



PC Conditioning

Personal Training for all Levels

Newsletter

March 2009

"Be the change you wish to see in the world."
- Gandhi

Thanks for checking out the March edition of my newsletter. This is a joyous time of year for many of us. Daylight savings begins, which in essence is the annual stepping stone toward warmer weather and increased sunshine. It wouldn't be a typical March without the annual NCAA March Madness basketball tournament. It's either a basketball fan or a gambler's favorite time of the year, depending on how you look at it☺.

March is ironically the month that health clubs see their highest check-in rates. People always think its January, but it's actually March. My theory is that the first hint of warm weather strikes us, thus pushing the resolution folks back on the train towards weight loss, optimized nutrition, "toning," etc... Whatever your goals have been thus far for 2009, make sure they are specific, measurable, and challenging, while at the same time realistic.



I was looking over the recently released physical activity guidelines set forth by the US Dept. of Health & Human Services. Found here (<http://www.health.gov/PAGuidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>), the document does a nice job of breaking down specifics as to what exercise goals to shoot for.

Before I end my opening comments for this month, I wanted to take moment to post a link for an incredible video that I've had on my blog a few times in the past. I still like to watch it every so often as I consider it a great source of inspiration. Please let me know what you think:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9ya9BXCIRw>.

Until next month, enjoy your March and keep those questions coming. I continue to appreciate all the great feedback I get from the newsletters, blog entries, etc...

To your health,

-PC

Exercise Tip of the Month

“Free Weights -vs- Machines”

One of the questions I continue to get asked over the years is the following: “Paul, which is a better choice, free weights or machines?” As always, I’ll answer with phrases like “what are your goals” or better yet, “it depends.” That being said, in the end, free weights will always trump machines. The following are some of the major features of free weights and strength training.



Free Weights

- Require more focus on technique
- Significantly less expensive
- Allow for replication of more natural movement
- Virtually any age, shape, or size can utilize
- Require much less space/square footage

Machines

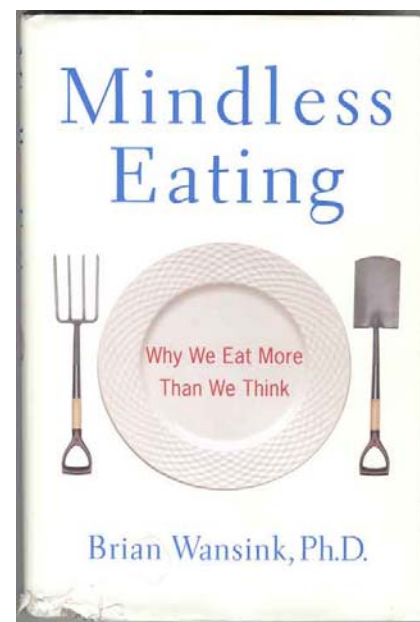
- Take up more space than free weights
- Most machines only allow one exercise on that machine (i.e. leg extension only allow for just that, whereas you could work every lower body muscle on a free weight squat variation)
- Don't accommodate all shapes and sizes (crucial due to our nations' current obesity epidemic)
- Don't allow for freedom of movement in certain ranges of motion
- Over-isolates muscles
- Most engage the exerciser to sit; we sit WAY too much in this country!

As you can tell, I am not a huge fan of machine training. Sure, there will be a time here or there I'll have a client try an exercise on a machine (or preferably cables), but free weights will always win the battle.

Nutritional Tip of the Month

“Mindless Eating”

We're all guilty of eating in front of the TV or surfing the Net. In this country, we're always on-the-go or multi-tasking and it's time we hit the pause button and take a moment to actually enjoy what we're eating and drinking. A dietician I teach a workshop in Massachusetts with recently led our group through an exercise where she taught the group to enjoy the texture and flavor of what we eat. Something as simple as a raisin, in her example, should be analyzed for its texture, smell, and taste. Long story short- we need to take the time to cherish what we're fortunate to have on our plate. Savor the flavor and chew slowly. In doing so, we're less likely to continue our upward trend of obesity in this country. Having a best friend with a culinary background, I always make sure to appreciate the flavors of every meal. This allows for deceleration and facilitation of digestion.



On the topic of mindless eating, Brian Wansink is a Stanford Ph.D. and the director of the Cornell University Food and Brand Lab. He is the author of the book, “Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think.” I always recommend it to clients who have trouble taking off the pounds. If it's something you'd have interest in checking out, the link to order the book is as follows:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/0553384481?tag=pccon-20&camp=0&creative=0&linkCode=as1&creativeASIN=0553384481&adid=0T3XZYVX2JHZJW7W6QPF&>

Blog

My blog contains a wide array of information, mainly on health and fitness topics. Truth be told, I tend to post random articles and links that having nothing to do with fitness on there, but people seem to find this the most enjoyable part of my web site. I post entries quite often so **make sure to bookmark the blog under your “favorites” section of your web browser!** The direct link for my updated blog is found here: <http://pcconditioning.blogspot.com>.

Product Recommendation of the Month

This month, I am recommending a product called “Precision Nutrition,” created by world-renowned nutritionist Dr. John Berardi. Precision Nutrition translates the latest in nutrition research into plain-English strategies that you can use immediately to be healthier and look better than ever before. I can unequivocally say that Precision Nutrition is the best nutrition product I have EVER purchased. I've read A LOT on nutrition over the years, so I know that's a huge statement to make. That being said, the direct link to order “Precision Nutrition” can be found at the following:

precisionnutrition



[\(https://www.amazon.com/dp/B001TIYSJQ?tag=pccon-20&camp=0&creative=0&linkCode=as1&creativeASIN=B001TIYSJQ&adid=1GV8XTYMGWXJR1FTTTWE&\)](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B001TIYSJQ?tag=pccon-20&camp=0&creative=0&linkCode=as1&creativeASIN=B001TIYSJQ&adid=1GV8XTYMGWXJR1FTTTWE&)

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.boston.com/news/health/articles/2009/02/23/vitamins_are_not_of_equal_value/
Vitamins are not of equal value.

<http://deadspin.com/5146348/yeah-id-imagine-vitamin-water-ad-people-cant-be-too-happy-with-this-update?skyline=true&s=x>
Vitamin Water controversy in the NCAA.

Q&A

Topic: "Equipment Review"

Q: Paul, I know you like to try new exercise ideas or more specifically, exercise and nutrition products. Do you have anything that gets media attention that you have plans to try in the near future?

A: Actually, I've been meaning to run through some exercises using the "TRX" suspension system (<http://www.fitnessanywhere.com/>). Luckily, I have access to them where I train, so I'm looking forward to giving them a test. I'll report back my findings in a future newsletter.



If you've got a question, feel free to email me at the following: paulconnolly123@gmail.com. Who knows- you may see your question published in a future newsletter!

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About the Author

Certified through the National Strength and Conditioning Association as a personal trainer (NSCA-CPT), Paul possesses a degree in Exercise Science from UMASS-Boston where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. Holding a background in anatomy & physiology, human performance, and nutrition, he has been involved in the fitness industry since 2003 and has contributed to local and national media publications as a featured health and wellness columnist. The founder of suburban Boston-based personal training consulting service PC Conditioning (<http://www.pcconditioning.com>), 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's passion for fitness has led him to engage his clients in all major components of fitness including cardiovascular conditioning, nutrition, strength training, and flexibility. Adult AED and CPR-certified, Paul is available by appointment only. He can be reached via e-mail at paul@pcconditioning.com or telephone at 617-834-1502.

"Understanding the fundamental concepts of exercise and optimizing daily function are key concepts in the training programs I outline for my clients. Injury prevention, improving self-confidence, and heightening one's knowledge of physical fitness through consistent hard work and dedication are all integral components of the approach I take with my clients. I see many people making similar mistakes in their conditioning programs and I make it a point to correct these areas. I demand 100% effort from my clients and make it a point to consistently educate them about the necessary lifestyle modifications required to achieve their respective goals."

Important Disclaimer: The information contained within this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice and is not intended for medical diagnosis or treatment. The intention of this article is for the sole purpose of disseminating fitness information. We recommend that you always request the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider before starting any new fitness program or with any questions you may have regarding your health or any medical condition.