



PC Conditioning

Personal Training for all Levels

Newsletter

July 2010

"Drink deeply from good books."
- John Wooden



Dear Readers-

Thanks for checking out the July edition of my newsletter. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend an incredible 3-day training summit in Rhode Island. I'll make sure to share several pieces of information I picked up as these newsletters continue to be published each month. One item I walked away with—and this is one I certainly was aware of, yet failed to put into practice—was to make sure to take time for myself to enjoy the little things. A key example: I was recently with a client I train who loves chocolate. She was almost afraid to eat it as she thought it would throw off her training goals. I told her it was important she indulge, albeit moderately, once in a while. Of course, I suggested she choose the dark type (>70% Cacao) and she obliged.

A few weeks after we chatted, I came across a fun little piece in a random magazine at my health club. It was called "Chocolate Math" and I wanted to share it with you. It's only a few steps, so check it out here:

- Pick the number of times per week that you would like to have chocolate
- Multiply this number by 2
- Add 5
- Multiply that number by 50
- If you already had your birthday this year, add 1760. If you haven't, add 1759.
- Now subtract the four-digit year that you were born.

- You should have a three-digit number. The first digit of this figure is your original number (i.e. how many times per week you want to eat chocolate). The next two numbers are your age!

Pretty cool, huh? I thought it was interesting. Now go train hard and enjoy a little dark chocolate (http://www.ghirardelli.com/products/chocbars_intense_twilight.aspx)! ☺

To your health,

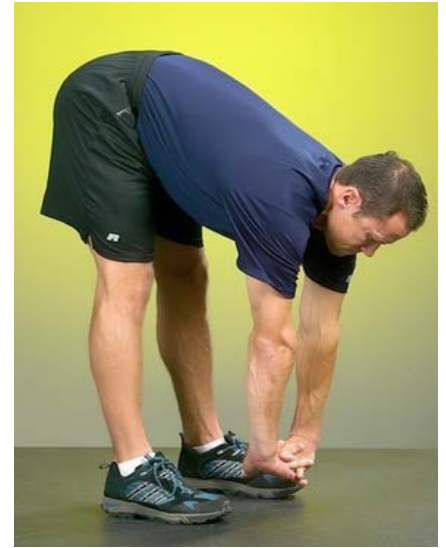
-PC

Exercise Tip of the Month

“Proper Hamstring Stretch”

Static hamstring stretching feels good, and is beneficial for lengthening hamstring fascia. That being said, it is often performed incorrectly. Most people recruit/“over-involve” their lumbar spine in this stretch. To properly increase pliability in the back of the leg and reduce stiffness/soreness, remember to keep the back flat. I’ll sometimes have folks with bad posture (that’s most of you reading this) attempt to arch their back as this is a good verbal cue to keep it flat. Stretch to a point of mild discomfort and perform this a couple times/day holding for 30

seconds with each leg, depending upon your relative level of stiffness.



Nutritional Tip of the Month

“Garbanzo Beans”

Looking for a high-quality, cheap source of protein? Whether you’re a vegetarian or not, beans are a wonderful source of plant-based protein. They’re rich in fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc. Garbanzo beans (“chickpeas”) are super-versatile. I use them regularly in salads, chili, and stir-fry dishes.



Blog

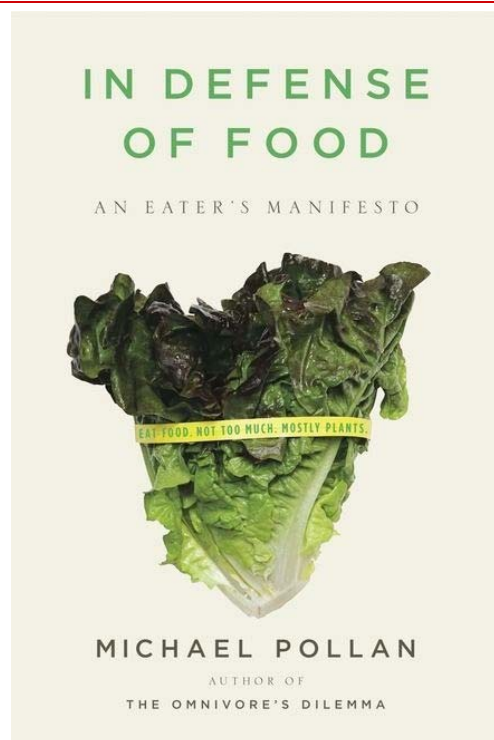
My blog continues to be the part of my web site and newsletter I get the most feedback on. Make sure to go back and check out past entries to get caught up. The direct link for my updated blog is found here: <http://pcconditioning.blogspot.com>.

Product Recommendation of the Month

After reading "*Food Rules*" by Michael Pollan, I had to check out his other work. If you follow my blog, you know what a big fan of Pollan I am. Knight Professor of Journalism at the University of California Berkeley, Pollan is the author of five other books, including "*The Omnivore's Dilemma*" and "*The Botany of Desire*."

Anne Bartholomew had this to say about In Defense of Food:

" Food is the one thing that Americans hate to love and, as it turns out, love to hate. What we want to eat has been ousted by the notion of what we should eat, and it's at this nexus of hunger and hang-up that Michael Pollan poses his most salient question: where is the food in our food? What follows in In Defense of Food is a series of wonderfully clear and thoughtful answers that help us omnivores navigate the nutritional minefield that's come to typify our food culture. Many processed foods vie for a spot in our grocery baskets, claiming to lower cholesterol, weight, glucose levels, you name it. Yet Pollan shows that these convenient "healthy" alternatives to whole foods are appallingly inconvenient: our health has a nation has only deteriorated since we started exiling carbs, fats--even fruits--from our daily meals. His razor-sharp analysis of the American diet (as well as its architects and its detractors) offers an inspiring glimpse of what it would be like if we could (a la Humpty Dumpty) put our food back together again and reconsider what it means to eat well. In a season filled with rallying cries to lose weight and be healthy, Pollan's call to action--"Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."--is a program I actually want to follow."



--Anne Bartholomew

To order your copy of this book, please click here:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0143114964?ie=UTF8&tag=pccon-20&linkCode=xm2&camp=1789&creativeASIN=0143114964>

Web links / Recommended Reading

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://robertsontrainingsystems.com/blog/+Finding+a+Personal+Trainer+-+2+Questions+You+MUST+Ask/>

"2 Questions to Ask a Personal Trainer" - I personally appreciate #2 that Coach Robertson discusses.

<http://www.cassandraforsythe.com/blog/Pregnancy+Nutrition+Guidelines/>

"Pregnancy Nutrition Guidelines" - One of my "go-to nutritionists," Cassandra Forsythe, provides an excellent breakdown on prenatal nutrition. This is a fantastic resource!

<http://bretcontreras.wordpress.com/2010/06/18/puppies-in-vices/>

"The Deleterious Effects of Sitting" - This is one of the best pieces I've read in a LONG time on back/spine issues.

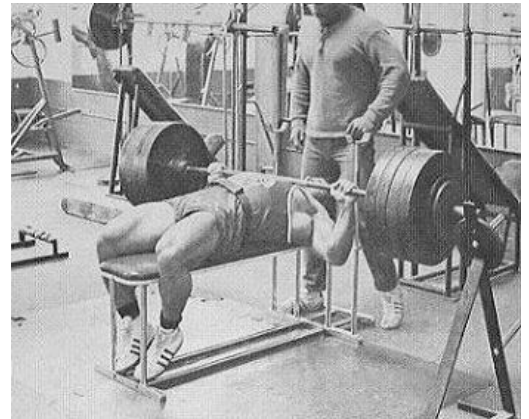
Q&A

Each month, I review a question submitted to me either via email or in person.

Topic: "Overrated Exercises"

Q: Paul, you talk a lot about underrated exercises, but what would you say are some of the most overrated exercises for the general population?

-Mark: Boston, MA



A: There are a few, but I'll give you three:

- Barbell Bench Press (I just prefer push-up variations as more musculature is involved)
- Dumbbell Bicep Curls (This is more of a problem with males as they often put an over-emphasis on their "mirror muscles")
- Abdominal Machine Crunches (Not only is this exercise overrated, but it can be dangerous as signs have pointed toward disc herniations. Shoot for more functional, anti-rotational exercises such as the Cable/Belly Press seen here:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpvbR_Ah8_g&feature=related

I like all three because they involve utilizing your body weight as resistance, so they can be done anywhere and don't require any fancy equipment. Shoot me an email (paulconnolly123@gmail.com)

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.pconditioning.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 paulconnolly123@gmail.com.

“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.