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## TAKE CARE OF THAT BODY!

By John Peponias

The rigors of regular exercise and physical training can wreak havoc on the human body. Muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, bones, etc. become more susceptible to damage or injury the more we demand of them.

Let's face it, the body you have is the only one you get and unfortunately, it can't be traded in for a brand new model when you feel like you're done with it. Your body sustains some level of damage every time you train, whether you realize it or not. You are constantly tearing muscle fibers and in most instances putting strain on joints and connective tissue. That of course does not include actual injuries you sustain and do feel, or the nagging and chronic injuries that linger when injuries are not treated properly. So how can you manage some of the damage or mitigate some of the potential long-term effects of leaving injuries untreated?

Start by listening to your body!

We often train right through injuries and fatigue. It is sometimes better to miss a few training sessions or lighten up routines for a while to allow your injury sufficient time to recover. In addition, when treated early on in the game, injuries stand a greater chance of healing properly and you can minimize the chances of them lingering around and developing into nagging or chronic conditions.

After you sustain an injury or trauma the body's defense to avoid feeling the pain associated with the injury, is to compensate by engaging and more-heavily relying on other muscle groups surrounding the injury. You may start to "favor" walking or moving in such a way that is unnatural, so as to avoid engaging the affected area which then activates your body's pain receptors causing you pain and discomfort. As you become more accustomed to these new "body mechanics," which often times you are not really conscious or aware of, the injured area can weaken or heal improperly, and potentially cause further injury to other associated areas.

Simply said, you just can't afford to "gut it out" when you get hurt and continue to strain through an injury; unless of course, you are playing professional sports for millions of dollars or you're Tiger Woods. You must keep in mind that as we get older it becomes harder to "bounce back" from injuries and older injuries will only become more painful if left untreated. Even minor injuries require some immediate attention and if a chronic or serious injury occurs you should seek the advice of a qualified healthcare practitioner, orthopaedic physician or doctor. You may also want to try a holistic approach for some injuries such as acupuncture or therapeutic massage. You will have to be diligent in your search however, as good practitioners of these disciplines are as hard to find as good doctors these days. If you research enough you will probably even find diet and herbal regimens you can follow that can aid in the healing process.

You only have one body, take care of it!!





## WORKOUT CORNER\*

Story and Illustrations by Luis Bonnet



### The Squat Press

This is a compound exercise, combining two exercises into one. This exercise will work your shoulder muscles as well as engage your mid-section and work all the major muscle groups in your legs.

Start with your feet separated about shoulders width apart. Dumbbells are above your shoulders.

1. Now keeping the weights above your shoulders squat down. Make sure to breath in as you do this.
2. Now you want raise back up while pressing the dumbbells up over head at the very same time. Make sure to breath out as you perform this part of the movement.



\* For more exercises please visit our Archives.





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## FLEXIBILITY TRAINING

By Sean A. Archer



Sean A. Archer

### Part Three: Leg stretches (Continued from the previous issue)

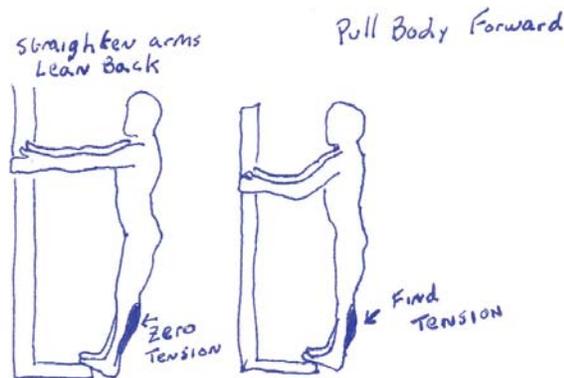
#### Quadricep.

- > Isolate the muscle — Knee, hip and shoulder of the stretching leg should be aligned.
- > Find zero tension — Hold on to your ankle not your foot. If your range of motion will not allow you to hold this position then take a towel place it around your ankle and hold on to it.
- > Find tension — Flex at knee by pulling back on your ankle. Slightly push hip forward and don't arch your lower back. Keep your alignment.
- > Listen to your body — Allow for loss of tension, then slowly release and repeat on opposite leg.



#### Calf.

- > Isolate the muscle — Entire ball of the foot in a raised edge and heels on the ground.
- > Find zero tension — Lean back.
- > Find tension — bend arms, pull forward slowly. There should be no tension behind the knee, if there is you have gone beyond your range of motion.
- > Listen to your body — Allow for loss of tension, then slowly release and repeat.





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## FLEXIBILITY TRAINING (cont'd)

By Sean A. Archer



Sean A. Archer

### Glut.

- > Isolate the muscle — Cross the stretching leg (right) over the supporting leg (left).
- > Find zero tension.
- > Find tension — Slide supporting foot (left) back toward the hip. You should feel tension in the right Glut area. If not, hold onto the supporting leg (left) and raise your leg.
- > Listen to your body — Allow for loss of tension, then slowly release and repeat on opposite leg.



NO TENSION



Find  
TENSION



Sean A. Archer is a Fitness Manager with Town Sports International; He is a Master Personal Trainer, PSC certified Massage Therapist, NASM and ISCA certified, a Corrective Exercise Specialist, Presenter Boxing/Certified Kickboxing and Certified 2nd degree Kung-Fu Wu-Su martial artist with over 15 years in the fitness industry.





## SPORTS DRINKS AND SUGAR

By Blake Baxter, HHC

Last month we talked about water and the importance of being properly hydrated. Sports drinks (like Gatorade, Powerade, Supermonsterdude-ade, etc...) are appropriate before, during and after workouts. Most other times, there are empty sugar calories you don't need.

It would seem a logical conclusion that if exercise is good for you, and sports drinks are designed to enhance exercise, then using sports drinks as a replacement for sugary sodas is a smart move. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Most sports drinks (aka "fuels") are loaded with simple sugars. Unless you are heading to a workout, actively working out, or recovering from a workout, that sugar is not what you need.

An exception might be when you are enjoying a nice, hot day, and feeling dehydrated, and not really eating that much. Then, you don't want to fill up on plain water without some type of electrolyte replacement.

Generally speaking, however, sports drinks should be considered in the same category as sodas: empty calories.

So, you're heading to a workout and preparing your fuels. Depending on the type of workout (aerobic vs anaerobic) you may be choosing a fuel that contains ingredients to enhance your pump, or protect muscle mass during calorie burns. All that is fine, but you want to watch out for two things: large amounts of sugar, and no sugar at all.

At first, that may seem like a contradictory statement. Let's look at the first: Lots of sugar. Sugar is not always readily identifiable. A good rule of thumb is that any ingredient that ends in "ose" is a sugar. Glucose, Fructose, Sucrose, Lactose. All sugar. One exception is "Sucralose" which is an artificial sweetener, the naming of which has been challenged in court, since it is not a sugar and ends in "ose". This is basically false advertising, but I digress. Again, if you're planning to burn calories and sweat, some sugar in a sports drink is appropriate, even necessary. Some manufacturers use Maltodextrin, which is a long-chain carbohydrate, instead of sugar. This is generally considered beneficial because it is absorbed by the body more slowly than a simple sugar, providing more sustained energy over a longer workout.





## SPORTS DRINKS AND SUGAR (cont'd)

By Blake Baxter, HHC

Second: No sugar at all. Anything that tastes sweet, or is flavored Vanilla Shake, Strawberry Shortcake, or Chocolate Sunday, and doesn't contain sugar, certainly contains an artificial sweetener. Artificial sweeteners should be avoided whenever possible. More and more studies are finding negative side effects (including weight gain) from their use. A great tool for research on artificial sweeteners is the book "Sweet Deception" by Dr. Joseph Mercola. Try to avoid: Saccharine, Sucralose ("Splenda"), Aspartame ("NutraSweet"), and the little-known Acesulfame Potassium ("Ace-K," "Sunette").

Nowadays, many natural sports fuels and muscle formulas are using Stevia. Stevia comes from a plant (an herb actually), goes through minimal processing, and is generally considered safe. It has no calories.

My sports fuels are all sweetened with either Maltodextrin (my endurance fuels) or Stevia (my muscle-building fuels). I've been using this combination for over 5 years and swear by its effectiveness. Of course, in a pinch, I grab a bottle of some sports-ade; it's better than passing out mid-way through the workout. But with a little preparation and research, you should be able to excel with healthier options.

### Sources:

- 1) *Sweet Deception*, by Joseph Mercola, Nelson Books, 2006
- 2) <http://hammernutrition.com/>

Blake Baxter is a Holistic Health Counselor and Kung-Fu instructor. He works with other martial artists to help them incorporate better eating practices and create awareness about the ways in which food impacts performance and recovery. Blake is the President of The Fifth Nine, Inc, an online holistic health counseling website. <http://thefifthnine.com>





## MARTIAL ARTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING

By Neal Zephyrin

The study of any martial arts entails learning a wide assortment of techniques, including blocks, strikes, and kicks as well as varying level of stances and footwork. Many schools spend countless hours reinforcing their techniques through repetitive drills, designed to make these techniques second nature. For example, executing one hundred bow-leg kicks (also known as round-house kicks) in succession, will strengthen the tendons in your legs, as well as your hamstrings, quadriceps, and gluts. But is it enough to just execute punches and kicks to develop strength, endurance, and flexibility for martial arts? For example, do professional baseball players only practice their swing and neglect other supplemental training regimens such as plyometrics or stretching? Of course not. In order to be an effective batter, a baseball player requires flexible and strong waist and hips, powerful legs, strong wrists and forearms, etc. This is no different in the martial arts. To execute strong and effective techniques, supplemental training is not an option, but a necessity.

The most effective supplemental training one can undertake is weight training. Weight training is a common type of strength training for the development of strength and size of the skeletal muscles. Weight training differs from bodybuilding, weightlifting, and powerlifting — weight training is not a sport, whereas the others are sports rather than forms of exercise. From golf to swimming, weight training has been shown to be very effective in developing and strengthening the muscles and tendons needed for a respective sport. However, a few myths persist in regards to martial arts and weight training. The most common is that *weight training will create a bulky physique, thus decreasing speed and flexibility, which for a martial artist is essential*. Nothing can be further from the truth. While weight training will develop the size of the skeletal muscle, it can also increase speed and flexibility if done wisely. Staying within a range of 8–15 reps will almost ensure that a trainee will stay flexible and develop strength as well as a toned and muscular physique.

Another effective strength training method that can be very beneficial to martial artists is isometric exercises. Isometric is a type of strength training in which the joint angle and muscle length do not change during contraction. They are performed in static positions rather than being dynamic through a range of motion. Examples of isometric exercises that are using the body's own muscle resistance are pressing the palms together in front of the body; holding a weight in a fixed position; pushing against a door frame, etc. Isometrics can also be found in static positions in certain branches of yoga. For example, the sun salutation, the beginning sequence of an asana, uses isometric concepts.





## MARTIAL ARTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING (cont'd)

By Neal Zephyrin

Then we have plyometrics, which every serious martial artist should be incorporating into their training regimen in some form or another. Plyometrics are a method of training designed to produce fast powerful movements and develop the nervous system, generally for the purpose of improving performance in a specific sport. Muscular power is determined by how long it takes for strength to be converted into speed. Plyometric exercises use explosive movements to develop muscular power, which is the ability to generate a large amount of force quickly. What serious martial artist does not want that ability?

There are numerous supplemental training routines a serious martial artist can incorporate into their training regimen. I just listed a few of my favorites. If you want to reach the next level and excel as a martial artist, supplement your training and blow the competition away.



Neal Zephyrin is a 3rd Degree Instructor at Alan Lee's Chinese Kung-Fu, Wu-Su Association. He has been studying martial arts for over 18 years. He is currently an AVP at an Investment Bank.





## TEACH TO LEARN

By Master Robert Thomas



Master Robert Thomas

Teaching is a great way to learn more. I have been teaching martial arts for over 20 years and never tire of giving the gift of experience to others. A few of my former colleagues have asked me from time to time, "Robert, why do you keep doing this?" My response is consistent. I give the same answer, but for different reasons.

I teach because, "I have to." No one is forcing me, but I am compelled to do so. Teaching for me is a way of releasing what I have learned back into the universe to complete a cycle. If a person learns something and becomes successful, it behooves that person to share the knowledge and experience gained with others. Either you perform and bring joy to others to improve morale in the world or you teach others to do so. This will help you contribute to the spinning of the web of life.

Contributing to the furtherance of a skill or knowledge in life provides one with usefulness. If you can teach, you never lose that usefulness. Athletes as they age begin to feel less useful when they think of performing in a sport they have excelled in all of their lives. The way to continue that usefulness is to teach.

Now, not everyone can teach. Not everyone has the patience, inclination, desire or opportunity to do so, but if you do, you should. Not only do you "give back" (a term I do not like and think is overused), when you teach, you also learn.

Watching people perform or try to execute techniques that you have formerly performed well or could not perform at all gives you insight. It can give you insight into yourself and give you insight into others. You learn about what it takes to teach different people of different personalities to do what you have done. You understand patience and appreciate the difficulty in learning what you have learned over the years. This will assist you in gaining greater self-esteem and greater self-worth because you can see that you have accomplished something significant in the past with quite a bit of sacrifice. You can help someone else accomplish the same thing you have, at least at some level, in the future.

Teach to contribute to the future. Teach to increase another individual's morale, another individual's and your own self worth. Teach to provide others with purpose they may not be able to discover on their own — especially young people.

Teach to learn.

*Master Robert Thomas has been a member of the Chinese Kung-Fu Wu-Su Association since 1974, where he currently holds the position of Kung-Fu Wu-Su Master Instructor and Co-Director. He has also served as an expert on the [allexperts.com](http://allexperts.com) website for six years, February 2002 to February 2008, answering various questions concerning Chinese martial arts. Most recently Master Thomas was profiled in a documentary entitled "Natural Mystery," that aired on The Learning Channel (TLC) and was distributed worldwide. You can contact Master Thomas directly concerning martial arts issues at [kungfuwusu@aol.com](mailto:kungfuwusu@aol.com).*





## GYM RAT

Review by Shir "Terror" Konas



Shir Konas

### P90X

On a normal schedule, I spend an average of three hours per day at the gym, five-to-six days a week. Some of my training is done while teaching, but a large chunk of it is done outside of the classroom, trying to overcome the inevitable plateau...

Recently, my attention was turned to a series of DVDs sold online, called "P90X" — short for "Power 90 X". The man behind these DVDs is Tony Horton, a professional trainer and renowned exercise and fitness specialist. Here Tony built upon his previous system, "Power 90," and created a multifaceted workout program for those seeking to advance their level of fitness.



The system is marketed as an extreme fitness series, based on the philosophy of muscle confusion: By providing an extensive variety of different moves that take time to master, P90X is continually challenging the body's muscles into new growth. The more you confuse the muscle, the harder your body has to work to keep up; the more variety is put into the workout, the better and faster the results will be.

P90X avoids the plateau effect by switching things up to keep the body guessing, which means IT NEVER GETS EASY. By breaking old routines and opening new doors, secondary and tertiary muscles are constantly being activated and developed.





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## GYM RAT (cont'd)

Review by Shir "Terror" Konas



Shir Konas

The DVDs take you through a 90-day program that incorporates nutrition (by experts Carie Wiatt and Mark Sisson) as well as some basic equipment that can be used at home.

I tried and tested each one of the 12 workout DVDs (on myself as well as some of my students...!), and I have to admit — I totally LOVE this system, with the exception of the Kenpo workout, which to me, a martial artist and martial arts/fitness instructor, wasn't half as intense as my beginners cardio kickboxing class.

I highly recommend P90X as your only training for 90 days if your objective is getting in better shape and seeing some nice changes in your physique; for people who have a solid training routine already, which they aren't able to put aside for three months, I highly recommend incorporating the muscle confusion philosophy into your routine, and replacing some of your exercises with those from the system.

For more information, visit [www.beachbody.com/product/p90x.do?code=GOOGLE\\_P90X](http://www.beachbody.com/product/p90x.do?code=GOOGLE_P90X)



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