



PC Conditioning

Personal Training for all Levels

Newsletter

June 2008

"I know the price of success: dedication, hard work and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen."
-Frank Lloyd Wright

Dear readers-

June is here and as I'm finishing this edition up, the weather forecast calls for sunny skies with temps in the 70s and 80s- perfection! I was happy to break out my bike today—later than normal start for me this year, but better late than never, right? I'm predicting an increase in bike traffic this year with the gas prices so ridiculously high. I've definitely found myself walking more often on short errands too. It's definitely a different perspective walking places than driving: no waiting or paying for parking spaces, no wasting gas, and most importantly getting more exercise!

-Paul J. Connolly, NSCA-CPT

Founder: PC Conditioning

<http://www.pcconditioning.com>

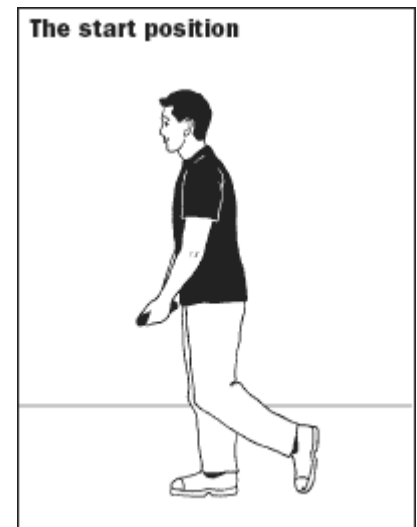
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Exercise of the Month

"Single leg balance stands"

Balance is often overlooked when it comes to exercise. It's important to take a step back and remember that we all exercise for various reasons, but we often forget that our balance is tested daily. Whether it be picking up your children, stepping on/off a curb outside, or my personal favorite—putting on your pants/shorts in the morning, we are all tested in different ways. To improve our balance, we need to engage what's referred in the exercise world as the "principle of specificity." This is a fancy fitness term which means that to improve something, (in this case balance) we need to practice it specifically. The perfect—and extremely simple—exercise to work on are "single leg balance stands."

To perform this exercise, all you have to do is literally stand on one leg. While on one leg, your lower leg muscles (calves, peroneals, intricate foot muscles) are all engaged. The body's demand to recruit these muscles increases when on one leg, thus improving balance. Now I know what some of you may be thinking: this is way too easy. To that I say, first give it shot and if you can hold it for over 60 seconds, there are several progressions to make the exercise harder. These



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include closing your eyes (try it- it's pretty challenging!), twisting your torso while on one leg, and reaching toward an object on the ground while on one leg.

Now of course this exercise isn't one designed to burn calories, so I'd advise using it as part of your warm-up if you're going to doing any flexibility work before your conditioning and strength training. Again, standing on one leg sounds easier than it is so give it a shot and let me know how you make out. Good luck!

Nutritional Choice of the Month

"Fiber One Bars"

Current dietary guidelines advise us to eat 25-35 grams of fiber each day. The majority of Americans don't even get half this! Fiber One recently introduced their own granola style bars that, in my opinion, are the best tasting bars I've ever had. I even went so far as to blog about it back in February (<http://pcconditioning.blogspot.com/2008/02/recommended-snacking.html>). At 9 grams of fiber per serving, these are the bars I have all my clients snacking on when on the run or if they need something healthy between meals (yes of course I want them all eating lots of fruits and veggies but I know not everyone will so this is a great way to get some fiber in their diets).



Here's a link to the product information: <http://www.fiberone.com/Product/Bars.aspx>. Try one and let me know what you think!

Blog

As always, I've added a lot of posts to the blog and am curious what you think, so please take a few moments to check out my updated blog here: <http://pcconditioning.blogspot.com>.

Product Recommendation

For this edition, I am recommending a book I read a few months ago entitled "The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth: The Surprising, Unbiased Truth About What You Should Eat and Why." Author Jonny Bowden does a great job explaining the specific benefits of each of these wonderful and tasty foods. Check it out and let me know what you think (http://www.amazon.com/150-Healthiest-Foods-Earth-Surprising/dp/1592332285/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1211770293&sr=8-1).

Articles

Please click the following links to check out the interesting articles I've come across these last few weeks and let me know what you think:

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/watertown/news/lifestyle/columnists/x1180658770/Connolly-Ten-foods-for-good-health>

*this is the article authored by yours truly that was featured in a recent edition of The Watertown Tab.

Q & A

This month's question comes from a gentleman I chatted with at a recent corporate wellness fair. He was concerned for the well-being of his elderly mother and had the following question for me:

Q: Why do doctors often suggest swimming and cycling (stationary exercise bike) for so many obese and elderly individuals?

-Richard: Franklin, MA

A: Excellent question, Richard! Cycling and swimming, both examples of cardiovascular exercise, are often recommended because they are "non-weight bearing." That is, they produce far less stress on the joints (hips, knees, ankles, etc...) than exercises like running do. However, while reducing joint stress may be of importance to specific exercise enthusiasts, one caveat must be pointed out. Swimming and cycling do not help improve one's bone density since they are not weight bearing.

To successfully improve bone density and increase muscular strength and endurance, I'd strongly suggest an exercise routine that balances the cycling and swimming with strength training (think free weights, machines, bands, etc...). That way, you are improving the health of both your circulatory and muscular systems. Your goal is to improve strength and stamina and these are the byproducts of a well-rounded exercise routine.

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About the Author

Certified through the National Strength and Conditioning Association as a personal trainer (NSCA-CPT), Paul Connolly possesses a degree in Exercise Science with a background in anatomy & physiology, human performance, and nutrition. Founder of suburban Boston-based personal training consulting service PC Conditioning (<http://www.pconditioning.com>), he has contributed to local and national media publications as a featured health and wellness columnist. Paul is an advocate of strength training for all ages and enjoys working with fitness enthusiasts of all levels. His diverse clientele includes high school and collegiate athletes, stay-at-home Moms, corporate 9-5ers, brides-to be, and seniors. Paul is available by appointment only and can be reached via e-mail at paul@pconditioning.com

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