the food you’re consuming, your workouts, your sleep, or finding balance in your daily grind, there’s a sweet spot we all can strive to live in. And once you get there, trust me when I say, you’ll feel unstoppable.

What would you do as a FULL TIME ONLINE NUTRITION COACH?

CHECK OUT THIS **FREE** NUTRITION COACHING CHEAT SHEET
AND LEARN HOW TO:



GROW A THRIVING ONLINE NUTRITION COACHING BUSINESS FROM SCRATCH
(even if you're currently working another full time job)



CREATE RAVING CLIENTS WHO REFER ALL THEIR FRIENDS TO YOU
(so you don't have to spend hours learning how to market yourself)



SET YOURSELF APART FROM EVERY OTHER COACH
(there are more online coaches now than ever)

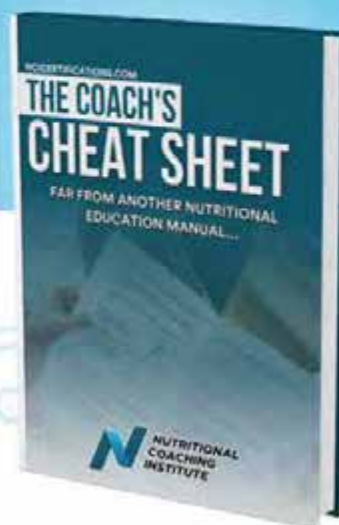
It's time to love what you do and get paid well to do it!

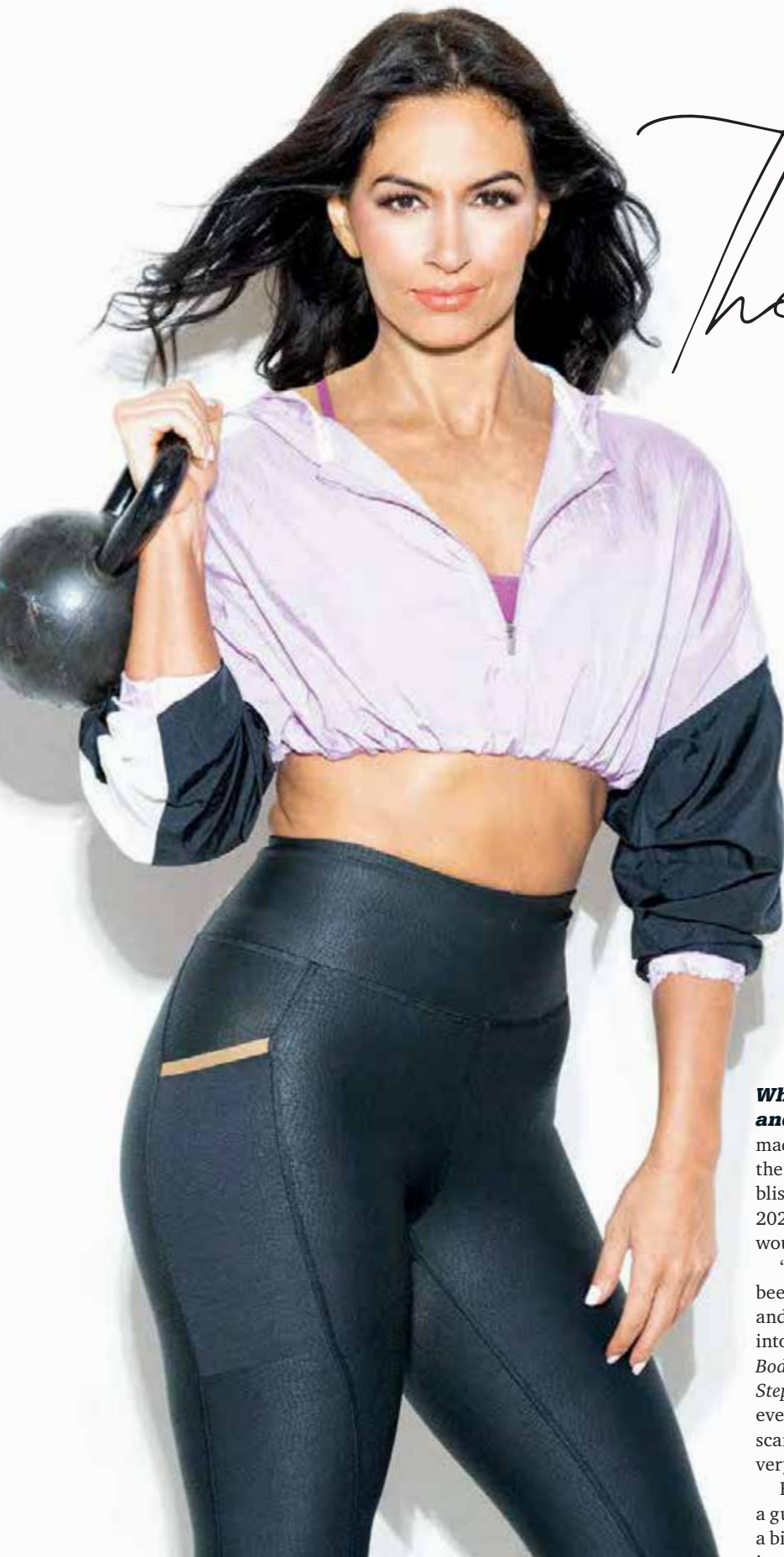
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The Doctor IS IN

Dr. Stephanie Estima is living the best season of her life in her 40s—and she's here to tell you exactly how you can begin to thrive in your own body, too.

WRITTEN BY MARTA USTYANICH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

When chiropractic doctor and metabolism and body composition expert

Dr. Stephanie made the decision to close her practice and move into the online coaching space in April 2019, the world was blissfully unaware of the certified dumpster fire that 2020 would become and how drastically our world would change in an instant. Call it a woman's intuition.

"It was a leap of faith," admits Dr. Stephanie, who had been serving her local community in Toronto, Canada and surrounding area for 16 years. Now, over two years into her new chapter, she's published a book, *The Betty Body* (2021), and she's the host of the *Better! With Dr. Stephanie* podcast—and the 43-year-old is surer than ever that she's made the right move. "It was really quite scary at the time, but on the other side of it now, I'm very happy that I trusted my intuition and followed it."

But there was more to Dr. Stephanie's decision than a gut feeling. "I was feeling called to serve women on a bigger scale," she says. While she's been honing her intuition her whole life, what she's really passionate

about is helping other women tune into theirs. “It’s important for us to be able to attune to the signals of the body, the way that she’s talking to us, and to be able to decode some of those whispers so that we can feel aligned and fully embodied.”

In her practice, it became obvious to Dr. Stephanie how little women understood about their own fertility. “Your hormones, your cycles, and your rhythms are actually your secret super powers,” she says. It also became clear how poorly served women were by modern Western medicine alone, which often dismisses—symptoms without searching for a root cause.

“With women, there’s so much more opportunity for hormonal issues, age-related issues, thyroid dysfunction, and period problems, not to mention menopause and perimenopause. Your body communicates to you in symptoms when things are awry—and that doesn’t mean that your body’s broken, it doesn’t mean that your body’s failing you, this is the way that your body talks,” she explains. “Wouldn’t it be great if your liver could just send you a text, like, ‘Hey girl, can you get off the wine a bit, I’m kinda backed up here?’ But that’s not what happens—we have insomnia, we have higher fasting glucose, we have higher fasting insulin.” And most times, to get the right diagnosis, “a woman really has to be the one to take control of her health, understand how hormones work, try to self-diagnose, and then go and communicate that to her primary healthcare provider to try and find a result,” she says.

Dr. Stephanie’s philosophy is grounded in her mechanistic knowledge of the body’s inner workings combined with what she refers to as a vitalistic approach. “The body has a great capacity to heal,” all thanks to an innate wisdom

that drives our cellular machinery, she explains. “Even though we can understand the mechanisms at play, we have great honor and respect for the body’s ability to self-regulate and self-heal.” Once you can tap into that innate wisdom, “you’ll be able to respond in a much more nourishing way that honors your biology.”

If that sounds like all woo-woo and mysticism, it’s far from it. Dr. Stephanie is a self-described nerd who delves into the science behind many of the proven tools and strategies she recommends to women looking to reclaim their hormonal and digestive health, reset their metabolism, and feel comfortable in their skin no matter their age. “*The Betty Body* is a huge, geeky magic carpet ride. We talk about menstrual cycles, we talk about different hormonal dysregulation, I talk about posture, sleep, the

importance of sex, orgasms, morning routines. So it’s really a bible, if you will.”

Now, the certified boss and mother of two is redefining what growing older looks—and feels—like. In fact, she’s embracing life in her 40s, or what she refers to as “the summer of your life.” “It’s the most expansive time, and we have to start treating it like that. This is where we actually feel really comfortable in our skin, we’re comfortable in our sexuality, and we feel really comfortable in the experiences we’ve accrued over the course of our life, and it’s time to celebrate it. I hope that I’ll be an inspiration to a woman who’s in her 40s or 50s, who feels like she’s lost her way, or that her body has “betrayed” her. Know there’s a different way forward—you can change your metabolism, you can change your body composition at any age,” she says.



ENERGIZE LIKE ESTIMA

Reinvention is no easy task! To keep her energy stores topped up, doctor of chiropractic Stephanie Estima looks beyond the *Americano* and taps into strategies that keep her naturally energized. “You are always going to be your own best producer of energy,” she says. Read on for her top tips:

1. Honor your physiology.

For Stephanie, that means hitting the weights to build muscle, moving her body, nourishing with whole foods that come from the earth, not starving herself, and prioritizing adequate sleep.

2. Manage your stress.

“If you are not actively releasing both current stress and old stress, you won’t have energy,” says Stephanie. These could be physical stresses, like exposure to toxins, or emotional stresses, like maltreatment as a child. “If we don’t actively release these from our body, they will lead to this state of chronic, low-grade inflammation, and that is truly the energy vampire. That is what steals your energy and causes all this hormonal mayhem and hormonal hurricanes.”

3. Hone your passion.

“My work is so fulfilling for me—I’m so excited to wake up every day,” says Stephanie. Of her podcast guests, she says, “It’s been an honor to get to interview these thought leaders.” So whether it’s your job, your side hustle, or a hobby, find that one thing that fulfills and excites you.

GET *KIPPED* UP

Our cover athlete's customizable full-body routine will ramp up your energy like never before.

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA CLARKE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

Motivation and energy might seem like unicorn traits, but Dr. Stephanie Estima will be the first to tell you that if you're expecting to wake up each and every day with natural vigor and pep, you've got another thing coming. "Motivation, in my experience, is a fleeting emotion, often only springing up at the beginning of something new," she says. "In order to persist and remain consistent in working out, the single best tool I use is my Google Calendar. I have my workouts and rest days prescheduled, so I don't have to think about what I'm doing or when I'm doing it. This helps to reduce my decision fatigue and gives me more available mental energy for my workout that day."

Her next best tool to get her energy revving is this exact workout. "This is a full-body workout that I use to get the blood flowing and to get ready for my day," she says. "It's a total-body pick-me-up." Dr. Stephanie emphasizes versatility in her routines so that her workouts can be customizable for her. When she's looking for a challenge, she'll increase the weight and reps, and decrease rest times; when she's traveling, she'll pull together what she can find in hotel gyms and use this workout to acclimate to different time zones. That way, armed with flexibility and her Google Calendar, there's nothing holding her back from getting the job done.

The Workout

This workout is comprised of three supersets. Complete each exercise for the prescribed number of reps back-to-back, resting 90 seconds between supersets. Perform each superset four times before moving to the next one.

Equipment Needed

A kettlebell, a set of dumbbells, and a bench

SUPERSET 1

KB Goblet Squat

15 REPS

Stand with feet hip-distance apart, holding a kettlebell at chest height (A). Bend the knees to sink the hips low, keeping the upper body tall (B). Drive through the heels to press back to standing.



DB Bent-Over Row

12 REPS PER SIDE

Place your left shin and hand on a bench for support, and hold a dumbbell in your right hand (A). Keeping the core braced, lift the dumbbell towards your ribcage, driving the elbow back (B). Lower down with control.



SUPERSET 2

KB Reverse Lunge

12 REPS PER SIDE

Stand with feet hip-distance apart, holding a kettlebell in front of the chest (A). Take a big step behind you, staying on the toes, then sink the hips low to come into a lunge (B). Drive through the back foot to return to the starting position.



DB Lateral to Front Raise

12 REPS

Stand tall with the core engaged, holding dumbbells at your sides (A). Lift the dumbbells laterally until they're parallel with your shoulders (B), then, bring them in front of your body until they're shoulder-width apart (C). Lower them slowly in front of your body (D). That's one rep.



SUPERSET 3

Plank Jack

25 REPS

Get into high-plank position, lifting through the shoulders and keeping the core engaged (A). Jump both feet out wide (B), then back to the starting position quickly. Repeat for all reps.



DB Military Press

12 REPS

Stand tall, holding dumbbells at your shoulders with the elbows facing front (A). With control, press the dumbbells overhead until the arms are straight, but not locked (B). Lower down slowly.

DB Skull Crusher

12 REPS

Lie on a bench with your knees bent, holding a dumbbell in two hands above you (A). With elbows stationary and facing forward, lower the dumbbell just overhead (B), then press back up.





DOUBLE-DUTY DINNERS

Move over boring, monotonous mealtime! These recipes will shorten your weekly grocery list and prep time, while totally treating your taste buds.

RECIPES AND STYLING BY CAROL DUDAR PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

We love a two-in-one combo: Reversible sweaters, BOGO deals, weighted HIIT workouts, etc. Double the pleasure for half the work? Count us in! That's why we're obsessed with these dinner recipes that, with a little panache, glow up to become something totally different and unexpected.

If you're someone who doesn't necessarily love to cook, but you love variety in your meals (referencing ourselves, here), these recipes are for you. With just a few simple ingredient additions and cooking techniques, your Monday dinner can get a facelift for a completely different Tuesday dish.

HOW TO: Enjoy the first recipe in each set on its own, or prepare extra to be used as a delicious component to the second recipe.

1

Winter Salad with Tahini Miso Dressing

Prep Time: 15 Minutes Total Time: 15 Minutes Makes 2 Servings

SALAD DRESSING

- 2 Tbsps white miso
- 2 Tbsps rice wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsps tahini
- 2 Tbsps water
- 2 Tbsps toasted sesame oil
- 2 tsps ginger, grated

SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 1 head radicchio, cored and torn into bite size pieces
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 3 carrots, shaved

- 1 McIntosh or Royal Gala apple, thinly sliced
- 1 small fennel, shaved
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Italian parsley leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsps white sesame seeds, toasted

1. Whisk the ingredients for the salad dressing together. If the dressing is too thick, add a Tbsp of water. Season with the salt and pepper.

2. Assemble the salad by mixing the radicchio, celery, carrots, apple, fennel, green onions, and parsley on a platter or in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper, then top with dressing and sesame seeds.



● ●
We love this
recipe paired with
flavorful grilled
bok choy.

2

Pork Chops with Tahini Miso Marinade

Prep Time: 10 Minutes
Total Time: 40 Minutes
(plus marinating time)
Makes 4 Servings

Tahini Miso Dressing (double the recipe)

4 bone-in pork chops

GARNISH

- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsps sesame seeds

1. Brush pork chops in marinade, cover, and refrigerate for 30 minutes or overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grill pork chops on each side for 5 minutes.
3. Place on baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes, then let rest for 5 minutes.
4. Add 1 Tbsp water to remaining miso-tahini marinade, and whisk together. Transfer pork chops to serving platter and top with drizzle of reserved miso-tahini sauce.
5. Sprinkle green onions and sesame seeds over top and serve.



1 Avocado & Edamame Toast

Prep Time: 10 Minutes
Total Time: 10 Minutes
Makes 2 Servings

1 cup edamame
½ cup avocado, mashed
1 Tbsp lemon juice
1 Tbsp lemon zest
½ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)
½ cup baby arugula or baby spinach
Sourdough or multigrain bread, sliced 1" thick

1. Steam or microwave the edamame for 3-5 minutes until tender. Let cool slightly, then add avocado and mash with a fork until edamame starts to break down. Add lemon juice, zest, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes.

2. Toast bread and top with avocado edamame mixture. Season with salt and pepper if needed.

3. Top with baby arugula and optional red pepper flakes.

Who says breakfast can't be dinner? Amp up the protein with a fried egg.

2 Avocado, Edamame & Zucchini Fritters

Prep Time: 20 Minutes
Total Time: 40 Minutes
Makes 4 Servings

Avocado & Edamame Toast Topper

3 medium zucchinis, grated or spiralized

1 cup firmly packed baby arugula or baby spinach, finely chopped

2 Tbsps capers, chopped

2 green onions, thinly sliced

2 Tbsps grainy Dijon mustard

2 eggs

2 Tbsps chia seeds

½ cup all-purpose or GF flour

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

4 Tbsps extra virgin olive oil, divided

1. Pre-heat oven to 300°F. Grate or spiralize zucchinis in large bowl. Add arugula, capers, and green onions and toss together well. Mix in avocado-edamame mixture. Then add eggs, mustard, and chia seeds into avocado mix, and combine completely.

2. Stir together flour, baking powder, salt and pepper in small bowl. Then add dry ingredients to wet ingredients, and mix together well.

3. Heat a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat and add 1 Tbsp oil to coat pan. Scoop mixture using 1/2 cup measure into pan, flatten to a pancake. Repeat with 2 more fritters.

4. Cook until golden-brown, about 3-4 minutes per side. Remove to baking sheet, and cover with foil. Place baking sheet in oven.

5. Add another Tbsp of oil to pan, repeating until remaining fritters are cooked.



● ●
This tropical-fruit
salsa is loaded
with vitamin C and
antioxidants.

1 Mango, Pineapple & Jalapeno Salsa

Prep Time: 15 Minutes
Total Time: 15 Minutes
Makes 1 ¾ Cups

- 2 cups mango, finely diced**
- 1 cup pineapple, finely diced**
- 1 small shallot, finely diced**
- ½ cup yellow pepper, finely diced**
- 1 small jalapeno, finely diced**
- 3 Tbsps lime juice**
- ¼ cup cilantro, stems and leaves chopped**
- ½ tsp salt**
- 1 Tbsp lime zest**

1. Combine all ingredients.
Serve with tortilla chips.



BONUS MEAL!
Turn this recipe
into fish tacos
by serving
it alongside
warmed tortillas.

2

Trout with Mango, Pineapple & Jalapeno Salsa

Prep Time: 25 Minutes
Total Time: 40 Minutes
Makes 4 Servings

Mango, Pineapple & Jalapeno Salsa

1 lb steel head or rainbow trout

3 tps extra virgin olive oil, divided

1 Tbsp chili powder, divided

1 medium clove garlic, minced

1 tsp salt

½ tsp black pepper, freshly ground

1 medium Vidalia onion, sliced thinly

Cilantro (for garnish)

1. Pre-heat oven to 425°F. Toss onion with 1 tsp oil and 1 tsp chili powder in a small bowl. Place fish on parchment-lined baking sheet.

2. Mix remaining oil, chili powder, and garlic and spread onto the flesh side of the fish. Add the seasoned onions around the fish.

3. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until flesh is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.

4. Add mango-pineapple salsa on top, then garnish with cilantro.

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**Constantly exhausted
no matter what you
do to combat it?
These unsuspecting
energy zappers could
be the culprits.**

WRITTEN BY RACHEL DEBLING
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TAMARA LÉGER

WOMEN ARE MASTERS OF MULTITASKING, AND THAT CAN OFTEN MEAN OUR ENERGY IS PULLED IN A MILLION DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

Luckily in recent years with the evidence showing just how important it is to put ourselves on our very long list of things to take care of, we're making a concentrated effort to consider our own needs for optimal health. So we tick all the boxes that we're supposed to: Putting in time at the gym, doing our best to eat right, and aiming to clock the recommended seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Yet for some reason, many of us are dragging our butts through the day, feeling as though we're moving in slow motion, unable to break a snail's pace physically and mentally.

Turns out, that's not just in your head. According to Dr. Amy Shah, author of *I'm So Effing Tired*, lack of energy is a problem that has been mounting in intensity on a global scale. And unfortunately, but perhaps unsurprisingly, it also discriminates: Women are 17 percent more likely to have this

complaint than men. "We believe that some of the cause is biological, but some is societal," she explains. "When we don't talk about it and we don't provide resources for it, people start to search for solutions themselves." And those solutions may not be effective—or healthy. (See "Artificial Energy," page 48.)

So what can you do if your get-up-and-go has got up and went? For starters, begin by identifying some outside factors that might be draining your energy without you even noticing, such as the ones listed here. If your precious bandwidth is being used up on these energy saboteurs, it's no wonder you've got no gas left in the tank when you need it. By paying more attention to when these sneaky energy zappers are sucking the life out of you, you can kick them to the curb so that the effort you put into sticking to your healthy habits nets you the results and vigor you want.

YOU NEED MORE MAGNESIUM



Studies have shown that women who are deficient in this mineral have to work harder to do physical tasks. This is because magnesium regulates a variety of biochemical reactions within the body, including protein synthesis, blood glucose levels, and muscular function. On a cellular level, it's also needed to produce energy.

A 300-350 mg supplement is a great place to start to get your recommended daily intake, but there are plenty of excellent food sources of this nutrient that you are probably already eating. Every serving of almonds, cashews, whole grains, and leafy greens you nosh will help you inch closer to your daily quota.



STRAIGHTEN UP YOUR POSTURE

Letting your shoulders stoop forward and your back round does more than just make you look uncomfortable: You may be sapping yourself of hard-earned energy. When your body is misaligned, it can be harder to breathe, depriving your systems of the oxygen that they need to properly function. Slumping over also weakens your core muscles and applies excessive pressure to your joints and ligaments. Straighten up by raising your chest and pulling your shoulders slightly back. While sitting, keep your chin lifted, your feet planted on the floor and your glutes touching the back of your chair. During your workouts, focus on core engagement to further improve your posture outside of the gym.

CHECK YOUR MINDSET

3



The mind-body connection goes beyond helping you eke out a few extra reps or fine tuning your form. When your mind is in pain, your body can follow suit. A negative mindset can make it more difficult for you to take care of yourself through exercise and proper diet. When you're preoccupied with what's going wrong now or in the future, your focus on your health can dwindle. On a larger scale, chronic depression is a known energy drainer, causing fatigue and weakness. Energy loss is also a side effect of many antidepressants.

If you find yourself consistently drained and believe you may be suffering from mental health issues, visit a doctor as soon as possible. For everyday negativity not associated with a serious condition, there are practices that have been shown to combat drowsiness and lethargy. Meditation is a well-known way to put pep in your step, and taking a daily break to show gratitude, whether through journaling or by expressing thanks, can improve your mood, thereby increasing your overall energy levels.

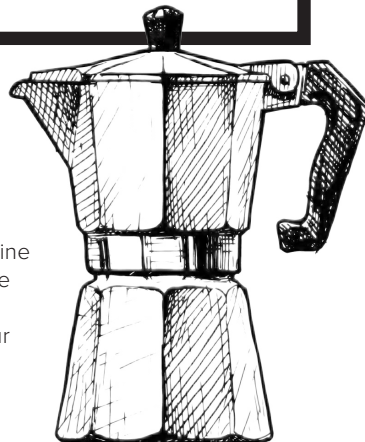
4 GET MOVING

Consider yourself a couch potato? It likely won't surprise you to discover that your bad habits are sapping your energy. Once you are in the vicious cycle of being too tired to work out and then not being able to exercise because you are tired, it can be hard to get out. And it can happen to the most dedicated of us. But the answer might be more related to your daily habits than your gym schedule. A study from Germany's Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, published in *Science Advances*, reveals that simply taking the stairs can increase energy and overall well-being. The participants overwhelmingly reported feeling more awake, alert, and energized directly after undergoing day-to-day physical activities. The researchers combined these results with brain scans of other individuals that measured their response to these activities. Unsurprisingly, the scans confirmed what the survey suggested. Need a reminder to move it or lose it (energy, that is)? Set an alarm on your phone or dust off that fitness tracker. After all, even the most active of us need a push in the right direction every now and again.

5

CHILL ON THE COFFEE

Sure, coffee can perk you up when the going gets tough, as it affects your sleep-wake cycle by blocking your brain's adenosine receptors. Once the caffeine has done its job, however, you are hit with a wave of this neurotransmitter and the onslaught can make you tired—exactly the opposite effect you want from your cup of joe. "It's not a solution—it's actually stealing from your energy bank," Shah notes.



Artificial ENERGY

It can be tempting to reach for a quick-fix solution when your energy levels start to wane. But the easiest solution isn't always the best. "When trying to fix fatigue problems, we often turn to taking a product or eating energy-boosting foods or drinks," says Dr. Amy Shah. But many, if not all, of these products can be unsafe, especially when taken in larger amounts. "They can stimulate the heart, raise your blood pressure, increase your anxiety, cause sleep loss, and so many other things." Considering adding a new product to your regimen? Do your bod and brain a solid and talk to your doctor or health practitioner if you are curious about any major changes to your diet or supplement plan.

6

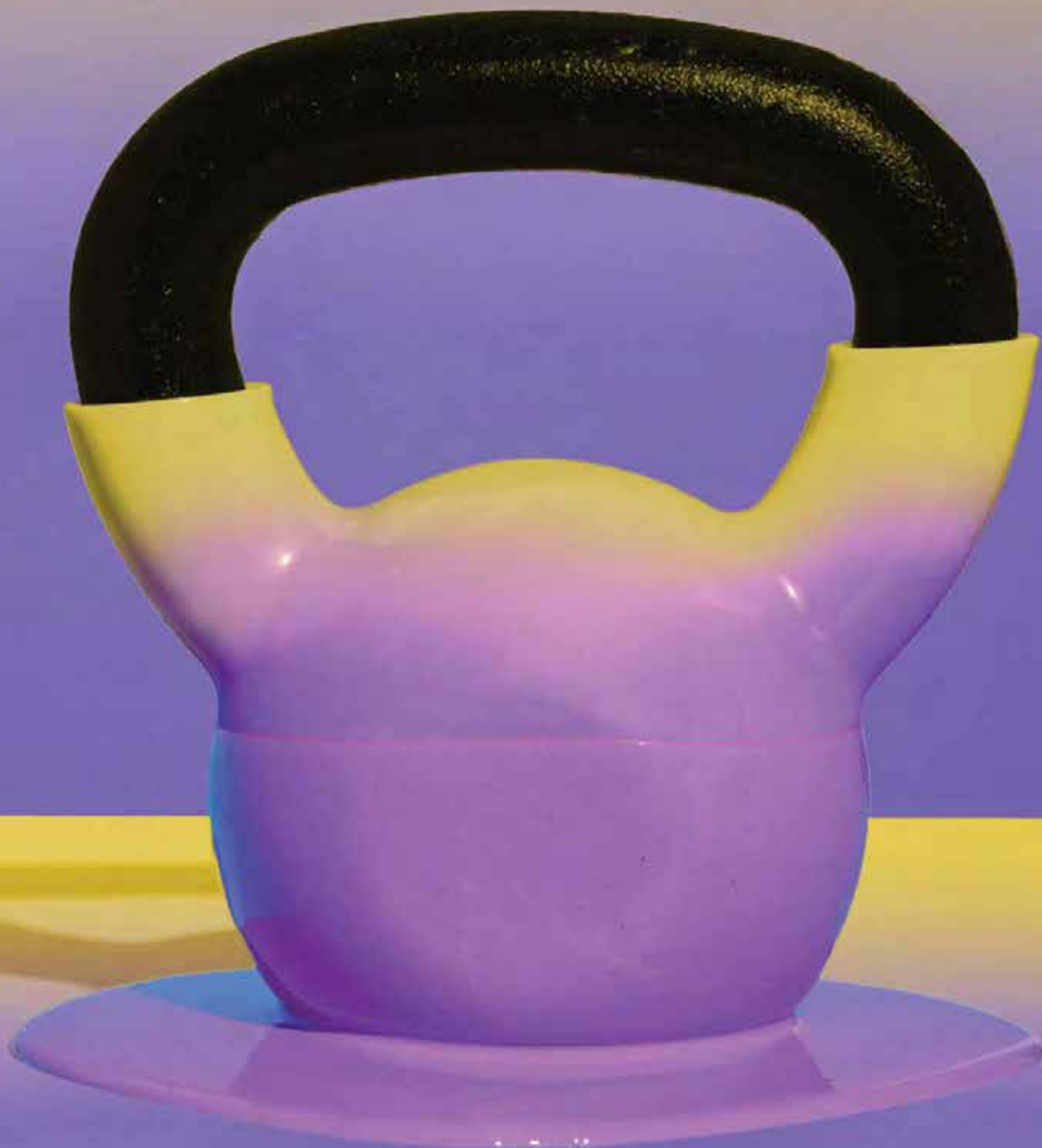
REEVALUATE HOW YOU EXERCISE

Nearly everyone knows that wonderful surge of energy you get following a satisfying sweat session. So why are you still drained, even though you've been hitting up the gym regularly?

The truth is that you might be overdoing it. High-intensity exercise, though great for spurring changes to your body, can increase your cortisol levels, and when paired with a stressful schedule, this spike can sap your energy. Save these types of workouts for

days that you are already feeling strong, not when you're dragging yourself to the gym.

Instead, try popping outside for a workout in nature, even if it's lower intensity than usual. "Nature-based exercise has been shown to energize," Shah notes. "Bright, natural light goes through your retina and straight into the suprachiasmatic nucleus in your brain, where it tells the body to turn on its attention and focus. You'll feel more energetic and ready-to-go."



20%

of American women consume energy drinks on a daily basis.

7

DRINK YOUR WATER

Since dehydration is linked to low energy levels, and because water is a necessary part of cellular energy regulation, meeting your daily water needs is important. Water also helps push waste products through the body, clearing you of stuff that is literally weighing you down. Keep a water bottle handy and be sure to monitor your urine color. Light yellow or clear is the best; dark yellow means you need to up your fluids.

MAKE SIMPLE CARBS BETTER

8

The glycemic load of foods can have an impact on your energy, too. Meals that are high on the glycemic index—those that contain a lot of easy-to-process simple sugars—spike your blood sugar and can send you crashing. That doesn't mean you need to avoid potatoes, white rice, and other high glycemic foods altogether. Try pairing them with a bit of fat, protein, or fiber to help control how quickly your body converts the carbs into blood sugar. **S**

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POWER



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FEEL THE Resistance

Mix up your usual full-body workout with this functional and totally portable training system from Lebert Fitness.

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA CLARKE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA
POWERED BY LEBERT FITNESS

MODEL: ASHLEY WEBSTER | HAIR/MAKEUP: MONICA KALRA

It's important to change things up every so often. While there's comfort in your usual fitness routine and equipment, keeping your body guessing with new moves, different planes of work, and a fresh apparatus can be just the thing to bust a plateau and build greater strength, all while staving off boredom and monotony. Enter the HIIT System from Lebert Fitness: A completely portable and customizable tool that leverages your own bodyweight to level up your endurance through dynamic resistance. This versatile trainer allows you to load virtually any exercise you can imagine while having the ability to switch up your stance to make it even more spicy. Unilateral, rotational, and bilateral movements are literally in the palm of your hand with this innovative tool.

THE WORKOUT

Spend 5-15 minutes warming up. Complete each move for 30 seconds on, then rest for 30 seconds. Repeat each circuit 3-5 times, depending on your fitness level.

CIRCUIT 1

1.

Unilateral Row

Stand with feet hip-width apart and lower into a squat. Holding both straps, extend one arm forward as the other arm bends to pull back. Alternate arms.

BONUS: Pulse in the squat for a lower-body burn.



2.

Unilateral Biceps Curl

Stand with feet hip-width apart, slightly bending the knees and maintaining an upright posture. Hold both handles with hands facing you, elbows facing forward. One arm at a time, lower the handle so it's parallel to the floor, then come back to the starting position. Alternate arms.



3.

Jump Squat with Triceps Press

Stand with feet hip-width apart and grip the handles. Bend into a squat and pull both straps towards you, bending through the elbows and keeping them close to your body (A). Jump straight up while extending the arms downwards (B), coming back to the starting position as you softly land. Alternate with wide- and narrow-base jumps.



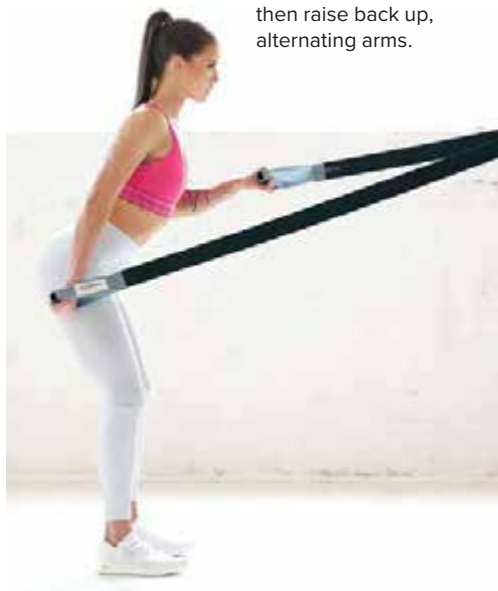
CIRCUIT 2

1.

Unilateral Triceps Extension

Stand with feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent, and hinge forward so your upper body is at a 45-degree angle. Holding the straps, keep the elbows close to your body as you extend one arm towards the ground, then raise back up, alternating arms.

Trainer Tip:
Keep the arms level with the body as you alternate forward and back.



2.

Swimmers

With feet hip-width apart, hold straps with an overhand grip and hinge forward at the hips. With arms straight, raise one arm forward and up while the other arm moves back and down to just behind your hip. Keep tension in the straps and alternate the arms forward and back.



3.

Crossbow

Place feet hip-width apart and grab the handles, extending arms out to either side of your body (A). Maintaining tension, bring your hands together so they cross in front of you (B). With control, return back to the starting position.

Trainer Tip:
This exercise alternates between targeting the rear deltoid of one side, and the pectoral muscle of the other.



A



B



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promo code **STRONG20** at
LEBERTFITNESS.COM.

CIRCUIT 3

1.

Unilateral Chest Press

Face away from the HIIT System and grab both handles. Keep a slight bend in the knees and engage the core as you slowly punch each arm in front of you, alternating each time.

2.

Lunge with Overhead Stretch

Grasp the handles and stand about three feet away from the HIIT System, straightening the arms in front of you (A). Lift the arms overhead as you take a step in front of you to lower into a lunge (B). Press off the front foot to come back to the starting position. Alternate legs.



A



B

Trainer Tip:
This combo
move opens
the shoulders
and chest while
activating the
muscles in the
legs and core.

3.

Front Lunge to Knee-Up with Row

Begin in a lunge position with the left foot forward, holding the handles in both hands, extending the right arm forward as the left arm stays in line with the body (A). Shift your weight to drive the back knee upwards while the same arm pulls back, leading with the elbow (B). Complete all reps on this side, then change sides.



A



B

STEPPING OUT

How R&B singer
Jully Black
conquered adversity
and uncovered the
perfect combination
of athleticism
and artistry.

WRITTEN BY MIKAILA KUKURUDZA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

A full-page photograph of R&B singer Jully Black. She is sitting on a black wooden chair, leaning back with her head tilted upwards and to the right. She is wearing a light blue button-down shirt that is open, revealing a white lace-trimmed bralette. She is also wearing black high-waisted trousers and black Nike sneakers with gold accents. Her hair is styled in long, thin braids. The background is a plain, light gray.

STRONGER

To say that **Jully Black** has lived many lives at age 43 wouldn't be a stretch. The Juno-award-winning recording artist, actress, former eTalk correspondent, and Tedx Talk speaker has just added one more title to her resume: **Founder of fitness and lifestyle community, 100 Strong and Sexy.**

The Toronto, Canada native didn't discover her core passion until she opened her mouth at church and began singing. "What came out of my mouth, I remember the feeling. Even though I was little, it was very spiritual," **Jully** says. "When I looked out I could see people with eyes closed, hands up. I knew I was doing something well."

Fast forward to age 14, when **Jully** won a local talent show—and the eyes of some industry professionals who invited her to record her first songs in New York City. By 21, **Jully** signed with Warner/Chappell Music Canada and began writing songs for industry heavyweights such as **Destiny's Child** and **Missy Elliot**. She's also shared the stage with **The Black Eyed Peas**, **Alicia Keys**, **Brittany's** driven to give back to the small-town community that raised her. **Dion**, and **Elton John**, just to name a few.

For **Jully**, athleticism and singing go hand-in-hand, and she's constantly building endurance for the stage. "If it's a 100-foot stage, I want to make sure I can run that stage in five-inch heels and not be out of breath," says **Jully**. "So, I started running on the treadmill and singing."

But when **Jully's** mother was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and she became her primary caregiver for the last year of her life, **Jully's** own health took a backseat. She stopped exercising and resorted to alcohol and comfort food to help ease her grief. It wasn't until **Jully** heard an audible voice of her mother saying, "Don't let life pin you down before you decide you get up," that she began to step towards healing.

In many ways, the end of **Jully's** mom's life became the beginning of hers—one that had mindful priorities and intentions. As with everything she does, **Jully** goes all in. If she was going to get her health back on track, she was going to turn it into another project and open it up to other women looking for the same accountability.

Jully's program, **100 Strong and Sexy**, is built on the belief that it may take 28 days to form a habit, but it takes 100 to make it a lifestyle you'll never turn back on. **Jully** and her community of women take a holistic, 360-degree approach to wellness. "I wanted to be mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually fit, which means all those pillars need to be exercised no different than doing biceps curls or running on the treadmill," says **Jully**.

Now **Jully's** program has a global reach that supports everything from intellectual development with a book club, to a grief and loss support group. On deciding what to include in her holistic expansion, **Jully** says, "Anything that was missing from my own life. It's been a blessing, and I credit my mom. Had my mom not left this earth, **100 Strong and Sexy** would not have existed."

When the pandemic hit in 2020 and stages closed for all her upcoming gigs, **Jully** wasn't about to sit around waiting for life to resume. Instead, she became a certified step instructor, bringing in her R&B roots to exciting routines that feel as good for the mind as they are for the body. Her latest venture includes coaching modern step classes

"When you've cared for somebody, especially to their last breath, you have a whole other outlook on life and on breath. Sometimes we don't recognize the value of breath. Until you see someone take their last one, I think a lot of us take it for granted."

through her new program, **The Power of Step** (turn to page 58 for a taste!).

Music hasn't gone anywhere for **Jully** (her sixth album, *Three Rocks and a Slingshot*, is slated for release in 2022); instead, she's married the life of an artist and an athlete into one seamless career. "At one point in time, I remember thinking, 'People are going to think I've given up on music if I do fitness or go into acting or speaking,'" she says. "I had to get rid of the what-are-people-going-to-think voice and follow what my mom taught me: Follow my intuition and make use of all my talents."



TURN THE PAGE FOR JULLY'S SIGNATURE STEP WORKOUT!

THE WORKOUT

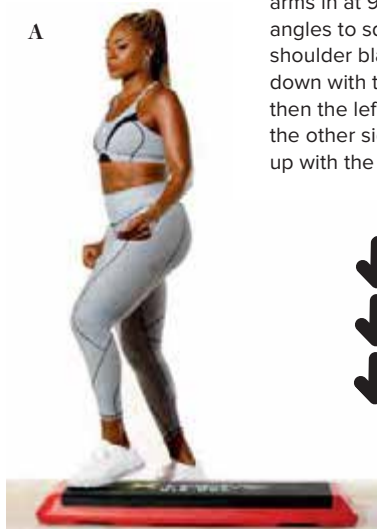
Lace up your sneaks for this remixed retro-style workout! Step workouts are done to upbeat music where each count represents a movement. If you've never tried step before, just get comfortable with the patterns first before pairing it with music. When you're ready, try repeating one move for a full eight counts, then try the next move for eight counts, and so on.

GET GROOVIN'! Check out Jully's exclusive step playlist for STRONG readers by searching "Jully Black for STRONG Fitness Magazine" on Spotify.

Leg Curl

Step with your left foot onto the step **(A)** and bend your right knee to curl the leg, while at the same time pulling the arms in at 90-degree angles to squeeze your shoulder blades **(B)**. Step down with the right foot, then the left. Repeat on the other side, stepping up with the right foot.

A



B



Jumpshot

Step with your left foot onto the right side of the step, and use your right hand to "throw" overhead (like a basketball). Step down with your right, then left. Repeat to the other side, stepping up with your right foot.

TRAINER TIP:

Mastered this one? Turn your step up into a hop like you're shooting hoops.



Side Step

Step up with your left foot and extend the right leg out to the side, while raising both arms into a T-shape. Step down with the right foot, then left. Repeat on the other side, stepping up with the right foot.



Corner Knee

Step up with your left foot to the right side of your step. Raise your right knee in front of you, higher than your waist, as you cross the left hand over your body towards the lifted knee **(A)**. Step down with the right, then left **(B)**. Repeat on the other side.

TRAINER TIP:

Need a booty burner? Stay stationary on one side and repeat the knee-up movement for 100 counts, lightly touching the toes to the ground before driving the knee back up. Then switch sides.



Burpee

Stand in front of the step **(A)**. Hop onto the step, landing softly **(B)**. Then, like a burpee, jump backwards off the step, landing with hands on the step so you're in plank position **(C)**. Step your feet back to the start position to stand.

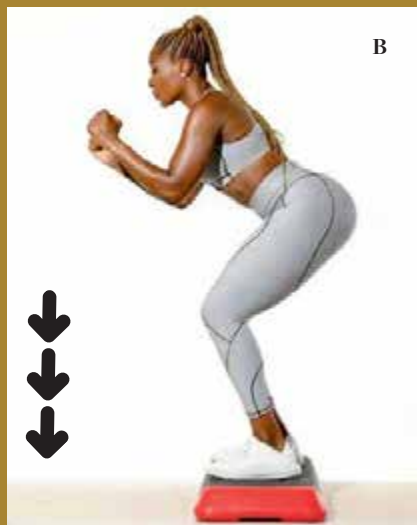
TRAINER TIP:

Make this move low impact by stepping into each position instead of jumping.



Up and Over

Stand in front of the step **(A)**. Hop onto the step with both feet and land in a squat **(B)**. Hop forward off the step, landing in a squat again **(C)**, then either turn around and hop back, or spice things up and dance your way back to your start position.



**WE DON'T WANT YOUR HARD
WORK TO GO TO WASTE.
YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR
BODY IN PEAK PERFORMANCE
MODE WHEN YOU TRAIN.
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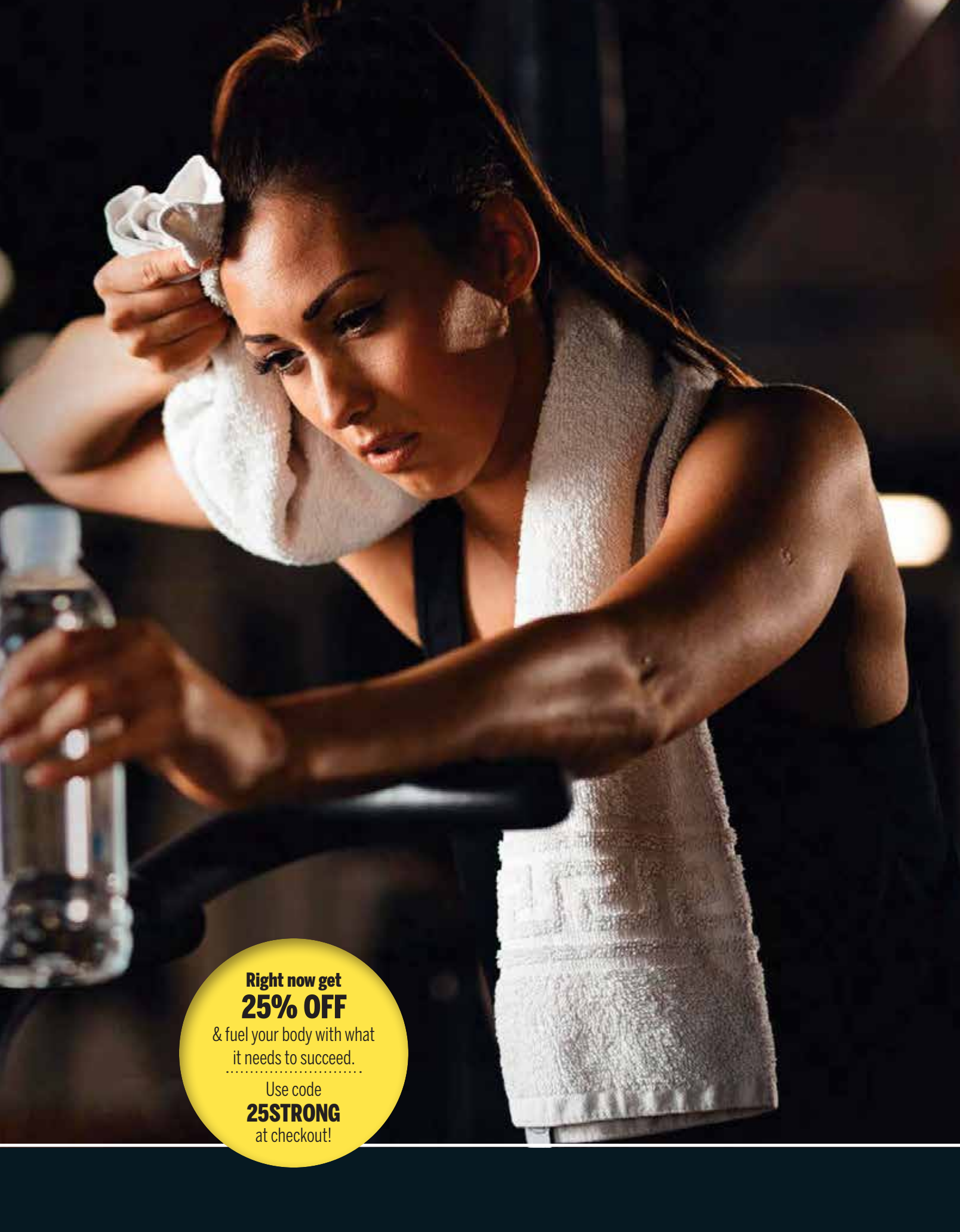


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**Do we have a
jealousy problem?
Here's why
deconstructing
female rivalry
is the key to a
cultural shift.**

WRITTEN BY MIKAILA KUKURUDZA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

Competitive Chaos





It's seemingly become the norm to see other women pitted against each other.

In the tabloids, we read about how Kate is threatened by Meghan. We've watched the plot of *Mean Girls* play out in real life over and over again. In conversations with friends, we're told that the weird vibes we're getting from another woman is because "she's just jealous of you." On social media, we intentionally skip liking the photos of women whose lives seem too perfect. And as young girls? We became accustomed to being called catty while the boys were encouraged to engage in "healthy competition."

The negative connotations associated with female competition are loud and clear in our society and are deeply entwined in our professional and personal lives. But why? Is female jealousy really a personality trait we just can't shake? We took a deep dive into where this rivalry originated, why it's so prevalent today, and how we can stop seeing one another as a threat, and instead, work together to empower ourselves and each other.

The Nature of Female Rivalry

Competition among women is likely rooted in evolution, when appearing more valuable to a mate was of the highest priority. Researchers believe that using indirect aggression in the form of rumors and isolation could therefore be a way to degrade the value of other women who are viewed as competition.

Take this 2011 study, for example, where aggression and gossip were tactics used to undermine another woman. Without context, a group of women were placed in a room and exposed to an attractive woman who was provocatively dressed. The majority of female participants commented on her promiscuity and disparaged her appearance. The second group of female participants were exposed to the same woman, but this time she was dressed conservatively—when she left the room, there was no discussion by the participants.

"Social comparisons often lead to jealousy when the comparison doesn't favor us," explains study author Tracy Vaillancourt, Ph.D. "Unfortunately,

women tend to manage this negative feeling by tearing down their perceived rival," she says. "One way we can guard against this instinct is to stop making social comparisons."

Reinforced Narrative

But can we really squash this habit of comparing and tearing down if it's so deeply woven into our fabric? Molly Galbraith, co-founder of Girls Gone Strong and author of *Strong Women Lift Each Other Up*, thinks that it's not only possible, but that it's also our responsibility to change the societal narrative.

"That's not innately who women and girls are. I don't believe that we are innately more catty or competitive or backstabbing than other genders," she says. "That's just what we're told is true, and then we're made to play this game where the rules and odds are stacked against us."

Evidence shows us this is valid—the odds truly are stacked against women. A recent report which measured gender discrimination based on eight key indicators in 187 countries found only six countries give women

equal legal work rights as men—neither Canada nor the United States made the cut. When we see that there are less opportunities for us, this can leave us with a scarcity mindset; a way of thinking that tells us, “If she gets something, there will be less for me.” In thinking this way, our instincts to tear down other women who might hinder our chances of getting those opportunities becomes reinforced.

You’ve likely seen this mindset come into play in conversations surrounding professional or financial successes of other women—an area in which women experience daily inequality. If you’ve ever caught yourself undermining a woman’s success by using phrases such as, “But she didn’t pay for it herself, her partner is well off,” or, “She only got the promotion because she sucks up to her boss,” then you aren’t alone.

With just 59 percent of women in the U.S. reporting feeling “very comfortable” with a woman as the head of government, it appears there’s a lot of work on all fronts. That being said, though women could be considered contributors to these societal and cultural hurdles, Galbraith is careful not to place the blame. “I think it’s natural human behavior that occurs from being in this system that’s not providing the support and opportunity that we need,” she says.

Shifting the Story

Considering these isolation tactics, it’s important to note just how much women need one another. New research in the *Harvard Business Review* finds that women with strong, close connections with other women are more likely to land executive positions with greater authority and higher pay. But the benefits of empowering other women

JEALOUS THOUGHTS, BE GONE!

When jealousy creeps up, shut it down with this proven thought process, courtesy of Galbraith’s book, ***Strong Women Lift Each Other Up***.

STEP 1

Notice and name how you’re feeling. This raises your emotional awareness, reduces the intensity of the emotion, creates a little space between you and the emotions, and allows you to choose how to respond, instead of react.

STEP 2

Get curious about why you’re feeling that way. Does this person have something that you want? If not, then it’s something you can work on letting go. If the answer is yes, then the next question to ask yourself is: Does what they have align with my values? For example, if they got a new job or a cool promotion and it’s something you want, does doing what it would take to get that job or promotion align with your beliefs and systems? If not, then you can begin to understand you don’t really want it. If the answer is yes, then you can use those feelings as a compass to help guide you toward where you want to go.



“Judging other people allowed me to take the focus off myself.”





"I was unhappy with who I was, so turning that around to other people made me feel better about myself," says Galbraith.

go well beyond financial. For starters, by digging into your own jealousy you might uncover unfulfilled desires in your own life (more on that in sidebar, "Jealous Thoughts, Be Gone!"), and change the tired narrative that society has assigned to women in the process.

For Galbraith, the first step to altering her mindset came after a negative comment. "A woman in my community told other women not to come to my gym because they might end up looking like me," she says. Devastated and exhausted, Galbraith recalls, "Finally, I just hit a breaking point. I'm not going to let how my body looks determine my worth, my value as a trainer—any of those things," she decided. By releasing the competition, gossip, and scarcity mindset, Galbraith began to see an abundance of opportunity in all areas of her life.

By utilizing her understanding of behavior change psychology from years of coaching and leaning on lessons learned through therapy, Galbraith began putting into practice exercises for shifting a scarcity mindset, dealing with jealousy, and using the power of her voice to amplify other women. She says that letting go of unhealthy competition is a

lifelong pursuit, but it can alter the society that future generations of women are raised in—it has the potential to become one that celebrates women for wanting more for themselves. "I was able to start putting into practice being a woman who lifts other women up, and I saw all the amazing ripple effects that happen once you start doing that," she says.

While gender equality is making strides and we're now recognizing the importance of dismantling unhealthy female competition, there's still work to be done. "We can't take for granted where we are now, but we have to look back and know all of these women laid the foundation for us and essentially passed the baton," says Galbraith, who believes competition amongst women is as much of a societal issue as it is a personal problem. "Now it's our job to grab that baton and run forward, lifting each other up until we get to a place of gender equality and equitable representation."

The next time you overhear gossip about another woman at work or read a headline that pins two female celebs against each other, stop and ask yourself: Do I buy into this narrative? Do I want to be a woman that empowers other women to succeed? "If we believe there's another way and we are willing to work together to do it, I believe that we can build a table big enough for all of us to have the seat that we want," says Galbraith. **S**



"Cutting them down made me feel like I was rising higher, when ultimately, it was bringing all of us down."



Good VIBES — ONLY —

Stuck in toxic patterns or experiencing chronic pain?
Subtle energy could be behind what ails you.

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA CLARKE

Y’know when you have a conversation with someone and the vibe is just off? You might feel uncomfortable, awkward, or like you’re itching to turn and run the other way. Or, have you ever had the common experience of finishing up your yoga class in Savasana and suddenly you’re in tears for seemingly no reason? These are all examples of something tugging at you that’s deeper than the physical body, and they could be signs that you’re tapping into your subtle energy.

Energy begins with the concept that humans are made up of more than just physical matter—it’s the belief that there’s energetic or vibrational pathways in all of us. “Energy can be physical, meaning it can be measured, or subtle, which means it can’t,” begins Dana Childs, intuitive energy healer, author, and educator. “Think about food for example. Food is energy. And when you eat that food, you receive the physical energy of it in terms of the flesh and calories. But you also receive the subtle energy of it based on the background of the food and your

personal relationship with that food. If you’re choosing which of two identical apple pies to eat, would you go with the store-bought apple pie or the one that your grandmother made fresh just for you? You’ll most likely choose the one your grandmother made because the subtle energy, what can’t be seen, is the love she poured into it that will more deeply nourish your body.”

When the energetic pathways within the body become blocked, energy healing practitioners believe that because the physical and energetic bodies are intertwined, this disruption can contribute to mental, emotional, and physical ailments. “Energy blocks show up as physical, emotional, spiritual, or mental. If a person has a disease or physical ailment of any sort, this is an indicator of blocked energy,” explains Childs. “Any time one feels stuck or stagnant or has trouble releasing thoughts or emotions tied to an event, person, or location, this can indicate blocked energy. Emotions commonly cause blocks because, as children, we don’t always learn how to healthily process our

60+

US hospitals use Reiki in patient practices.

SOURCE: UCLA

feelings. Instead, we may disassociate or ignore feelings, or even shove them down if they're too intense or if we're in an environment in which it's unsafe to process or express the feeling. In adulthood, our blocks are often tied right back to our childhoods."

Energy healing therapies can address and manipulate the body's subtle energy. Many proponents of energy healing seek out these therapies as a complement to traditional medicine, or to address issues such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, or chronic pain. Overall, the goal of energy

meditation, and movement patterns; and Shiatsu, a form of massage that targets and manipulates energetic pathways.

While scientific evidence is limited on the effectiveness of energy healing, there are studies that confirm that cultivating these relationships and being more mindful leads to reduced depression and better overall quality of life. The Canadian Cancer Society even recommends pairing energy healing practices with cancer treatment to ease symptoms of pain, nausea, and vomiting, with patients reporting feeling relaxed and calm after sessions. Very few negative side effects are reported in energy healing sessions, but emotional and physical manifestations can be common, such as feeling tired, angry, or sad—all

"When you do have a session, be sure to maintain your own power," advises Childs. "Don't take everything the energy healer says as truth. Sit with the information and filter through it to ensure it all feels as if it resonates for you."

healing is to bring energy to the patient, or to harmonize energy within the patient. "When our energy is harmonized, our daily ins and outs tend to flow smoothly. It doesn't mean we don't have feelings, but we're more able to flow gracefully and easily in and out of the feelings that arise. There is a sense of lightness, of understanding, and of peace. While the physical body may not always completely meet our expectations for what complete 'healing' looks like, we feel more in acceptance of the state our body is in," says Childs.

There are various energy healing modalities, but some common ones include Reiki, in which the practitioner will place their hands over specific places on the patient's body to transfer their energy; Qigong, a system of coordinated breathing,

acknowledgements that trauma is being released, according to healers.

In seeking out an energy healing practitioner, Childs has some suggestions. "The first thing is to get a good recommendation. If you don't have anyone to ask for a recommendation, go to a trusted source or website that vets their practitioners." Simultaneously, trust your instincts: "Do some Googling and allow yourself to feel whatever you experience when you land on their website and see their photo. It should feel expansive and welcoming, exciting, and safe. You may almost feel a pull or a sense that you 'need' to reach out to this person. If your stomach tightens, or you feel a sense of dread, it's not the person for you," says Childs.

Take Block Stock

Not sure if you're experiencing an energy blockage? Childs gives some helpful hints.



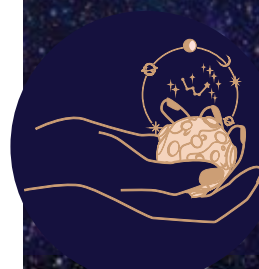
Continually experiencing patterns (failed relationships, dietary sabotage, poor interpersonal relationships, etc.)

Inability to feel feelings (not just intellectualizing them)



All physical body issues and ailments

Blowing off intense emotional experiences



Feeling as though you're living a flatlined life

JUMP TO IT!

Adding plyometrics training to your regimen can build the strength and athletic power you're after—but it's not easy. Be warned, this explosive, intense style will leave you breathless.

WRITTEN BY LEE BOYCE, CPT PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

When it comes to training, we're actually quite limited despite the multitude of exercise options that are available to us. Weight training is dominated by sagittal plane exercises, meaning, moving weights or your body up and down, or forward and back. If we want to spice things up, we may move in the lateral plane and travel from side to side, or hit up the transverse plane to tackle rotational work. But those two methods appear far less in typical programming.

With that in mind, what we do have control over is manipulating how we're performing reps to diversify our portfolio. This is where plyometric training can be your new best friend. Simply put, plyometrics typically involve bodyweight or very light loading for resistance, and are performed by powerfully exploding in various movements and directions. The equipment will leave the body, or, in bodyweight plyometric exercises, the body will leave the ground.

Plyometric training increases the speed that the muscles contract, therefore targeting fast-twitch muscle fibers. Twitch muscles are skeletal muscles that help support your movement, and if you're looking to trigger strength, power, or muscular development, your mission becomes to exploit fast twitch muscle fibers. These fibers have a short endurance life and fatigue quickly—but they're also the biggest, strongest fibers in the muscles. Improving your fast twitch muscle speed translates to improved athletic power in short, intense routines such as sprinting, powerlifting, and HIIT workouts. Fast twitch fibers are the gold standard to train if your goals include a more athletic body composition.



BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Plyometrics require extremely rapid contractions in any given muscle group in order to perform the reps correctly, and knowing this comes with a disclaimer: To have a rite of passage to train plyometrics, you have to be an intermediate lifter. That means you've spent a few solid years under the iron, and have a good background of the fundamentals of basic training principles and movement patterns. If you struggle to nail the form for primal movement patterns like squats, deadlifts, and presses in their basic form, plyometric training is a little too advanced for you, for now.

Plyometrics also ask for a clean bill of health. If you're dealing with an injury or chronic pain to any load-bearing joint, it's best to leave the plyos on the backburner until you've fully recovered.

Remember—plyometric training is explosive. That means the one factor that you're immediately depriving your body of in each repetition is time. You're now asking for a technically sound exercise pattern to be performed in a quarter of the amount of time you'd normally take to do it. These movements also require rapid eccentric contraction of muscles to absorb impact, change direction, and stop the body from moving. Suffice to say, you've gotta be on point, fresh, and focused.

The Rules

If you're cleared to train this way, here are a few guidelines to get the most from your routine.

Keep Reps Low

We know that plyos work the fast twitch muscle fibers, but there's more to learn about those fibers. As mentioned above, the fast twitch fibers fatigue quite quickly; usually inside 15 seconds of effort. That's because they're driven by the anaerobic energy system, which means they do their job without any oxygen to fuel them. Sets of plyometrics can either be limited to a 10-second window, or to reps in the single digits. Both of these guidelines usually ensure success in staying anaerobic to train those explosive properties.

Go Hard, or Go Home

Effort needs to be focused and intense to properly perform plyometrics. There's no such thing as exploding "gently" or "slowly." It's an all-or-nothing type of deal. Properly train your muscles to get the most out of your plyometric exercises by keeping your reps at full, fast effort. Once you can't do that anymore, your set is over.



Don't Go Too Heavy

If you can't move the weight fast, it's not plyo. Plyos involve leaving your feet, or having the equipment leave the body. That'll be mighty hard to do with your 3-rep-max back squat. Truly developing power means finding the intersection between strength and speed. You can't go wrong with bodyweight, but when it comes to loaded movements, choose a weight you can comfortably accelerate.

Be Fresh

Plyos aren't for tired bodies, or for the end of a workout. If you want to keep risk low and safety high, and amplify the effects it can have on body composition and performance, you want to perform plyometric exercises at the start of your workout, or as their own workout.

Always Warm Up

This rule should go without saying. A thorough warm-up involving dynamic mobility drills and stretches to every major muscle in the body is in order. Since you're going to be training so aggressively, your tissue quality will matter. Pay special attention to your quads and hips, hamstrings, chest, and shoulder complex.

THE MOVES

This is your crash course in getting to know fundamental plyo movements. Taking standard compound movements in the gym and bodyweight patterns on the field, then simply adding an explosive edge to them is the best way to optimize your results.

LOADED JUMP SQUAT

These can be performed with a light barbell loaded on the back, or with two dumbbells loaded in the hands by your sides. The goal is to assume proper squat mechanics, and then accelerate on the lifting phase, explosively enough to jump off the ground and catch some serious air. Make sure the landing is soft, and in the same foot positioning as the squat.



Choose weights that are lighter than usual.

PLYOMETRIC PUSH-UP

If you're advanced enough to do these from the ground, plant the hands in your natural push-up position, and lower yourself to the ground. Explode hard enough to "push the ground away," getting some air space between the hands and the ground. No need to clap your hands. Land gently, and immediately go into your next plyo push-up. If you're not ready to do these from the ground, place your hands on a raised surface like a bench or stable platform. The goal is to be explosive, not slow!

BOX JUMP

The rules of the box jump often get thrown out the window, so here's a rundown: First, make sure the distance between the body and box is about one outstretched arm's length. Next, assume a proper half-squat position to load for your take-off, and jump with both legs, the arms swinging upward to assist in the take-off. Land on the box softly. Stick the landing in a partial squat position, pause, and then step down off the box—don't jump down.

MED BALL CHEST THROW

Stand ten feet away from a wall with a light medicine ball—10 lbs should be plenty. Using a stable, bilateral stance (knees can be slightly bent), hold the ball at chest level with the elbows flared outward. Using all your force, throw the ball into the wall with both hands. Let the ball bounce back to you, and repeat.



SAMPLE PLYO WORKOUT

Complete a full warm-up, then try this workout on for size.

REMEMBER: The name of the game is low reps that are focused and intense.

Plyo Push-Up

5 x 10 seconds.
Rest 90 seconds between rounds.

Loaded Jump Squat

4 x 6. Rest 2 minutes between rounds.

Seated Row

3 x 15. This is a bonus exercise that'll help reset the shoulders by stabilizing the scapulae, and offset the push-oriented training that dominates this workout.

Med Ball Chest Throw

4 x 8. Rest 90 seconds between rounds.

Box Jump

5 x 5. Rest 2 minutes between rounds.



Oh, The Places She'll Go

Two-time Paralympian Brittany Hudak is on a mission to show others what's possible when you choose to focus on what you do have, instead of what you don't.

WRITTEN BY MIKAILA KUKURUDZA

Living in a small town can amplify any differences that one might have, but being the only amputee in school meant that Brittany knew right away that she stood out from her peers. "It didn't take me long to recognize that I was different from others," says the two-time Paralympian. "The thing with a physical disability is that it's quite obvious something is missing or looks different."

Brittany was born missing the lower part of her left

arm, and as she entered her school-aged years, self-consciousness took hold. "I wanted to be like my peers and do everything just like them," she says, which led her to often avoid asking for help in tasks or activities that may have required assistance. But the resilience and self-assurance she developed this way were integral. "I was more than capable of doing the same activities," says Brittany. "But I needed to adapt and get creative in order to do so."

LEAD PHOTO: HEIDI LEHIKONEN

By age 11, Brittany had developed a new perspective. How she was born was out of her control, but what she did next was entirely up to her. “I realized that there was nothing I could do to change my circumstances,” she says. “The best thing I could do for myself was to embrace the fact that I wasn’t like the others.” At 19 years old while she was attending post-secondary, during a shift at her part-time job in between classes, Brittany was approached by six-time Paralympian skier, Colette Bourgonje, who asked her if she had ever considered skiing. “I went home and later had this

When she’s strength training, she uses a prosthetic that allows her to lift weights or to have more stability and control. As she’s skiing, she stays cognizant of her dominant side since her body had learned to adapt for balance. “I noticed that it was easier to glide longer on my left leg than it was on my right,” she says. “Learning to balance and be efficient on skis has been a constant progression.”

By 2018, Brittany added a bronze medal at the Paralympic Winter Games in PyeongChang to her resume. “It was surreal to win a medal. There’s so much anticipation as we train for a competition



“People are born into varying circumstances regardless of their actions. But I choose to view others for their strengths.”

feeling that it might be fun to try skiing,” says Brittany. “I like the places that you can get to with skis on your feet.”

And it didn’t take long before Brittany was going places. Just two years after first buckling up her cross-country skis, Brittany earned first place at the Japan World Cup, second place at the Norway World Cup, and fifth place in biathlon at the World Championships. As she was accustomed to throughout school, Brittany put her determination and tenacity to good use as she navigated adaptations for training and competing.

that only happens once every four years. When that moment happened for me, I was initially in shock,” says Brittany. “I felt so honored to be competing for Canada, and going home with a medal made my heart so happy.”

For Brittany, competing holds a meaning that’s larger than herself. “Parasport, to me, is parallel to Olympic sport,” she says. “It gives people with differing abilities an opportunity to show what’s possible, regardless of any physical limitations they may have.” For Brittany, sharing this passion doesn’t

stop just because the skiing season has.

A hometown hero in her small, northern community in Saskatchewan, Canada, Brittany has made it her mission to give back to the province that raised her. Since receiving her Bachelor’s degree in social work, the 28-year-old has been addressing the substance abuse, poverty, and crime prevalent in her area. In just the first six months of 2021, reports suggest drug overdoses have increased by 41 percent as the province experiences a high risk of opioid fatalities.

“I hope young girls are able to persevere through challenges, and remember that we become stronger, more resilient people after experiencing adversity,” says Brittany, who is also a mentor for Classroom Champions, a SEL educational program that aims to empower children to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically through the mentorship and mindsets of world-class athletes. “People are born into varying circumstances regardless of their actions,” says Brittany. “But I choose to view others for their strengths.”

Now, as she prepares for the 2022 Winter Beijing Paralympic Games, that message is something Brittany hopes everyone tuning in will do—view Paralympians for their strengths. “I love how adaptable humans are,” she says. “Parasports help shed light on this because we focus on maximizing what we do have.”



Brittany’s driven to give back to the small-town community that raised her.

Women to Watch

Find out how these fitness up-and-comers are making waves in the industry.

WRITTEN BY KATHRYN LEKAS

Ingrid Yang

Age: 41 **Hometown:** San Diego, CA

Gig: Physician, Yoga Therapist & Meditation Teacher

Follow her: @ingridyangyogamd

For physician and author Ingrid, achieving optimal health for herself and her patients is not simply a matter of practicing “this” or “that.” Instead, she firmly believes that a broad approach to fitness is key to living your best life. She says, “I like to mix things up in my fitness routine. I practice yoga almost daily, but I also cycle, run, surf, hike, and swim in the ocean regularly.” Ingrid says she’s motivated by helping others understand why it’s beneficial to incorporate a variety of modalities into their fitness plans. “It’s important to keep your body challenged, your mind engaged, and prevent injury.” Ingrid knows firsthand how critical a mindful movement practice can be, especially when you’re not feeling 100 percent. “I recently fractured my ankle and it took months of rehab to get back to even walking,” she says. Throughout her rehab, Ingrid continued with yoga because it helped her regain balance and stamina, and with her book, *Adaptive Yoga*, Ingrid is helping individuals with disabilities learn to improve their wellness, too. “I practice yoga therapy in the hospital setting with my patients. Even if you are in the hospital bed, you can still practice plenty of yoga,” she says.

Ingrid believes that exercise should also include mind/body aspects such as breathing techniques, posture control, and meditation.

Marisa Thompson

Age: 25 **Hometown:** Victoria, British Columbia

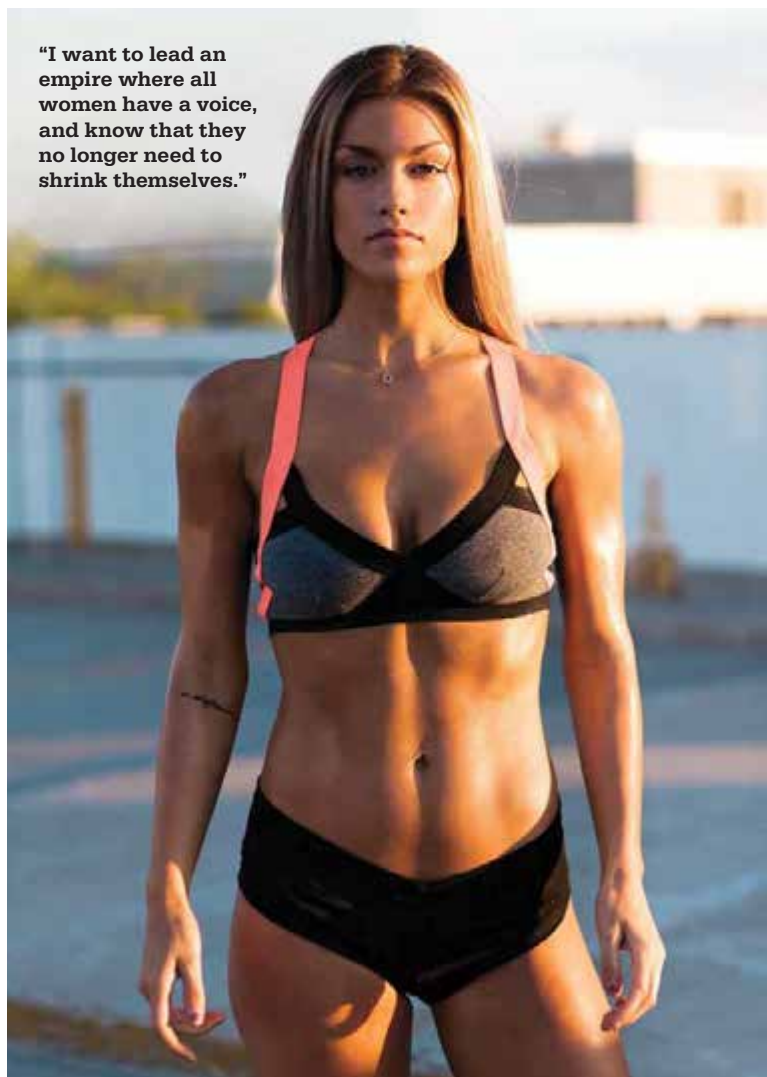
Gig: Online Nutrition, Health & Fitness Coach

Follow her: @marisahopeee

Ever since she joined her first local YMCA at the age of 15, Marisa says she looked up to strong women lifting weights. “I always wanted big muscles!” she declares. Becoming interested in Bikini competitions a few years later, Marisa dedicated herself to building her physique. Unfortunately, along the way, she picked up a very rigid approach to nutrition which led her down a path to body dysmorphia. “At one point, I was afraid to eat more than 1000 calories and was bingeing every weekend,” she says. The experience of that detrimental dieting cycle is what’s made Marisa

so passionate about helping other women now. As a coach, she’s still all-in when it comes to training and pushing herself physically, but she does so with a healthy mindset towards food. “I am on a mission to share my story and help other women understand they don’t need to starve and shrink themselves to look their best. We need to trust our hunger cues and nourish our bodies to be strong,” she says. “Something you can maintain long-term, with a healthful approach, will always be the most beneficial and enjoyable for how you look and feel,” she advises.

“I want to lead an empire where all women have a voice, and know that they no longer need to shrink themselves.”



MARISA: PHOTO NATALE PREFONTAINE SONIA: PHOTO DAVE LAUS



“I find flow by tuning in to what my mind and body really need.”

Sonia Jhas

Age: 37 **Hometown:** Toronto, Ontario

Gig: Mindset and Wellness Expert

Follow her: @soniajhas

Gradual progress and patience over perfection. That’s the motto health and wellness expert Sonia lives by. As an official ambassador for the Canadian Mental Health Association, Sonia constantly strives for flow—and teaches others how to achieve it, too. After spending a lifetime on what she calls a “hamster wheel” of weight loss, this mom of two flipped her lifestyle around to tune in to what her body really needed: On-going self-care. Sonia says when she finally abandoned the idea of dieting and focused on eating better (not less) and conquering small wins at the gym related to her strength (not her size), that’s when the magic happened. “I began to recognize the woman looking back at me in the mirror. Each day, she felt more and more like the real Sonia. The feeling was palpable and empowering.” Now, through her coaching program, social media following, and TV appearances, Sonia is helping other women find their own version of fit, which she believes has become more important than ever since the pandemic. “I turned to exercise as a way to stay aligned during a time of chaos and as a source of strength through sheer volatility,” she says.



Who She Is

AGE: 36

HOMETOWN:

Chandler, AZ

FOLLOW HER:

@chasing_nydia



Relearning

At the start of her sobriety journey, Nydia had to relearn what it meant to live again. She had been so used to turning to drugs and alcohol, she needed to start from scratch. “That’s when I started to run,” she says. “I could forget about all the wrongs I had to right. I felt free.”

A New Addiction

Eventually, her running habit nudged her to join a gym and expand her fitness horizons. “I became addicted again, but to something good. I built a passion for becoming the strongest, healthiest version of myself. Day by day, I started to feel better. I wasn’t going to take this gift for granted.”

“Fitness gave me the confidence I desperately needed. There’s nothing more rewarding than looking in the mirror and seeing all the muscles you’ve built lifting a weight you never thought possible.”

Build a Toolbox

When stressful times recently found Nydia, she felt herself becoming tempted to slip into old patterns. “I very quickly noticed some bad signs for a recovered addict or alcoholic,” she says. Instead, she relied on the tools she had built along the way. “I threw myself into the very thing that got me sober in the first place: Fitness. Because I was honest with myself, and self-aware of bad choices, the risk of a relapse was far less than it would have been without these things.”

What She’s Working on Now

“I’m in the process of getting my personal training certification through NASM, followed by a certification in nutrition. I can’t wait to help as many people as I can to achieve their goals.”

Nydia Salazar

Caught in a cycle of drug and alcohol addiction since high school, Nydia hit her lowest point in 2016, when she looked in the mirror and realized just how dark her life had become. “I was miserable and always felt sick,” she remembers. “I couldn’t remember what having a purpose felt like.” That day, she vowed to become someone that her family could be proud of. The process wasn’t easy, and she’ll tell you that staying on her new path is a never-ending learning experience, but discovering how therapeutic running could be wasn’t just a step in the right direction—it was also her saving grace.

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES PATRICK



“Fitness didn’t just improve my life—it saved it.”

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Host Gym:
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Guest Instructors & Presenters:
Maria Gonzalez, Kelly Calderbank, Susan Tripp, David Tripp, Lynn Otero, Esmin Feliciano, Wendy Siermienski, Mariah Coleman, Jennifer Nolte

Photographer:
Paul Buceta



STRONGCAMP celebrates women from all fitness levels with a weekend full of innovative workouts and empowering seminars. Join like-minded women as you discover how strong you really are. Visit strong-camp.com to find an event near you.



Sweating
is better
with friends.



“

When I held hands with friends next to me who two days prior were total strangers, I knew that every struggle will forever be different moving forward. Because now, I have an army of friends by my side.”

-CASSIE WINFREY,
FEATURED STRONGCAMPER



Keeping the beat in group class.



Alpha Progression

Can this strength training app meet our demands? We find out.



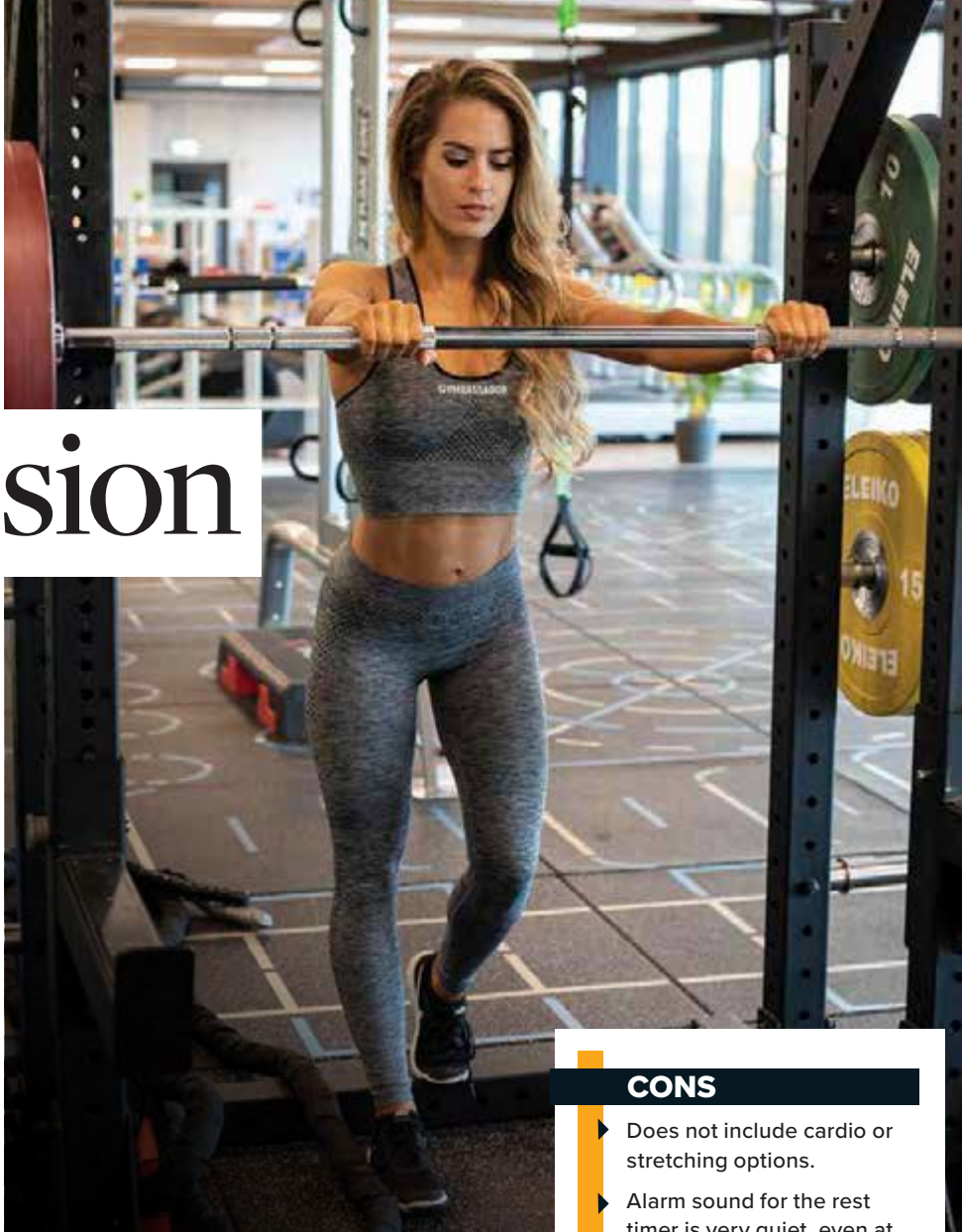
WHO TRIED IT?
Marilynn Roth, CPT

What It Is:

A strength training app that creates custom programs, provides training recommendations, and tracks workouts and achievements.

Price: \$\$

Free two-week trial, then \$9.99/month or \$59.99 annually.



PROS

- ▶ Extensive exercise database with videos, descriptions, and anatomical information.
- ▶ Create custom or generated programs based on needs, specifications, and available equipment.
- ▶ The “Help” function links to a Facebook group where you can post questions and feedback, or ask for advice on exercises.

CONS

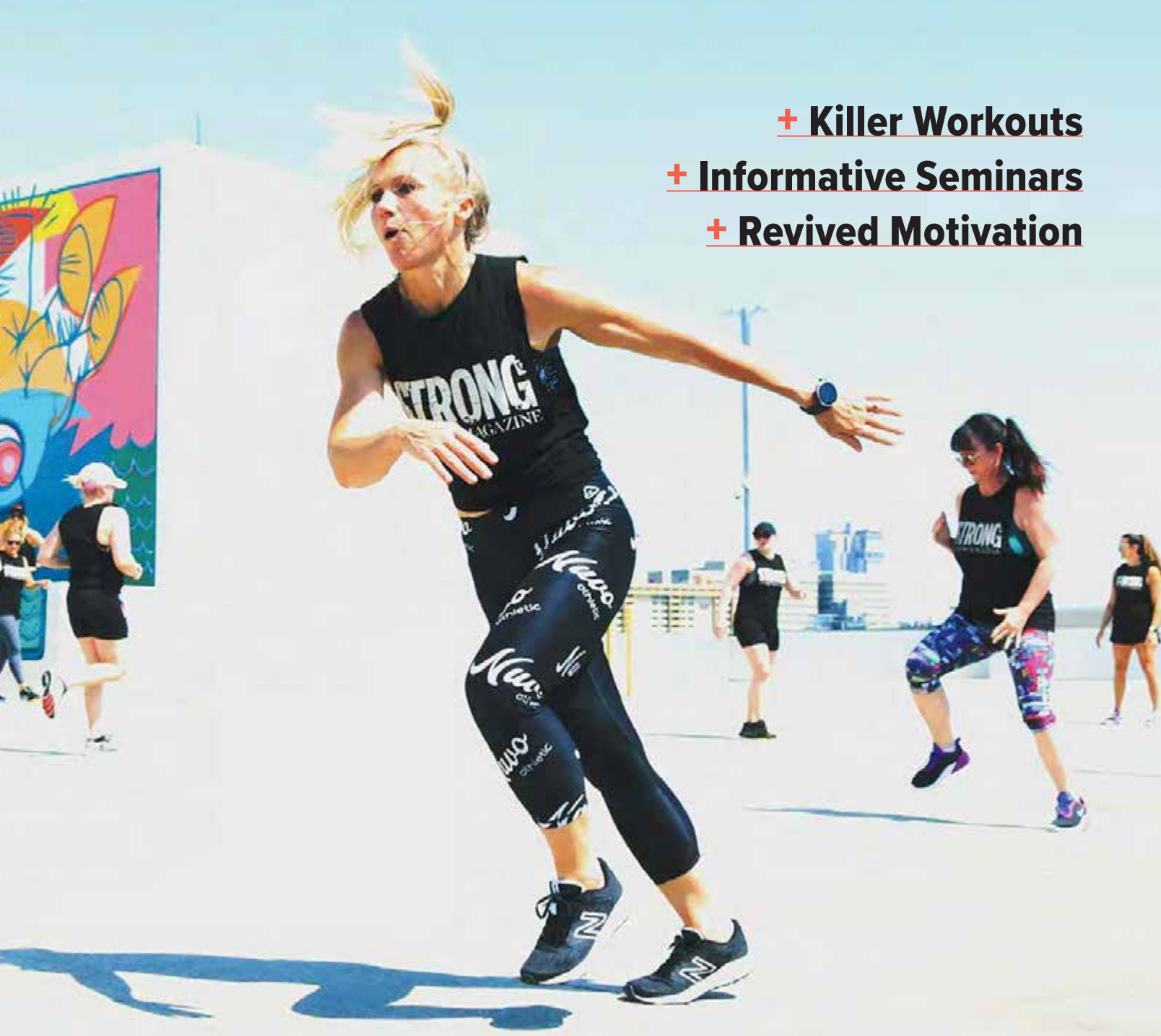
- ▶ Does not include cardio or stretching options.
- ▶ Alarm sound for the rest timer is very quiet, even at full volume, which makes it easy to miss, especially in noisier environments.
- ▶ Currently unable to connect to an Apple watch or Google Fit.

“I was extremely impressed with the intuitiveness and functionality of the Alpha Progression app.”



Final Thoughts:

This app is a valuable tool for fitness beginners and enthusiasts, as well as fitness professionals. Its design and layout make it easy to use, and although it currently does not include the options for cardio or stretching, its extensive exercise database and many features create effective strength training programs for all fitness levels.



- + Killer Workouts**
- + Informative Seminars**
- + Revived Motivation**

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PUMP & POWER

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AGMATINE - BETA-ALANINE

ENERGY

CAFFEINE - SYNEPHRINE
HIGENAMINE

THERMIC

ALCAR - GBB

NOOTROPIC

DMAE - PEA - HUPERZINE

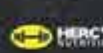
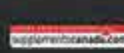
VITAMINS

B3 - B6 - B9 - B12

8.32[†] GRAMS CITRULLINE
MALATE 2:1

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*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. †Per 2 servings (1 full scoop). U.S. product shown.