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FULL THROTTLE: GO ALL OUT WITH TABATA TRAINING

POTLUCK? THE
TRUTH ABOUT
CBD OIL
P79

MEN'S FITNESS

JOHN
CENA

Stronger
than ever

EXTREME
EXERCISE:
TO THE LIMIT

IT'S
TIME
TO GET

ripped!

FOUR WEEKS TO

KILLER
ARMS

IT'S A GUN
SHOW

67

SUPER
FIT LIFE
HACKS



EAT FAT TO
LOSE FAT

APRIL 2020
AUS\$9.50 / NZ\$8.50



Mensfitnessmagazine.com.au

The image is a side-by-side comparison of a man's face and neck, split vertically. The left side shows skin with significant redness and irritation, while the right side shows smooth, clear skin. The top of the image has a dark blue banner with the Gillette logo. The bottom of each side has text describing the condition.

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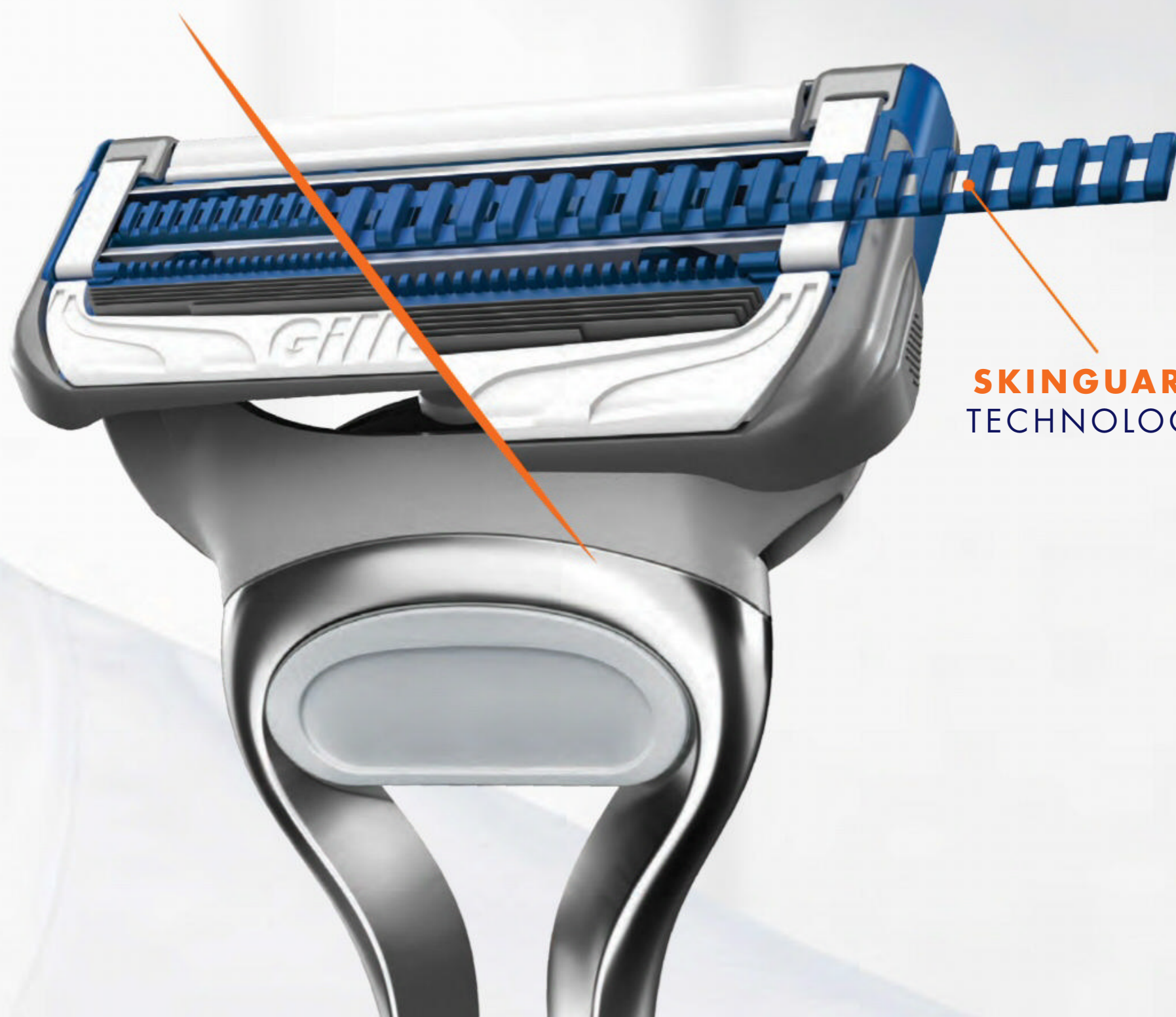
*Simulation of typical
shaving irritation.*

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“We have explored less than 5% of our ocean world,” Fabien tells us. “As we push further, longer and deeper, we can learn a lot more.” For the adventurous, discovery has no boundaries.

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150 YEARS
Blundstone
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apr.

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Fat chance.



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United weed stand.

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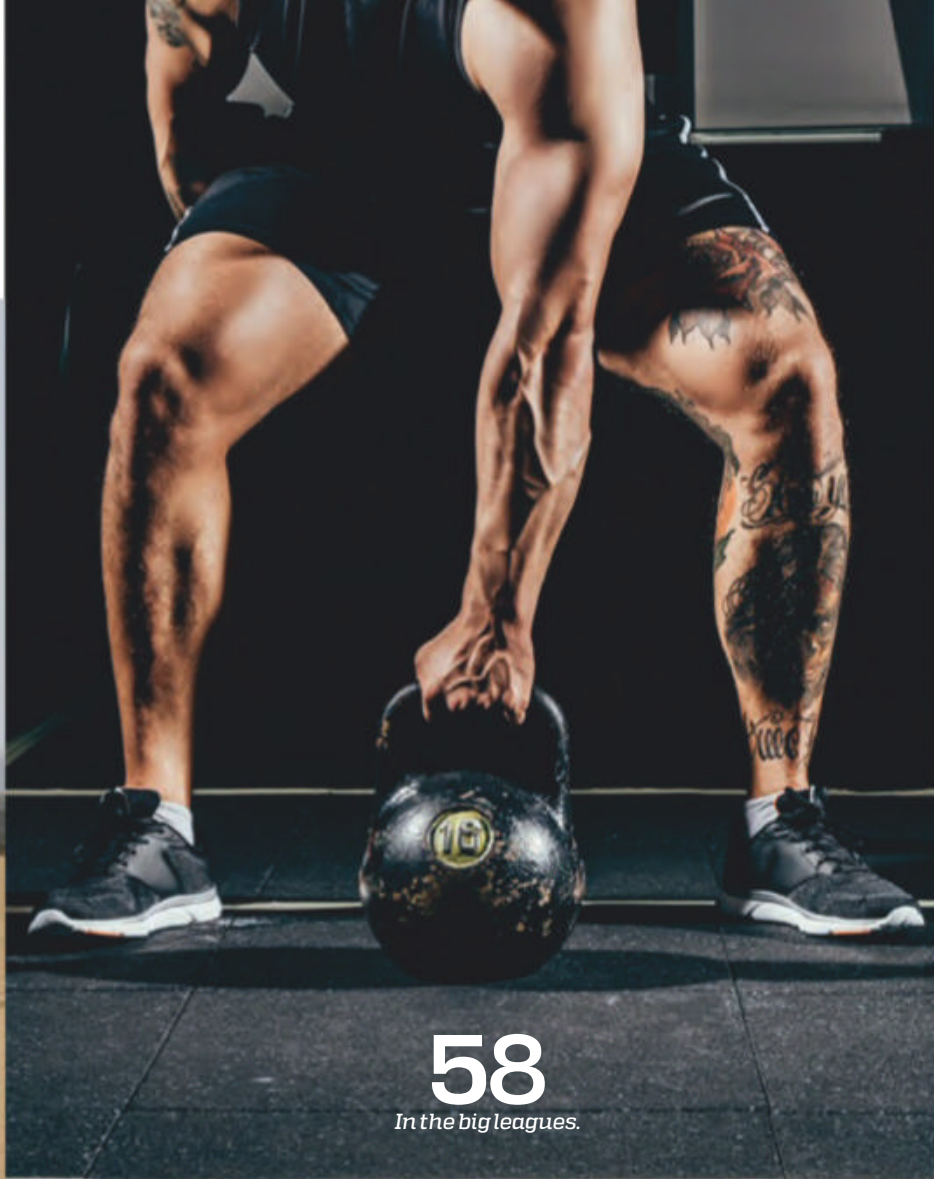
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apr.

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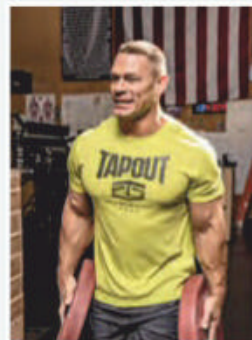
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BEAT YOUR GUT.

ON THE COVER

JOHN CENA

PHOTOGRAPHY: PER BERNAL



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The smart man's cheat sheet

The latest advice, wisdom and healthy-lifestyle hacks from *Men's Fitness* to give you that extra edge.



Eat this

The whole egg

■ Egg whites might be high in protein and low in fat, but a recent study in *Sports Medicine* compared ingestion of whole eggs to egg whites on muscle synthesis rates. Whole eggs were found to be superior for post-exercise protein synthesis, which may be due to the combo of high-quality protein, fats, vitamins and minerals not found in the whites alone. A single egg contains less than 100 calories, but packs in 6g protein – making it an ideal addition to any meal.

Take this

DOMS-buster

■ A new way to reduce delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS): digestive enzyme supplementation. A recent study in the *Journal of Nutrition Science Research* found that a multi enzyme (containing alpha-amylase, protease, cellulase, lactase and lipase) resulted in significant improvement in pain and tenderness and may be an effective way of relieving the symptoms of DOMS.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“THE BAD NEWS IS TIME FLIES. THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU’RE THE PILOT.”

– Michael Altshuler

Know this

Go the gram

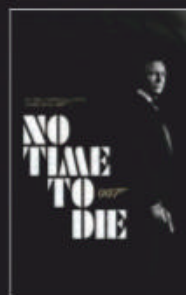
■ If you’re looking for a social media platform that’s not tainted by toxicity, Instagram is the way forward, according to a new study by the University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands. Because Instagram is more focused on visuals than text, researchers concluded it was less polarising. In other words, it’s more difficult to have an argument over a picture than a controversial statement.

Watch this

April 8

No Time to Die

The 25th film in the Bond franchise, and the fourth to have the word “die” in the title. Are they trying to tell us something? Probably not. Either way, Bond films hardly ever disappoint and this one – Daniel Craig’s last 007 film – pulls out all the stops.



MEN'S FITNESS

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● Training diary

1 MONTH AWAY

2 MONTHS AWAY

3 MONTHS AWAY

RUNS



April 3-5
Buffalo Stampede
Where: Bright, VIC
What: the courses take runners through a range of gruelling but picturesque journeys in Victoria's Alpine country. Compete in individual events, or take on the Buffalo Grand Slam.
More info: buffalostampede.com.au

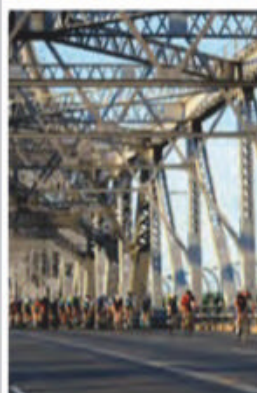


May 17
SMH Half Marathon
Where: Sydney, NSW
What: Australia's largest half marathon take in some of Sydney's best views, including the Opera House, Botanic Gardens, Harbour Bridge, The Rocks and Hyde Park.
More info: smhhalfmarathon.com.au



June 7
McDonald's Brisbane Marathon Festival
Where: Brisbane, Qld
What: the new and improved course features a full marathon and half marathon, along with 10km and 5km runs.
More info: brisbanemarathon.com.au

RIDES



April 5
Tour de Brisbane
Where: Brisbane, Qld
What: this is cycle tourism at its best, featuring a closed road ride and a fully supported cycling experience. And all for a good cause: to raise funds for the Amy Gillett Foundation.
More info: tourdebrisbane.org



May 1
Endure for a Cure
Where: Eastern Creek, NSW
What: a unique 12-hour closed-circuit, endurance cycling challenge that raises much-needed funds to help find a cure for kids with cancer.
More info: endureforacure.org.au



June 27
Cairns 2 Karumba
Where: Cairns, Qld
What: a challenging and fun 7-day cycling adventure across North Queensland from Cairns to Karumba. All in the name of charity.
More info: c2kbikeride.com.au

TRIATHLONS



April 5
Coogee Beach Triathlon
Where: Coogee, WA
What: swim in pristine calm waters sheltered by offshore islands, ride on the wide coast road, which is closed for the event, and run on a sheltered path.
More info: allbarnone.com/events



May 9
Byron Bay Triathlon
Where: Byron Bay, NSW
What: one of the most popular triathlons in Oz, with racing commencing at lunch time to allow participants to sleep in, race, and then celebrate in one of the biggest party towns on the East Coast.
More info: byronbaytri.com.au



June 7
IRONMAN 70.3 Cairns
Where: Palm Cove & Cairns, Qld
What: swim in the warm waters of Tropical North Queensland, ride one of the most scenic coastal roads in the world and finish in the heart of Cairns.
More info: ironman.com

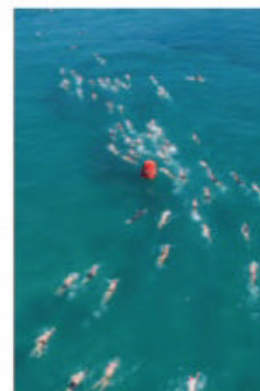
SWIMS



April 26
Cooly Classic Ocean Swim
Where: Coolangatta, Qld
What: the Cooly Classic is a rare opportunity to swim a course with some of Australia's most revered surf breaks as your backdrop – Snapper Rocks, Coolangatta and Kirra.
More info: worldserieswims.com.au



May 28 - June 1
Swim the Whitsundays
Where: Whitsunday Islands, Qld
What: immerse yourself in the exquisite waters of the Whitsunday Islands and enjoy seven of the most scenic ocean swims you'll ever experience.
More info: oceanfit.com.au



May 30
Swim the Gold Coast
Where: Gold Coast, Qld
What: a new marathon-distance ocean swimming event – a 21.5km open-water swim, from Coolangatta Beach to Surfers Paradise, that's open to both individual and team participation.
More info: worldserieswims.com.au

ADVENTURE



April 5
Porirua Grand Traverse
Where: Porirua, NZ
What: from the 9km fun run, full 58km multisport and 48km duathlon events to the 10km paddle, 30km mountain bike and 18km mountain run, there's a place for you on the starting line.
More info: poriruagrandtraverse.co.nz



May 23-24
Adventurethon Demolish Dwellingup
Where: Dwellingup, WA
What: a multisport event with paddling, biking and running. Experience the unique scenery of the area as you tackle this superb cross-country course and its associated trails.
More info: adventurethon.com.au



June 19-21
Oxfam Trailwalker Brisbane
Where: Brisbane, Qld
What: Oxfam Trailwalker is Australia's original charity team endurance event. For the Brisbane event, teams of four walk 100km through the D'Aguilar National Park in under 48 hours.
More info: trailwalker.oxfam.org.au

Got an event in your state that MF readers can train for in 2020? Email details to alison@mensfitnessmagazine.com.au with a couple of good action photos.

The Sydney Morning Herald
halfmarathon



RUN ICONIC.



AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST HALF MARATHON / SUNDAY MAY 17, 2020 / EARLYBIRD ENTRIES CLOSE MARCH 17





Rolling in the deep

Born in the windsurfing hotspot of Wissant (near Lille in northern France) with a keen windsurfer for a father, it's no surprise that Arthur Arutkin has gone on to be so at home on the water. As well as being a whizz on the windsurfer, he's also a rising star in the SUP world. Here, Arutkin proves he's a true waterman, windsurfing a seriously impressive swell in Teahupoo, Tahiti, French Polynesia in November 2019.

Photographer: JB Liautard/Red Bu | ume

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Breakthroughs

Full steam ahead

WORKING OUT CAN HELP KEEP THE MUNCHIES AT BAY.



Does training make you hungrier and so you eat more than you should, or does it help to control your appetite? New research out of Drexel University, US, suggests that it's the latter.

Researchers found exercise to be a protective factor in a study where participants who were following a reduced-calorie diet also exercised.

"Almost all weight-loss programs prescribe exercise because of its health benefits and because it burns calories," says Rebecca Crochiere,

lead author of the study. "Interestingly, our study suggests that exercise may also aid in adhering to a reduced-calorie diet, perhaps through improved regulation of appetite or eating behaviour."

The study found that when participants didn't exercise, the risk of overeating in the following hours was 12%. But when they exercised for 60 minutes, the risk of overeating was cut by more than half, to 5%.

For every additional 10 minutes a person exercised, the likelihood of overeating decreased by 1% over the next few hours.

Weight for it:
squash cravings
with exercise.



Get sweating

Think saunas are relaxing? Sure, they might feel luxurious, but they're also giving your body a workout. According to German researchers, **your blood pressure doesn't drop during a sauna visit - it rises, as well as your heart rate. This increase is even comparable to the effect of a short, moderate workout.** Getting steamy can also help to keep you healthy - taking a sauna can halve your risk of picking up a nasty bug, according to an Austrian study. Over a six-month period, study subjects taking a sauna twice a week experienced significantly fewer incidences of common cold symptoms compared with a control group who didn't get hot under the collar. Saunas have also been found to help reduce your risk of stroke and dementia. Local gym doesn't have a sauna? Set one up at home! Check out iHealthSaunas.com for the best range in Australia.



Cup of life

Drinking tea at least three times a week is linked with a longer and healthier life, according to a new study in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*. **Habitual tea consumption was associated with lower risks of cardiovascular disease and all-cause death**, and the favourable health effects were strongest for green tea and long-term habitual tea drinkers. Compared with never or non-habitual tea drinkers, the study found:

- Habitual tea consumers had a 15% decreased risk of all-cause death

Tea might not be as exciting as tequila, but it could help you to live longer.

- Long-term habitual tea-drinkers had a 29% decreased risk of all-cause death
- Drinking green tea was linked with approximately 25% lower risk for all-cause death



Tea totaller.



PHONES DOWN

Texting is linked to compromised pedestrian safety, with higher rates of "near misses" and failure to look left and right before crossing a road than either listening to music or talking on the phone. So says a pooled analysis of the available evidence, published online in the journal *Injury Prevention*. Worldwide, around 270,000 pedestrians die every year, accounting for around a fifth of all road traffic deaths. And here in Oz, pedestrian road deaths are increasing even while the total road toll is going down.

Heat of the moment



Climate change isn't just putting us at risk of bushfires and stupid Facebook videos from Barnaby Joyce - scientists at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, US, warn that global climate change is likely to unlock dangerous new microbes, as well as threaten humans' ability to regulate body temperature. We generate body heat

and have the capacity to regulate our temp within a few degrees. But the scientists say that, as heat waves become more common, more severe and longer, there may be more heat-related illness and death. And, because microbes can adapt to higher temps, we may soon see new infectious diseases that can break through our natural defences.

A man with blonde hair tied back, wearing a red swim cap and blue Speedo swim trunks, is running through shallow water. He is viewed from behind, and his muscular back and legs are prominent. Water splashes around his legs. The background shows a dense line of green trees.

**TOUGHEST
WORKOUT
TOUGHEST
WORKOUT**

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The Speedo logo, featuring the word "speedo" in a stylized, italicized font with a registered trademark symbol, and a large, white, stylized lightning bolt graphic below it.

No doze?

One in three Aussies will suffer from insomnia at some point in their lives, and if you're one of them, a study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* might offer you some insight. The study, which was looking at post-menopausal women, found that **those who consumed a diet high in refined carbs – particularly added sugars – were more likely to develop insomnia.** Meanwhile, those whose diet included higher amounts of vegies, fibre and whole fruit (not juice) were less likely to develop insomnia. "Insomnia is often treated with cognitive behavioural therapy or medications, but these can be expensive or carry side effects," says the study's senior author Dr James Gangwisch. "By identifying other factors that lead to insomnia, we may find straightforward and low-cost interventions with fewer potential side effects."



What's in your cup?

Did you know that 75% of Aussies drink at least one cup of coffee a day? Best stick to your flat white, as those fancier ones can pack a massive calorie and sugar punch...

McDonald's Coffee Frappe, Large

645 calories
80.7g carbs
77g sugar
29.2g fat

46.5 mins TO RUN IT OFF
(for the average Aussiemale @ moderate pace)

Gloria Jean's Iced Chocolate with Full Cream Milk, no Whipped Cream, Large

555 calories
85.5g carbs
74.2g sugar
17.2g fat

40 mins TO RUN IT OFF

Starbucks White Chocolate Mocha with Non-Fat Milk & Whipped Cream, Venti

518 calories
80g carbs
77g sugar
14.3g fat

37 mins TO RUN IT OFF



K IS FOR CARDIO

Vitamin K plays essential roles in bone and heart health, and it's also been shown to boost exercise capacity. While some K1 (found mostly in green plants) can be converted into K2 in the body, that conversion can be limited. On average, men need at least 120 micrograms per day, but one study found that taking 300mcg of K2 for four weeks and then reducing it to 150mcg for another four weeks increased cardiac output – the amount of blood the heart pumps through the system in a minute – by 12%.

FOD for thought

If stomach troubles affect your endurance training, the low FODMAP diet could help. Standing for fermentable oligosaccharide, disaccharide, monosaccharide and polyols, FODMAPs are poorly absorbed short-chain carbohydrates that can increase diarrhoea, bloating and gas in some people. By restricting your

intake of these foods, particularly around strenuous exercise, you may find gut symptoms improve. Various studies have found that athletes switching to a low FODMAP diet experience noticeable improvements in their gut symptoms, which in turn can improve performance. Monash University, Vic, has developed an app (monashfodmap.com) that helps you find out which foods are high or low in FODMAPs. Examples of foods to avoid include gluten products, lactose, apples, onions, garlic, pulses, dried fruit and honey.



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Relationships

Breakthroughs

Dating game

Still looking for love? You're far from alone. According to Relationships Australia, around **4.5 million Aussies use dating apps or sites every year**, and according to YouGov Australia, a third of all Aussies have searched for love online. Further, 53% of us know at least one couple who met online. But if you're not having any luck on Tinder or OKCupid, you could try this tactic: a 30-year-old bloke from the UK has forked out £425 (\$822) for a 3m high and 6m wide billboard advertising for a girlfriend. Mark, from Sheffield, told *The Mirror* that he had been contacted by more than 100 people, and is currently raising funds for more billboards to go up around the country. Sure beats swiping right.



The fuzz

Beards are kind of in right now. But do women find your beard a turn-on or a turn off? Researchers from the University of Stirling, Scotland, may have the answer: it depends on whether or not she fears something might be living in it. The researchers found that **women who are more repulsed by the idea of lice, fleas, ticks and other such "ectoparasites", are less likely to find beards attractive**, possibly because such pests might carry diseases. "This is likely to be the case for the majority of our evolutionary past," says researcher Anthony Lee.

"In modern times, with increased grooming and overall better hygiene, this link between hairiness and carrying ectoparasites may no longer exist, but the evolved tendency may still persist."



"He who sacrifices his beard for a woman deserves neither." - Anonymous



BABY WHISPERER

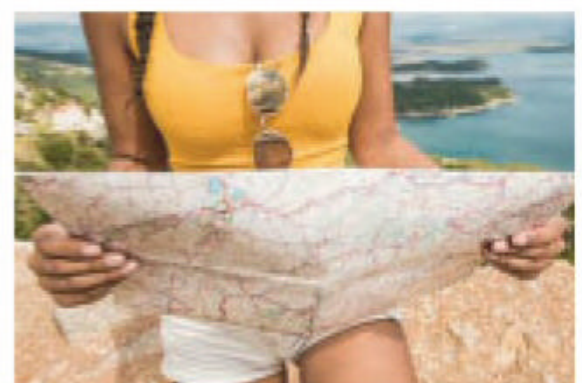
Have you ever played with a baby and felt a sense of connection, even though they couldn't talk? New research from Princeton Uni, US, suggests that you might literally be "on the same wavelength", experiencing similar brain activity in the same brain regions. The researchers conducted a study of how baby and adult brains interact during natural play and found measurable similarities in their neural activity. In other words, baby and adult brain activity rose and fell together as they shared toys and eye contact. Nawwww.

On the map

It's one of those things that people believe: men are better at spacial cognition tasks like map reading. But Irish researchers have found this is not the case. Using cutting-edge eye-tracking technology, the researchers found that there is no male advantage when it comes to navigating our environment. However, they did find that males and

Yes, but what about asking for directions?

females used different "gaze strategies" during spacial cognition tests. In other words, men and women approach the task in a different way to get the same result. Now that's something to argue about on your next road trip with the missus.





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Weight loss

Breakthroughs

Keto cut-off

■ The keto diet offers benefits in the short term, but negative effects after about a week, researchers have found in a study of mice. When the body's glucose level is reduced due to the keto diet's low-carb content, the body acts as if it's in a starvation state and begins burning fats instead of carbs. This process yields chemicals called ketone bodies as an alternative source of fuel. When the body burns ketones, tissue-protective gamma delta T-cells expand throughout the body. This reduces diabetes risk and improves metabolism. **After a week on the keto diet, mice in the study showed a reduction in blood sugar and inflammation.** But when the body is in this mode, fat storage is also happening simultaneously with fat breakdown. When the mice continued to eat the keto diet beyond one week, they consumed more fat than they could burn, and developed diabetes and obesity.

Should you veto keto?



Best in show

■ A study from University of Otago, NZ, has found that there were some weight-loss and health benefits for overweight adults who followed the Mediterranean, intermittent fasting (IF) and paleo diets, but adherence to the diets dropped off considerably during the one-year study. The IF diet led to slightly more weight loss than the other diets, while the Mediterranean diet improved blood sugar levels. Meanwhile, for those on the IF or Mediterranean diets, clinically significant improvements in blood pressure were seen. Of the three diets, the researchers found

Some diets are easier to stick to than others.

the Mediterranean diet to be the easiest to adhere to. After 12 months, the average weight loss was 4kg for those on the IF diet, 2.8kg on the Mediterranean diet and 1.8kg on the paleo diet.



TOUGH NUTS

US research has found nuts contain fewer calories than we thought. The study found almonds contain 32% fewer calories than previously determined, walnuts have 21% fewer calories and cashews have been overestimated by 16%. It's all due to the way we digest them. Nuts are crunchy due to them having tough cell walls. This means that when we eat whole nuts (as opposed to crushed nuts or nut butters) our bodies can't break down and absorb some of the nutrients - including the fats - that nuts contain.

G'day, mate

■ A study in rats has found that **caffeine may offset some of the negative effects of an obesogenic diet (a diet that makes you fat)** by reducing the storage of lipids in fat cells and limiting weight gain and the production of triglycerides. Researchers from the Uni of Illinois, US, found rats which ate a high-fat, high-carb diet and also consumed caffeine

extracted from mate tea (a herbal drink that's consumed as a stimulant by people in Latin America) gained 16% less weight and accumulated 22% less body fat than rats that consumed decaf mate tea. The effects were similar with synthetic caffeine and that extracted from coffee. Now if you'll excuse us, we're off to grab a double espresso.

Gone up a cup size?





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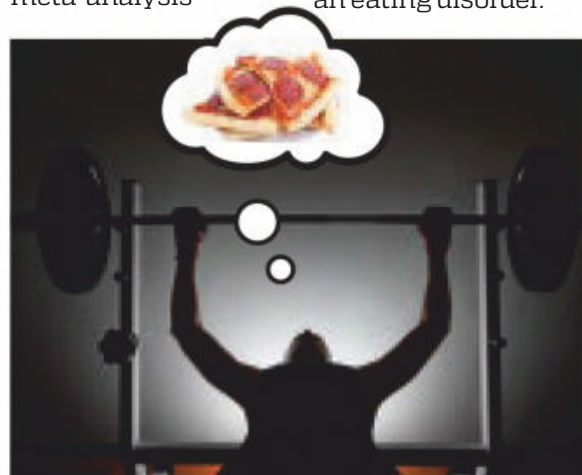


Rhythm method

Previous studies have documented some of the benefits of listening to tunes while you train – music can distract from fatigue and discomfort and increase participation. But a new study in *Frontiers in Psychology* is the first to show that **listening to music at a higher tempo reduces the perceived effort involved in exercise and increases its benefits.** These effects were greater for endurance exercises, such as walking, than for high-intensity exercises, such as weightlifting. “We found that listening to high-tempo music while exercising resulted in the highest heart rate and lowest perceived exertion compared with not listening to music,” says researcher Professor Luca Ardigò, who plans to also study the effects of other music features such as genre, melody and lyrics on endurance and high-intensity exercise.

Gym junkies

■ New research shows that exercise addiction is nearly four times more common amongst people with an eating disorder. The study, from Anglia Ruskin University, UK, is the first to measure rates of exercise addiction in groups of people with and without the characteristics of an eating disorder. The meta-analysis examined data from 2140 participants across nine different studies, including from the UK, the US, Australia and Italy. It found that **people displaying characteristics of an eating disorder are 3.7 times more likely to suffer from addiction to exercise** than people displaying no indication of an eating disorder.



D FOR EFFORT

Want to train harder? Check your vitamin D levels. A recent study in *The European Journal of Preventive Cardiology* has found higher levels of D are associated with better exercise capacity. It's well established that vitamin D is important for healthy bones, but there is increasing evidence that it plays a role in heart and muscle function, too. In particular, cardiorespiratory fitness – the ability of the heart and lungs to supply oxygen to the muscles during exercise – is improved with higher levels of vitamin D.

Lift your spirits

■ Adding strength-based workouts to your cardio routine could be the key to happiness, according to a study of more than 1.4 million adults. The research, led by the Uni of Southern Queensland, found **people who engaged in high levels of both aerobic exercise and strength training were less likely to report a history of depression** compared to those who were less active. While the benefits of aerobic exercise for depression are well established, this is the largest study to examine the association between the two modes of exercise with clinically diagnosed depression. The results showed that



those who did twice the recommended amount of physical activity reduced their odds of depression by almost 50% compared to those who were inactive. It also revealed that there appeared to be anti-depressive benefits among those doing low-to-moderate levels of both aerobic and strength exercise.



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Mad for a G & T?

■ Gin and tonic drinkers are more likely to be psychopaths. That's the finding from Innsbruck University, Austria, which claims that bitter taste preferences are associated with antisocial personality traits including narcissism, sadism and psychoticism. The researchers did two studies that measured people's taste preferences and tested them with personality questionnaires. "The results of both studies confirmed that **bitter taste preferences are positively associated with malevolent personality traits**, with the most robust relation to everyday sadism and psychopathy," the researchers write.



"I'll have a gin and tonic and two boiled bunnies, thanks barkeep."

The fright stuff



■ Why do we love horror movies? According to Finnish researchers, it's to feel excitement. It's also an excuse to socialise, with most of us unlikely to watch a horror flick alone. People find horror that's psychological in nature and based on real events the scariest, and were more scared by things unseen or implied. The researchers also established the 100

scariest horror movies of the past century. Here's the top 10:

- 1) *The Devil's Backbone* (2001)
- 2) *The Wailing* (2016)
- 3) *The Conjuring* (2013)
- 4) *REC 2* (2009)
- 5) *Insidious* (2010)
- 6) *The Exorcist* (1973)
- 7) *Goodnight Mommy* (2015)
- 8) *A Chinese Ghost Story* (1987)
- 9) *The Conjuring 2* (2016)
- 10) *Under the Shadow* (2016)



LIVE & LET LIE

Tall tales make fast friends. That's the finding of researchers who studied how "entertaining exaggerations of experiences" made people feel emotionally closer to those who included inflated truths or even outright lies in their stories. The study, published in the *Journal of Personal and Social Relationships*, found that this held true even when listeners knew that the exaggerated elements had been invented.

Silver linings

■ Does stress cause grey hair? Apparently it can, according to a study on mice from Harvard University, US. Researchers found that stress activates nerves that are part of the fight-or-flight response, which in turn cause permanent damage to pigment-regenerating stem cells in hair follicles. "When we started to study this, I expected that stress was

bad for the body – but the detrimental impact of stress that we discovered was beyond what I imagined," says researcher Ya-Chieh Hsu. "After just a few days, all of the pigment-regenerating stem cells were lost. Once they're gone, you can't regenerate pigment anymore. The damage is permanent."

Grey is the new black, dude.





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Game Changers

Joint venture

NEW SCIENCE ON WHY ACL INJURIES CAN BE SO HARD TO BOUNCE BACK FROM.



Ever done your ACL? It's bloody painful, and the recovery

is tough—with many people experiencing a loss of function or reinjury following reconstructive surgery, even after going through intensive physical therapy.

It turns out it's not just your anterior cruciate ligament that suffers—research from the University of Michigan, US, has found structural changes in the brains of patients who underwent ACL reconstruction. These changes hinder recovery and contribute to performance deficits and reinjury.

Researchers took MRI brain scans of 10 ACL-reconstructed patients and the scans showed that part of the corticospinal tract—the pathway that shuttles messages from brain to muscles—had atrophied in the patients.

The corticospinal tract runs from front to back through both hemispheres of the brain. The side of the tract that controls the ACL-reconstructed knee was about 15% smaller than on the uninjured side, the researchers say. They liken the altered corticospinal tract to a traffic tunnel that narrows, letting fewer cars pass through. **In the ACL reconstructed patients, less information gets from the brain to the muscle because less information can travel along the smaller tract.**

This finding suggests that future therapies for ACL injuries should focus on more than just the knee, to help “rewire” the brain to help the body adapt to a new normal.



On bended knee: ACL injuries can be tough to recover from.

Sumo strong

Target your inner thighs and glutes with the sumo squat.

The squat is just about the best lower-body compound exercise going, but eventually you will get bored of doing the bog-standard version. At that point, it's time to tweak the form slightly – not only will this keep it fresh, it'll also ensure different muscles get their moment. With the sumo squat, it's the inner thighs and glutes that get more of a workout.

Thigh will be done

The sumo squat places more emphasis on the inner thigh adductors.



HOW TO DO THE SUMO SQUAT

1) Start in a standing position with your feet wide apart and your toes pointing at 45° angles. By wide, we mean wider than shoulder-width apart – around 30cm beyond your shoulder on each side.

2) Drop into a squat, bending at the hips and knees and sitting back. Keep your chest up and your knees out.

3) Keep lowering until your thighs are parallel to the ground, or even slightly below parallel if you have it in you.

4) Then stand back up to the starting position. Make sure you don't lift your feet off the ground or round out your lower back as you perform the squat.

THE VERDICT

THE MF TEAM TRIES... BLUEANT X1 & X2 PORTABLE SPEAKERS



Who are BlueAnt?

BlueAnt is an Aussie electronics and audio brand that develops simple, innovative and intuitive devices. The company pioneered hands-free Bluetooth products in Australia, developing the first dual-microphone Bluetooth headset. Their products have a smart and functional fit and finish, optimal sweat- and water-proofing, top-of-the-range sports audio and a sleek and funky design.

What we tried

Sleek, splash-proof and rugged, the X1 and X2 have been designed to fit the home, workspace and the outdoors. The X-Series delivers a true wireless experience without the need for regular charging, and features Grammy Award-winning DSP software and BlueAnt's patented psycho-acoustic bass extension.

What we thought

The X-Series produce bass that even much larger speakers fail to deliver. And at just \$79.95 and \$99.95 respectively, the X1 and X2 pound-for-pound deliver well above their price point. We took the X2 away on a boys' weekend, and the speaker was more than sufficient to fill the house with pumping bass. We also took it to the beach, where it survived plenty of sand and sea, as well as an impromptu game of BlueAnt footy. It came through it all with flying colours. Find them at blueant.com.au

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Better off bread?

Can you eat bread and still have a solid six-pack? Yep - if you're smart, there's room in your stomach for bread *and* abs.

Obvious things first - it's not as simple as opting for brown over white bread. Being able to eat bread and avoid getting a doughy mid-section depends on your metabolic condition, the type and amount of training you do and whether you're hitting your ideal calorie and macronutrient targets.

Dos and doughn'ts

■ Are you overweight or living a sedentary life? If so, bad news. Such people tend to have poor insulin sensitivity, blood-sugar control and nutrient-partitioning abilities. That's a scientific way of saying

carbs have a harder time getting into the muscle cells and are likely to be stored as fat. If this is you, a lower-carb diet is better for improving body composition and health, so a daily breaking of bread is less advisable.

Training frequently at high intensity changes everything. If you strength train, cross-train or compete in intermittent sprint sports, you need carbs. They're the best way to fuel training sessions and recover from them. But if you want to walk around with a six-pack, you need to consider total calories and food quality, too.

To lose fat and get lean, you need to be in a calorie deficit (see box below). And if you train hard and maintain a consistent calorie deficit, you can include bread and other starchy carbs in your diet.

Emphasising good food choices - whole, natural foods instead of highly processed foods - improves the health benefits of your diet,

improves nutrient density and reduces hunger, which makes staying in a calorie deficit easier. With that in mind, foods that are less refined, such as potatoes and rice, are better sources of starchy carbs.

Roll with it

■ So if you do decide to have bread on occasion, which is best? It depends. Assuming you're in calorie deficit, training hard and eating it alongside protein, the glycaemic load matters less than it would for sedentary people. So your choice of dough doesn't need to be significantly influenced by that.

The main consideration is tolerance. Some grains can affect digestion and mineral absorption. Find out what you can and can't tolerate by trial and error. Perhaps due to the fermentation process, sourdough seems to be the least problematic. That doesn't mean you can gorge daily on sourdough-base pizzas, but as a cheat meal, you could do worse.

You don't need to be leaven loaves out of your diet.

SLICE OF LIFE

Eat bread while staying in calorie deficit to earn a six-pack.

1. Work out your daily calorie requirement for fat loss. This is around 27.5 per kilo of lean body mass, so 2200 for an 80kg man.

2. You also need around 2g of protein per kilo (160g for an 80kg man) and 25% of calories should come from fat (60g).

3. The rest should come from carbs, which adds up to 380g (adjust this amount based on your fat-loss results). Here's a guide to how:

- Slice of wholemeal toast **12g**
- ¼ of a sourdough loaf **56g**
- ¼ of a baguette **35g**

WELCOME BLACK



WITH SODA OR ON THE ROCKS, TOO EASY.

Take it easy. Drink responsibly.

Full speed ahead

Tailor your training around what you want to achieve in the water.

D Developing speed in the water isn't just about effort, it's about finding the sweet spot between efficiency and power. The following will help you work on both of these critical aspects of faster swimming. It's not heavy on distance, but it is high in quality.

There's a lot of stroke counting during this workout. Counting your strokes is a great habit to get into – it's a constant reminder of how efficient you're being in the water and keeps you focused on a tangible part of your swimming, cutting down on some of the daydreaming that inevitably happens while we churn around the black line.

SWIMMING FOR SPEED WORKOUT

1 Freestyle 50s

Reps 4
Distance 50m
Rest 25 sec

With each rep, lower the number of strokes per 50m. If you take 35 strokes on the first rep, try 34 for the second rep, 33 for the third and 32 for the fourth. The goal is to swim as efficiently as possible. Think tight streamline off the wall, solid hip and shoulder rotation and an even and balanced stroke.

2 Freestyle 25s

Reps 6
Distance 25m
Rest 40 sec

Take your best stroke count from the 50s and cut it in half. Your goal is to go as fast as possible while holding that stroke count. This will teach you to be efficient at a high speed and find that happy balance between stroke count (how fast your arms are turning over) and distance per stroke (how far each stroke takes you in the water). It's all about quality with these bad boys.

3 Double-arm backstroke

Reps 1
Distance 50m

Swim easy to keep loose before the next round starts.

Beginners should do this set one to two times, while more advanced swimmers can work their way up to five rounds.

Next month: swimming to build stamina

MFTOP PICKS

NEED FOR SPEEDO



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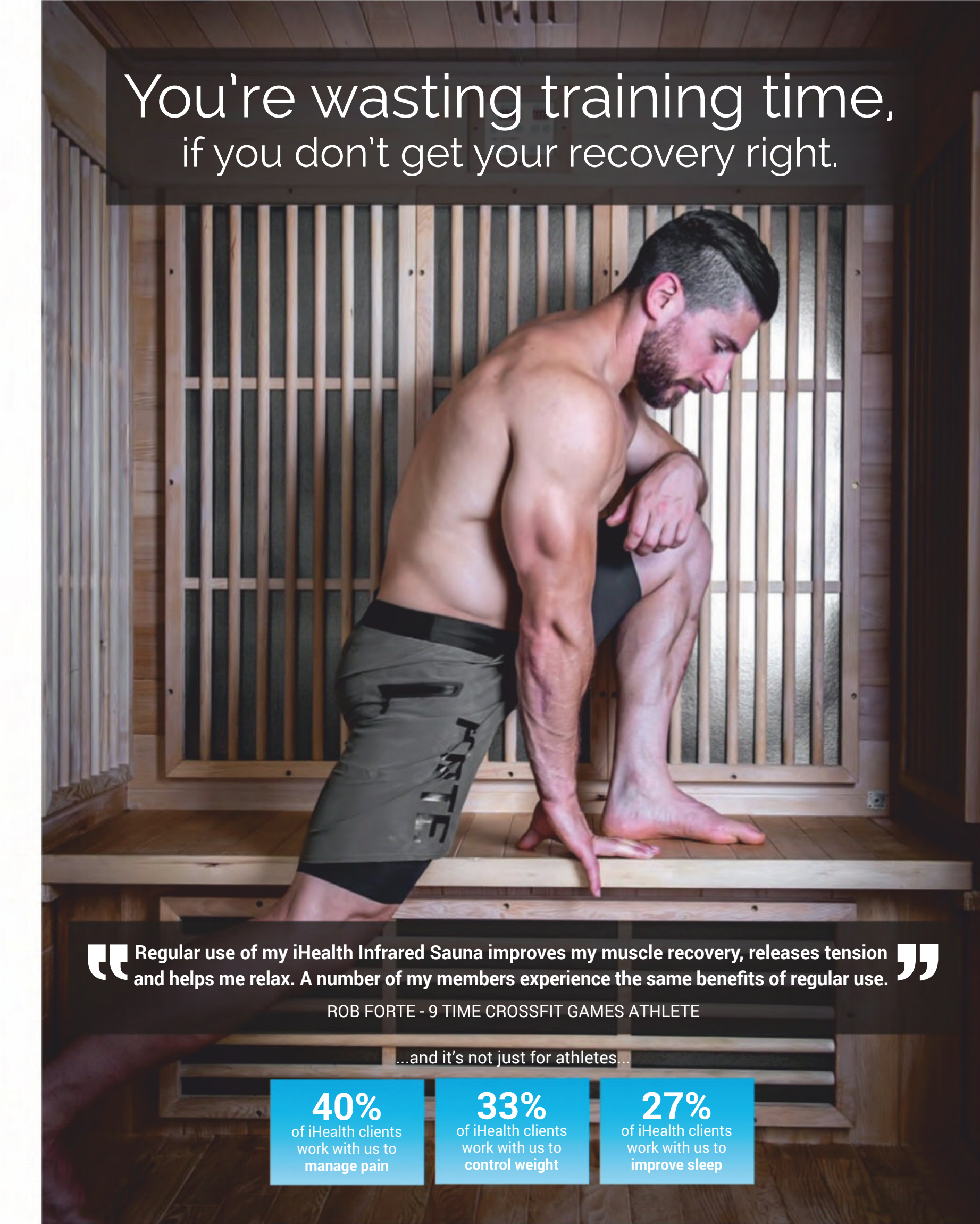
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Moment of tooth

Use these tips to keep your gnashers in tip-top shape.

As you are no doubt aware, World Oral Health Day – the Christmas of the dental hygiene world – falls on March 20, meaning there's no better time to brush up on your mouth care plan. Statistics from the Australian Dental Association suggest plenty of people in Australia need to do just that. Only 50% of adults brush their teeth twice a day, and almost half of all adults haven't been to the dentist in the past 12 months. One in six of us can't even remember the last time we saw a dentist. As a result of this, 90% of Aussies have some form of tooth decay.

How foods stain your teeth

There are three culprits in food and drinks: chromogens – pigment-producing substances that latch on and cause stains – and acids and

tannins that soften up and erode enamel, making it easier for the chromogens to stick to it.

Red wine, the standard bearer of teeth stainers, contains all three. Other big stainers include dark berries, coffee, tea, balsamic vinegar and white wine, which softens up the teeth for other food to stain through the acids and tannins it contains.

Rinse and brush your teeth within an hour of eating to prevent a darker hue from infecting your chompers. Don't brush immediately, though, as the acid-softened enamel could be damaged by your efforts to save it.

5 tips for better oral health

Once you've brushed your teeth, don't rinse out your mouth with water or mouthwash, as this will wash away the protective fluoride from toothpaste.



Ninety percent of Aussie adults have some form of tooth decay. Time to see your dentist?

A Cochrane Review in 2014 found that using an electric toothbrush results in a 21% reduction in plaque compared with a manual brush after three months.

After a meal, treat yourself to a small chunk of cheese, which contains alkali and will neutralise acids left by food, which can damage tooth enamel.

If you're concerned about bad breath, lick your wrist, let it dry and then sniff it. (Obviously, you'll need a clean wrist for this to work.)

You should brush your teeth before breakfast to remove the overnight build-up of bacteria, which use the food we eat to produce acid, causing tooth decay.

Soft drink is acidic, and acid makes teeth more prone to staining.

MF TOP (TOOTH) PICK

NO ORDINARY TOOTHPASTE



■ Want to make brushing fun again? Now that you're too old for your Dora the Explorer toothbrush, it's time to try something a little more grown-up. Marvis create unique dental products that will add

a little oomph to your daily dental routine. Brushing aside the traditional one-mint-fits-all concept of toothpaste, the Italian brand delivers a world of quirky, eyebrow-raising flavours. Think

cinnamon, black forest, sweet and sour rhubarb and orange blossom. But these aren't just for fun: they're all top-quality fluoride toothpastes that remove plaque and keep your teeth clean. marvisaustalia.com.au

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Remember the 5 Ps: proper preparation prevents poor performance.

Losing streak

Goodlife Fitness Director Joel Burns (pictured at left) shares his expert advice on how to achieve long-term, sustainable weight loss.

1

Set some goals

■ Take the time to write down what you want to achieve. If possible, link your goal to an upcoming event (wedding, etc), as it will help keep you accountable. **Big goals can sometimes feel far off, so try setting smaller goals as well** – it'll keep you focused until the physical results really begin to take shape. Small goals could include going the gym three times a week, increasing the distance you can run without stopping or decreasing the number of beers you drink. Also, goal setting should be dynamic: review, reset and chase.

2

Establish your baseline

■ What physical activities are you doing now? What does your weekly food intake look like? Once you've clearly established your baseline, you can set about planning for some sustainable changes in physical activity and/or nutrition. **It's unrealistic and not sustainable to make a change from doing nothing to exercising seven days a week**, or transitioning from an unrestricted high-calorie food plan to tiny meals of chicken and broccoli. Small continuous improvement is the best approach for long-term sustainable results.

3

Prep and plan

■ Poor nutritional choices are often made out of convenience and a lack of preparation. **Try planning your meals on the weekend or when you have some downtime**, use these plans to create a shopping list to stick to, then prepare the week's meals in advance so you always have healthy food readily available. Your approach to exercise should be the same: write down what your training plan is for the week to help you stay accountable, and remember to include a mix of incidental exercise as well (walking, sport, etc).

4

Build support

■ Taking on any significant change in lifestyle is always easier when you've built a supportive team around you. Start with a great personal trainer, then recruit friends and family members who are willing to support the goals you're looking to achieve. If you can, **connect with others who are embarking on a similar journey** – arrange to meet for training sessions (which will make you more accountable) and share advice on nutrition and exercise. With the right support, you'll find it easier to stay on track.

5

Never give up!

■ If you don't achieve your goal, you haven't failed. Life is about ups and downs; **the most important thing is that you learn and adapt**. The first step towards progress is acknowledging what went wrong. If you can identify this, you can work on moving forward. And know that maintaining health and fitness shouldn't come at the expense of a well-balanced lifestyle. If a plan restricts you from going out to dinner or having a beer with friends, you aren't going to stick to it. Rather than removing pleasure from your life, plan for it, then get back on track.

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Bar exam

They ain't cheap and can contain more calories and sugar than chocolate bars. Choose wisely with our expert's guide and our top picks.

Maybe just stick to one.

Protein is so much more convenient these days. Where once gym-goers had to tuck into a couple of barbecued chickens to refuel their muscles after a hefty workout, they can now mix up a protein shake or, more convenient still, tuck into a protein bar.

Protein bars are now widely available, involve zero preparation, and generally taste good enough to seem like a treat as well as a way to help build muscle. However, there are downsides to protein bars, mainly involving the diamond-hard texture of some of them, and you need to be careful not to overindulge because they're not simply a guilt-free replacement for chocolate. Read on for the full lowdown on what to look for in a protein bar, as well as our top five.

■ Before you start grabbing fistfuls of bars, it's important to know what to look for. Obviously how much protein they contain is key, but as with all processed food, you have to be careful to avoid hidden nasties. To help guide you, we enlisted Kurtis Frank from nutrition and supp encyclopaedia examine.com.

What should people look for when choosing a bar?

■ "The main factors would be taste, macronutrient composition and price," says Frank.

Most bars deliver somewhere between 15g-25g of protein. Beyond that, you want to look at how much protein you're getting per calorie.

"For macronutrient composition, most bars are either just

"Aim to get a decent amount of protein per calorie."

under 200 calories while giving 15g of protein or are around 250 calories for 25g of protein," says Frank.

"Both are good since, at the end of the day, they should only be making up a small percentage of your total calories."

Also make sure you're buying a protein bar, not an energy bar aimed at endurance activities where loads of carbs are required.

The price of protein bars can vary hugely, and there will be awful ones at the cheaper end of things. However, if you can find a cheap bar you like, it will save you money and there are bargains available, especially online.



CHECK YOUR LABELS

The wrapper might look promising, but the nutritional label cannot lie. Check the protein, fat, sugar and carb levels before you shell out any cash.

"A premium bar can easily be one of the most expensive things in your diet on a per-calorie basis," says Frank. "They aren't cheap, but cheap ones tend to taste worse and be made with poorer ingredients, so it ends up being a balancing act based on your preferences and how much you're willing to spend. It's worth it

to at least try the cheaper bars since they might taste good and end up saving you money.

"Aim to get a decent amount of protein per calorie and if you've found a brand you like, then consider buying in bulk online."

What difference does the type of protein make?

■ Brands offer many varieties in their bars and the terms used can be confusing. Luckily, it doesn't matter too much what protein is in your bar.

"The different types of protein matter much less in a bar than they do in shakes," says Frank, "since the rate of absorption for proteins are inherently slowed when put into a solid form and paired with dietary fats and fibres.

"The types of protein with higher biological values are technically better, but they're all close enough that debating about milk protein concentrate versus whey isolate is irrelevant."

A couple of things you should look for on the label is whether there's a high amount of gelatine or soy concentrate, says Frank. "The only real ways that protein type is relevant is if there is a high gelatine content, which provides amino acids and appears as protein on a nutritional label but is not a nourishing protein type, or if you're getting 30g of soy concentrate, since in high doses there could be a mild oestrogenic effect. Keep in mind soy lecithin is not soy protein and is totally fine in a protein bar."

RAISING THE BAR

What else should I look out for in a protein bar?

■ Protein bars can contain more calories and sugar than you might expect.

"You definitely should be worried about calories and sugars in protein bars," says Frank. "Just because it's seen as healthy, doesn't make its consumption a free pass to be omitted from your calorie counts."

On the other hand, you can also pick

up protein bars that contain unexpected health bonuses, especially when it comes to fibre intake. "It is usually a good idea to get at least 5g of dietary fibre in a protein bar," says Frank. "It helps it go down better, and a lot of us need help to get a decent amount of fibre in our diets."

Sugar alcohols like sorbitol and xylitol

are more common in the cheaper protein bars that are looking to reduce calories by swapping natural sugars for these ones.

"While they can be eaten in moderation and aren't necessarily bad, they can definitely cause stomach upset in some people," says Frank. "If you're eating a protein bar before exercise, this is the last thing you want."

Called to the bar

Here at *MF*, we've tried more protein bars than you could shake a, well, protein shaker at. Here are our faves.



1 **CRANKT PROTEIN BARS**

BAR CODE: **crankin'**

Crankt protein bars combine premium high-protein (33%), low-carb (1.2% to 4.2%) ingredients and energy that are free from gluten and artificial ingredients, including artificial sweetener. They come in six flavours and are high in fibre. crankt.com.au

2 **SCIENCE IN SPORT PROTEIN20**

BAR CODE: **low carb**

These low-sugar (2g), high-protein (20g) bars are ideal for after a gym session, easy spin or recovery run, where a lower carbohydrate intake is needed. PROTEIN20 uses a combination of milk protein, soy protein and collagen peptides. scienceinsport.com

3 **BODY SCIENCE CLEAN BARS**

BAR CODE: **clean as**

These guys come in three flavours (Banana Bread, Choc Lamington and Lemon Cashew) and they're so delicious, you wouldn't know they were purely plant-based, with no dairy and no added sugar. A genuinely satisfying texture, too. bodyscience.com.au

4 **BOUNCE BREKKIE BARS**

BAR CODE: **morning!**

Gluten-free and high in fibre, Bounce Brekkie Bars offer a different flavour profile from most other bars. Think Apricot Almond, Coconut Goji and Banana Pecan. Oh yeah. Perfect to grab as you run out the door for work, or if you want to keep your morning meal light. bouncefoods.com.au

4 **CLIF PROTEIN BARS**

BAR CODE: **it's all go**

Nutritious and organic, with an almost cakey goodness that really fills you up. Awesome flavours, too – including our favourite, Crunchy Peanut Butter. These are energy bars, so they deliver a whack of carbs along with protein. So they're a little higher in calories. clifbar.com.au

6 **SUPERCUBES WHOLEFOODS BARS**

BAR CODE: **pure love**

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The missing link

If you're going to splash out on quality spirits, don't drown them in sub-par sugar water.

D Do you drink spirits with a mixer? You might give a lot of thought to the quality of spirit you use, but if three-quarters of your drink is the mixer, isn't the mixer you use just as important as the booze you use it with?

You also need to think about calories. If you want a cocktail, the main problem for your health isn't the alcohol (unless you're downing bucketloads), but the insane amount of sugar you can end up consuming. That doesn't mean you have to forgo cocktails entirely. Instead, try these ideas and you'll be able to have a tipple without running the risk of becoming diabetic.

Add a real kick to your G & T with some hot chilli.



Classic G & T

150ml Fever-Tree Premium Indian Tonic Water
50ml Hayman's of London Dry Gin
Plenty of fresh ice cubes
A twist of lime peel

TO MAKE: Add the ice to a large balloon glass or wine glass, pour over the gin, then the tonic water. Twist the lime peel over the glass, then add to the mix.

Mojito

150ml Fever-Tree Premium Soda Water
Juice of 1 lime
1tsp granulated sugar
Handful of mint leaves, plus extra to serve
50ml white rum
Fresh crushed ice

TO MAKE: Muddle the lime, sugar and mint in a tall glass. Add a good handful of crushed ice and pour over the rum. Stir with a long-handled spoon and top with the soda. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

Jalapeño Basil Gin and Tonic

1 jalapeño, sliced
2 sprigs fresh basil
½ small cucumber, sliced
60ml Hayman's of London Old Tom Gin
150ml Fever-Tree Premium Indian Tonic Water

TO MAKE: Muddle jalapeño, basil, and cucumber in the bottom of a cocktail shaker. Fill shaker with ice, add gin, and shake vigorously. Strain cocktail into ice-filled glass and top off with tonic before serving.

In the mix



Fever-Tree was founded by two pros in the drinks business who noticed premium spirits were growing, fuelled by consumers' increasing awareness of the provenance of what they drank. But this interest neglected mixers. The company created a range of drinks that provide the kind of fresh, tongue-tingling flavours that your fancy booze is just crying out to jump into a glass with. fever-tree.com



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If the boot fits

Blundstones are as Aussie as a kangaroo eating a Tim Tam – and the classic brand is celebrating 150 years of success.



B

Blundstone, that iconic Aussie boot brand, is celebrating its 150th Anniversary in 2020. One hundred and fifty years is nothing to sneeze at – especially these days, when brands come and go faster than a toupee in a hurricane.

The Blundstone story is as enduring as the boots it created: bootmaker John Blundstone arrived in Hobart with his wife Eliza in 1855, after an arduous 93-day boat journey from England. JB started importing boots from England that could handle the harsh conditions of colonial Tasmania, but was soon making his boots from locally sourced materials. He founded Blundstone in 1870.

Since then, the name Blundstone has become synonymous with toughness and durability. The company prides itself on making honest, fit-for-purpose footwear designed for what the wearer needs and wants – the antidote to today's cheap, fast fashion.

Everybody wants a pair

■ During WWI and WWII, Blundstone supplied boots to Aussie soldiers, making more than 500,000 pairs for the Australian Army in WWII alone. The boots were so sought-after, the left and right boots were shipped separately to keep envious wharf

labourers from nicking a pair for themselves. US soldiers also tried – and sometimes succeeded – in swapping their own boots for a pair of Blunnies.

Blundstones were also used in an Australian expedition to Mt Everest in 1977. During the trip, Nepalese Sherpas

During WWII, Blundstone boots were so sought-after, the left and right boots were shipped separately to keep envious wharf labourers from nicking a pair for themselves.

requested that they receive the worn Blundstones as a gift.

Celebrities also love their Blunnies – Iggy Pop, David Beckham, Jimmy Fallon, Chris Hemsworth and JJ Abrams have all worn them, and this year the #990 was featured on models walking the runway for Dion Lee at New York Fashion Week.

Boots for life

■ When you own a pair of Blundstones, you own them for the long haul. Blunnies form to the wearer's foot as they're used, which makes them so comfortable, you can take them anywhere, no matter how muddy or rugged the terrain you're

tackling. It's not just workers who love their Blundstones – the comfortable fit, easy-on-easy-off design and classic look and feel of these boots make them as at home on a dancefloor or in a music festival mosh pit as they are on a building site.

The company's oldest boot currently available is the original #500, which has sold upwards of 25 million pairs. Designed in the 1960s, the iconic #500 has remained relatively unchanged since, and is worn and loved by everyone from tradies on the job to cool kids in New York. But the range extends far beyond its classic, elastic-sided rugged all-rounder; today

Blundstone boasts 400 different products available around the world.

The company may have moved into new categories, but has always kept its founding philosophy of quality and longevity – and the famous look and feel of a pair of no-nonsense Blundstones is as loved by Aussies today as it was back in the 1870s.

While the classics will always remain – the company's best-selling boot worldwide is the rustic brown #585 – the company continues to innovate and design new ranges, as well as updating the safety styles with the latest technologies to

BIRTHDAY BOOTS



To celebrate 150 years, Blundstone has released two limited-edition boots – the #9150 safety boot and #150 casual boot.

The #9150 features a broad-fitting steel toe cap; a rubber outsole; slip, cut and abrasion resistance; and has the ability to withstand temperatures up to 300°C. The boot has a rich oxblood leather upper, with an embossed “150” heel feature. The brand's iconic pull tabs also receive an anniversary update with a gold hue and 150 years element. Gold may not be a staple colour on a worksite, but 150

years deserves some bling! The #150 is fashioned on the brand's iconic Chelsea boot style. It features supple 1.8mm-thick premium auburn leather, and a hand screen-printed and stamped bronze lining. The boot is debossed into the outer heel leather to mark the milestone, and further touches include smooth leather rolled edges, a 150 gold update on the iconic pull tabs, and bronze lining.

Get 'em at blundstone.com.au or at leading retailers

ensure they're always fit for purpose. And Blundstone remains proudly Tasmanian.

There are exciting things planned for Blundstone in 2020, and this year the company is focused on celebrating 150 years of boot-scooting success.

The brand's history is an inspiring one, but its ethos and focus remain the same – to produce boots that can take you anywhere. Happy birthday, Blunnies.

Follow Blundstone @ [blundstoneau](https://twitter.com/blundstoneau), or head to blundstone150.com



Look after your Blunnies

■ Basic care tips for keeping your Blunnies in their best shape:

Bang the soles of your boots together to remove excess dirt.

Take a brush and remove any dirt on the top of your boot.

Waterproofing your boots will protect the leather against anything you throw at it.

Wipe your boots down with a damp cloth and use a polishing pad to replenish the natural oils in the leather of your boots.

Do not dry them next to the heater or other direct heat, as this can stress the leather and make it crack.





John Cena

Never

been

He's one of the most successful athletes ever to step foot in the WWE's famed squared circle, but industry icon John Cena knows that reputation and winning spirit go more than skin deep. By Peter Wallace

stronger



gruelling as the one laid out for WWE employees. Ever humble despite the glittering litany of high-profile personal accolades, Cena is quick to point out the role played by others in getting him ring-ready.

“The travel is crazy, so there’s no real daily schedule for workouts,” he says. “Usually it’s four days on, three days off, two days of compound strength movements - multiple joint stuff - and two days of push-pull with the goal of being stronger every day.

“Professionals know the way to be healthier. We know we need a trainer. Why? Because you’re not moving around enough. Move around some, make good choices, and just do it every day, be consistent. The moment when you’re like, ‘Ah, I don’t want to do this’, stop. And if you really don’t want to do it, you haven’t found the right thing yet.”

In fine form

Cena’s journey away from the glare of the WWE spotlights is one that any fitness fanatic can feel akin to, no matter what stage of that path they’re on. Now one of the company’s most experienced names, Cena has shown little sign of slowing down since his milestone fortieth, having played a leading role in last year’s calendar stand-out WrestleMania.

But even the man who fellow wrestling legend The Big Show said made him feel most confident being lifted in the ring - despite Cena being a foot shorter and over 90kg lighter than the monolithic “Show” - faces challenges in the gym. As the years have gone on, Cena has switched to performance training over appearance-specific work - a move he describes as “hard as hell”.

“It’s like teaching an old dog new tricks,” he laughs. “My trainer Rob will tell you, I fought him every step of the way. I’d say, ‘Man, I can’t do this.’ And he’d tell me, ‘Dude, you’re just making excuses. Just shut up and do it. You’re an athlete.’

“And the first couple of weeks of trying these lifts, like the snatch or the power clean or the glute ham-raise, anything abnormal but performance-based stuff, is difficult. But you get a couple of reps in, you get the form down, then it becomes fun.”

Staying strong

Nowadays, Cena is maxing out on powerlifts of around 600lb (272kg).

Every new year that John Cena steps into the ring, he takes on the adulation of yet another generation of children across the world. For the man who has become more synonymous with the modern incarnation of professional wrestling entertainment than any of his peers, the life of a wrestling “superstar” - well documented to be anything but easy - is worth every second.

“I don’t consider it a job,” 42-year-old Cena says. “I consider it a privilege that I have a message powerful enough to get young people to listen - ‘Never give up’. And to get them to pay attention to stuff, like the impression they leave on people. Sometimes it doesn’t make me the coolest kid in school, but I’m very happy with the message I have to send. I’m very happy to be a role model.

“I never get tired of hearing it - it’s basically people saying, in so many words, ‘You have had an

impact on my life.’ That’s the coolest thing anyone can ever say to you.”

Stronger every day

WWE’s biggest names have come and gone, but John Cena has remained at the very core of Vince McMahon’s billion-dollar business over the past 20 years. Billed more often than not as the all-American poster boy for this most American of showbiz sports extravaganzas, Cena’s domination of ’90s wrestling has led him to 16 world titles and a semi-legendary status in the ring.

Indeed, in spite of WWE’s basis in showmanship and entertainment, there’s an argument to be made that the 182cm tall, 111kg Cena is one of the most impressive athletes of the 21st Century thus far.

“I show up on time, I work really, really hard, and I approach everything like it’s the first day on the job,” he says. “Also, I have a saying: ‘Don’t be an A-hole’, and I’m guided by that! I just try to be a nice person, treat people with respect and work hard.”

Few yearly itineraries are as

It's a far cry from his earliest steps down the path to fitness phenom, when teenage bullying led him to focus on getting as big as he could be. "As a kid, what brought me in the gym, what got me in there every day, was a chance to break my personal best," he says. "A chance to be strong. I just really, really dig that."

Looking back, Cena can still recognise the same insecurities that got him going to the gym in the first place, more than 30 years ago.

"Do people think because I'm 250 pounds and 6-feet that I wouldn't have a sense of self-exploration and want to find out who I really am and be comfortable in my own skin?" he asks. "That actually surprises people because they don't view people that look like me as being able to do that. I'm not angry and I don't get argumentative about it. I view it as any time I can surprise someone, I think that's good."

And for a pro wrestler who's sometimes been seen as undeserving of his in-ring success, perhaps due to his closeness to the WWE powers-that-be, such snap judgements carry a little extra weight. Peel back the layers, however, and a new John Cena emerges - not so much a "Doctor of Thugamonics" as a grafting university graduate in sports psychology.

"It's helped me more from an anatomy standpoint," he says. "I'm no doctor, but I can better describe if there's something wrong

with me to my athletic training team. It helps diagnose problems of even strong points quicker. I only have a bachelor's degree - I didn't take it further than that. I can offer ideas, but I don't beat my chest and act like I know it all. My knowledge helps the professional doctors and trainers get to the root of a problem better.

"I got an education as a by-product; my goal was to play football. In every phase of my life, where my life has taken a tectonic shift, is that the stuff that was important to me - playing football, being in a WWE ring, just having a general chance to entertain folks - does not define who I am."

Surprise package

This is the Cena who often goes unrecognised. The Cena who has studied piano, for example - "I love being able to play some classical music and things like the blues, Ray Charles, and the Rat Pack-y lounge stuff" - or who learned Mandarin to be able to better connect to his legions of fans in Asia.

"I always love exploring new challenges," he says. "With Mandarin, I've just always been fascinated with the Chinese culture, and I certainly wanted to do more business in China. Taking the time to learn the language and culture of someone you want to partner up with? To me, that's a very solid gesture.



"I ALWAYS BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN PROGRESS, AND YOU CAN GET BETTER."

"The hardest thing to do at an old age is learn a language and play an instrument... I always believe that you can progress, and you can get better. If anything, I think of the opposite. I stay awake at night with crazy ideas of what to do."

All this time, Cena's burgeoning acting career has been going from strength to strength. Following on in the footsteps of his former colleagues Dwayne Johnson and Dave Bautista, the wrestler's acting career has gone from WWE-produced buzzcut box-office bombs (*The Marine*, *12 Rounds*) to a spate of well-received comedic roles in films such as *Sisters*, *Trainwreck* and *Daddy's Home*.

Older, wiser and stronger than ever

John Cena used to train like a bodybuilder, but now works out like an athlete - relying on compound exercises and strategically choosing set-and-rep schemes that ensure progression while reducing injury risk. See the differences in Cena's workouts below:



Landmine unit core work has long been a staple of Cena's routine.

Cena's old-school chest routine

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Incline machine press	5	20
Incline barbell press	5	20
Machine flye	3	15
Cable flye	3	15
Bench press	3	10

*Lower the weight to upper chest. Push up one-quarter of the way. Lower back down to chest. Push up to full extension. That's one rep.

Cena's updated upper-body routine

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Bench press	3	5
Incline DB 1¼ press*	3	6
Lying DB triceps extension	3	8
Single-arm DB row	4	5
Machine row	3	8
Barbell shrug	4	6, 6, 5, 5
Landmine twist	2	10

“IF I CAN PUT A SMILE ON SOMEONE’S FACE WHILE I MAKE A FOOL OUT OF MYSELF, I’M HAPPY WITH THAT.”

“I’m comfortable enough with who I am to do it; I don’t have to look tough or act a certain way or project a certain image,” he says of his move into more light-hearted cinema. “I’m comfortable in my own skin. And if I can put a smile on someone’s face while I make a fool out of myself, I’m happy with that.”

“After seeing what I’ve done for 15 years in WWE, to be able to sit down and see that mystique, that wall broken down, at my expense, for the fun of the viewer, I think it’s funny.”

Okay with me

This year, expect to see Cena looming large on billboards across the globe. Upcoming turns in *F9*, the ninth instalment of the *Fast & Furious* franchise, and his Marvel debut in the third *Guardians of the Galaxy*

movie represent a huge step up for the silver-screen Cena.

It’s not a bad retirement plan, all things considered, should Cena make his gradual stepping away from regular WWE appearances a more permanent reality. In that instance, it may well be that it’s the WWE, not Cena, who suffers most, as they struggle to fill the huge void that would be left by the loss of the company’s prodigal son. To that end, there’s little doubt that McMahon will do anything he can to keep Cena nearby in any capacity. For the man himself, this being the start of his third decade in pro wrestling, now seems an opportune moment to “take a step back and reflect”.

“The movie *The Wrestler* was centred around a guy who can’t let go,” Cena says. “I’m being a shitty human being because I can’t let go of this thing. I invested my life in that company and there’s no one, whether they like my performance or not, that will argue that. But every sunset that happens, I get a little slower and a little older

5 things about Cena



1. Sports entertainment hurts

My worst injuries were when I tore my pec muscle right off the bone and herniated a disc in my neck. Tearing a pec hurts like hell, but I knew I could carry on. I had a responsibility to.

2. The fans come first

There is no better feeling than walking into an arena packed with fans. I don’t care whether they’re cheering or booing me – as long as they’re making a noise, I’m happy. The energy they bring is amazing; it makes me perform better.

3. We fight to entertain

The UFC is really popular, but I don’t think it’ll ever become bigger than the WWE. It’s a totally different product.

4. I’m only as good as my next fight

I’m not particularly proud or pleased of any one match or performance. Once that fight is over, I don’t dwell on it. My focus is to always perform better than my last match.

5. I’ll go out on top

I came into the WWE without any career goals, so everything I’ve achieved has been a bonus.

and a little slower and a little older, and it’s eventually going to end.

“And if it all stops tomorrow, I’m still okay with me. I know the good things that define me, and I know the qualities I have as a human being. I’m going to move on and go forward. I know that all this is borrowed. I’m just grateful to have it and grateful to be able to contribute. I don’t want to be greedy as a performer, and I see that a lot in sports entertainment.”

There’s a real sense that Cena will finish as he started, not obsessing over the number of heavyweight titles or Royal Rumble wins, but matching up to his own expectations, the high bar he has set for himself and consistently bettered throughout his career. But luckily for young wrestling fans around the world today, this is one champion who isn’t on his back just yet.

“Every time I leave the gym, I’m thinking,” he says with a smile, “I can’t wait until I go back next time to try to do better!” ■



Clockwise from top: Cena in a scene from the panned *The Marine*; taking a comedic turn with Amy Schumer in *Trainwreck*; on set with his castmates on *Fast & Furious 9*, in cinemas this May.



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THE INCREDIBLE BULK



Eat, pray, lift
While hard training is essential, it's what you put in your gob that will determine whether you succeed.

WHAT TO EAT, WHAT TO LIFT AND WHERE MOST PEOPLE GO WRONG WHEN TRYING TO BUILD BIG MUSCLES.

{ By **MF EDITORS** }

What man doesn't want bigger muscles? While gym floors are chockas with wannabe muscle men making awkward grunting noises, most of these blokes are unlikely to see any really gains. Why? They lack a plan. Give a man a pair of dumbbells, and he can crank out a few sets of curls, sure. But give a man a pair of dumbbells and a plan, and he can change his entire body. Here's some solid advice to get you some solid results.



**GOT
ABS?**

If you spend a few weeks training hard and eating a strict, healthy diet, you'll start to notice a set of upper abs. At this point, you'd be forgiven for making the assumption that the rest of your abs are set to follow in a similar timeframe. Sadly, that's not how things go. The upper abs are always the first to show and they are also easier to target. If you want to sculpt a complete six-pack, you need to hit the lower abs and obliques, too.



Recovery kit
Chocolate milk gives you a good whack of carbs and protein.

It's bulking season

Bulking is a seasonal ritual for weights room regulars. As winter draws in and opportunities to take your shirt off recede, thoughts turn to supersizing muscles ahead of cutting body fat in the spring, ready again for summer. Basically, it's all about eating and lifting big to get big.

Bulking centres on two core principles: consuming enough food to be in a calories surplus and exercising to trigger hypertrophy, or in other words, muscle growth. It sounds simple, but in practice, of course, there are pitfalls at every turn. *MF* spoke to gym experts who have been there, done that and helped others do it,

too, to explain what to eat to achieve a calories surplus sensibly and safely, what to lift to trigger hypertrophy, and to find out exactly how to bulk up regardless of your body type.

Bulking centres on two core principles: consuming enough food and exercising to trigger hypertrophy.

The biggest bulking mistakes

■ The most common mistake people make is assuming muscle growth will be a quick process, says former *mag* cover model Scott Baptie. A sports nutritionist, Baptie knows building muscle is hard.

"It's glacial," he says. "The more experienced you are with the gym, the longer it will take. Experienced trainees would be lucky to add around 0.5kg of muscle a year. Beginners, perhaps 3-4kg."

Another typical pitfall is assuming you can accelerate the process with a so-called "dirty bulk". A pumped-up diet of fast food, monster shakes and nutritionally bankrupt calories, this simply leads to excessive weight gain and minimal muscle growth.

Apart from causing your waistline to expand, a dirty bulk will sabotage the health of organs that need to be firing to help you grow. "You wouldn't put cheap fuel in your Ferrari and expect it to run at high performance for long," says Gideon Remfry,

a nutritional therapist.

"To support sustainable muscle growth, you need to optimise your body's natural anabolic [muscle-building] hormones," he explains. "This relies on supporting the health of organs that produce and manage them, including your glands, liver, guts and pancreas."

Good-quality sleep and a healthy diet are just as crucial as repetitive and consistent resistance training. In other words, train hard, eat smart and rest lots.

Because muscle growth is so hard-earned, Remfry also finds a lack of planning and tracking can be a common oversight. "It's better to plan a long-term strategy of training and nutrition - around three to six months - with monthly testing of key markers such as skeletal muscle and body fat."

That will give you a better indication of success than merely counting the number on the scales.

PRO TIPS

Beware the long-term side effects.

"A few years ago, in a bid to make it as a strongman, I took bulking to the next level. At 1.93m tall and 120kg, I needed to eat a ton of dirty food to reach my surplus. I even ended up drinking olive oil and had no qualms using anything from chocolate bars to Yorkshire puddings to hit my goals. Over two years, my weight peaked at 142kg. I gained

a load of muscle and strength, but also a hell of a lot of fat.

"Would I do it the same way again? Probably not. I didn't feel great and the extra weight began to take its toll in the form of injuries. On top of this, I became totally uninterested in food.

"Clean is the way to go, with dirty treats thrown in within the macro

target. That's purely for sanity - if you can't be naughty during a bulk, you've got no chance surviving a cleaner cut. But consistency is the most important factor in any diet."

- Emil "Goliath" Hodzovic



Control yourself

Working out a plan of endless drop sets, negatives and supersets will probably take longer to do than the workouts themselves, and it's not time well spent. Instead, stick to Hodzovic's tried-and-tested solution, "controlled movement with slow tempos and rest-pause sets".

TAKE IT EASY

Try this tempo rest-pause set with biceps curls: lift your 10-rep max at a tempo of two seconds up, four seconds down until failure. Rest for 15 seconds. Lift again for two seconds up, two seconds down to failure. Rest 15 seconds once more, then do a final set of as many reps as you can muster at a faster tempo. Then shake off the agonising lactate. And never forget – you grow while you rest.

Turn fat into muscle
Fats in avocado support muscle-building hormones like testosterone.



How much do you need to eat?

■ As with losing weight, what works for one person won't work for another and genetics will play a large part.

Ectomorph hardgainers, those with a fast metabolism who struggle to gain weight, will need to consume far more calories than the genetic lottery-winning mesomorphs, who gain muscle quickly.

On the other hand, endomorphs, who typically gain fat

easily, will need to be extra careful they don't balloon instead of bulk up.

To work out how many calories you need, you should workout your resting or basal metabolic rate (BMR) using an online calculator.

This will help you understand how many calories your body requires to fuel metabolic processes during an average day, and how many more you should consume to kick

you into a surplus. For example, a 75kg moderately active man has a BMR of around 1750 calories and would require an estimated 2715 calories a day just for maintenance.

Baptie says to aim for around 10-15% above maintenance. So, using the above example, you should bump up your intake by around 270-410 calories a day - equivalent to a handful or two of mixed nuts.

Top tips for eating to bulk up

■ Before charging stomach-first into a bulking plan, you should establish the macronutrient breakdown of your diet so you don't load up on the wrong foods.

Hardgainers should aim for a daily intake of 3g of protein, 5g of carbs and 1g of healthy fats per kilo of body weight. Mesomorphs and endomorphs should aim for around 2g of protein, 2g of carbs and 1g of fats, adjusting these totals week by week to encourage lean muscle gain.

If you're not sure how many calories and grams of each macro you're eating each day, Baptie recommends using a food-tracking app such as MyFitnessPal that will help you understand what you're putting on your plate and into your body.

Remfry agrees. "Tracking food helps you to see what your calories look like in the context of your

overall food, and will enable you to create and log delicious meals you can rely on during your muscle-building journey," he says. "It also means you won't fall back on the tired old chicken and broccoli diet."

If you follow a vegetarian or vegan diet, it can be hard to consume enough complete proteins (those containing all nine amino acids, such as meat, milk and eggs) to support your training. Vegan sources of complete proteins include quinoa and buckwheat (great in porridge), Quorn and tofu (a fine substitute for chicken in stir-fries) and easy combinations such as rice and beans, hummus and pitta or the highly recommended peanut butter sandwich. Two slices of wholemeal bread with two tablespoons of peanut butter packs 15g of complete protein - comfort food perfection.

Establish the macronutrient breakdown of your diet so you don't load up on the wrong foods.

PRO TIPS

The best supplements for bulking up.

1

Whey protein

Whey protein contains all nine amino acids and is an especially good source of leucine, one of three BCAAs that play a key role in the muscle-building process. "A 25g serving of whey provides around 2.5g of leucine, the optimal dose," says Remfry.

2

Creatine

"If your diet is on point and you're training smart, creatine has been shown to help add muscle, increase strength and improve power output," says Baptie. Research suggests a 5g serving of creatine monohydrate, taken at any time, does the trick.

3

Vitamin D

Bulking is a common winter pastime for gym-goers, so a deficiency of D - mostly provided by exposure to the sun - can drain you of strength and make you more susceptible to injury. Remfry favours a dose of 1000 IU per day if the sun isn't shining on your training.

4

Caffeine and beta-alanine

"This is a common pre-workout concoction, and there is good evidence this combo of stimulant and amino acid can help increase workout performance and subsequently boost muscle-building potential," says Baptie.

5

Probiotics

These good bacteria aid digestion and support your immune system. "Taking a daily supp can help your gut tolerate the high demands on your central nervous system and digestive system from the stresses of heavy-duty eating and lifting," says Remfry.

The best bulking foods

Protein is the main ingredient of muscle tissue, carbs power your workouts and prevent muscle breakdown and fat supports hormones like testosterone that help muscles grow. The following are the healthiest sources of each nutrient:

MUSCLE GRUB

You know that protein plays a vital role in building muscle. When you exercise, you cause microscopic tears in your muscles, and to repair those tears so the muscles grow back bigger, you need the amino acids that you get from protein. And even if you're not smashing out workouts every day of the week, protein is a vital nutrient because of its role in building and maintaining body tissues.

PROTEINS

Lean meat (any kind), including chicken, beef and turkey
Fish and seafood
Eggs
Protein powder

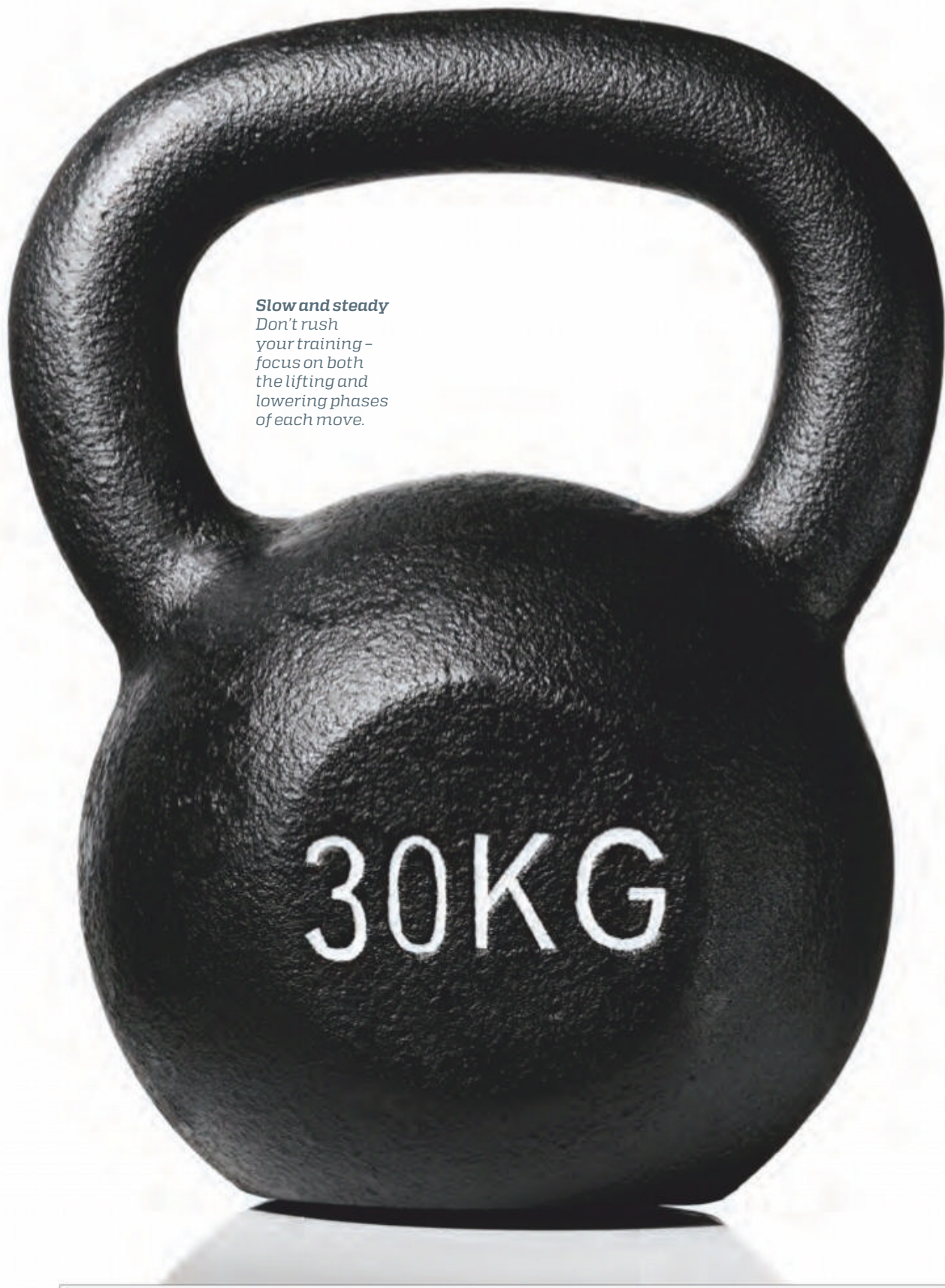
CARBS

Potatoes
Sweet potatoes
Rice
Fruit

FATS

Avocado
Nuts (all kinds)
Seeds (all kinds)
Oils (including olive and coconut)





Slow and steady
Don't rush
your training –
focus on both
the lifting and
lowering phases
of each move.

Gym tips to bulk up

■ Your time in the gym should be spent on maximising the time your muscles are under tension. This will cause micro-tears and increased blood flow to the muscle fibres.

As long as you're providing enough high-quality raw materials and ample rest, these tears will repair and increase in size and strength.

"Any program should be built around compound moves, such as squat, deadlift, bench press, bent-over row and chin-up, with a limit on calorie-burning metabolic conditioning," says strength coach Martin Sutcliffe.

For maximum returns, Sutcliffe recommends you train each major muscle group twice a week. Aim for four sets of 6-8 reps of the compound move in each session, progressively overloading the muscles each week by gradually increasing weight.

Once you've fried yourself on the big lifts, the rest of the

session should focus on accessory work. Think single-joint isolation moves such as chest flies, lateral raises and biceps curls and triceps pull-downs.

This is when you should increase the volume and work the muscles to complete failure. "Increase the rep range to 10 to 20 and introduce slow negatives, where you draw out the lowering part of each move for three to four seconds."

Spend plenty of time on each exercise to work the muscles to near failure. An effective way to achieve this is with slow tempo rest-pause sets. Pick a weight that you can lift for 10 before you hit failure. Lift this at a tempo of two seconds up, four seconds down until you run out of juice. Rest for 20 seconds, then lift for two seconds up, two seconds down, again to failure. Rest for 20 seconds, then do a final set of as many reps as you can at a faster tempo to flood muscles with blood.

PRO TIPS

The best exercises for bulking up.



Squat

Targets: quads, hamstrings, glutes

"Build up to the full barbell squat with the goblet squat," says Sutcliffe. Hold a DB with both hands at chest height. Keeping chest up, lower into a squat, keeping knees wide, then stand back up. "Once you're ready for the real thing, take your time and lower for 2-3 seconds, then drive up powerfully."



Deadlift

Targets: hamstrings, glutes, lower back

If you're unfamiliar with this move, protect your back by using a trap bar where you hold the handles on either side of your feet. "Once your form is perfect, deadlifts should become the cornerstone of your bulking workouts," says strength coach Tom Eastham. Aim to go heavy for four sets of 5-8 reps.



Incline bench press

Targets: chest, shoulders, triceps

Either use the barbell or if nobody is there to spot you, use dumbbells. "Ignore your ego and use weights where you don't compromise on form," says Sutcliffe. "The longer you can take to lower the weights under control, the longer the muscles will be under tension and the more they will grow as a consequence."



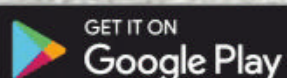
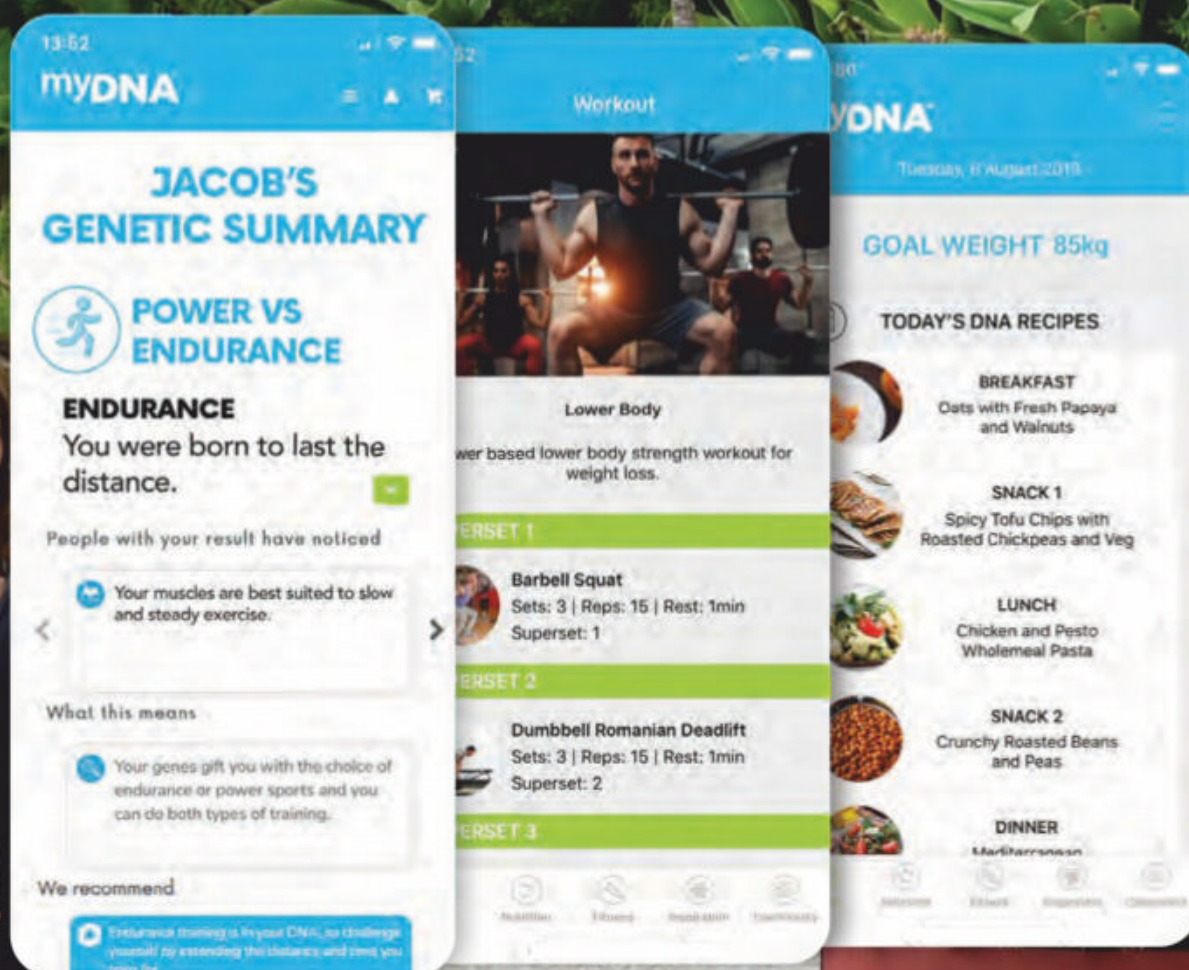
Chin-up

Targets: upper back, biceps, core

"The bent-over row is worthy, but chin-ups have the added benefit of targeting your abs and deep core muscles that protect your spine and provide you with a platform to pack on extra muscle," says Eastham. Use resistance bands to support your weight so you can focus all your energy on the lowering part of the move.

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“
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”

Luke Milton
USA's #1 Celebrity Trainer
myDNA Ambassador

MF goes...

at the Vine

IT'S THE HIP, HOLISTIC TRAINING ALTERNATIVE TO PUMPING IRON, AND AHEAD OF ITS BURST



ONTO THE OLYMPIC SCENE THIS YEAR, MF HELPS YOU CRIMP, CRANK AND DYNO YOUR WAY INTO THE WORLD OF CLIMBING.

A

A rock-solid physique, core control and life-affirming experiences

are just a few of the benefits guaranteed for anyone who takes up climbing on a regular basis. And while you're learning the ropes, the bustling social scenes of local climbing centres make for motivating places to get fit and strong. If and when you're ready to brave the granite of the great outdoors, the challenge of outdoor climbing can take you on adventures you wouldn't otherwise have dreamed of. So load up your chalk bag and prepare to "climb when ready!"

Get to grips

A first trip to your local climbing wall is often even simpler than an induction at the gym. Pay on the door and take a pair of clean sports shoes and most climbing walls will let you loose on their series of boulder "problems" (see Climbing Chat box for more of the lingo). Many new climbers spend time gaining confidence, building muscle and honing all-important technique on indoor walls above the

Meet the experts



BEN HEASON has been a professional rock climber for more than 20 years. He is also a coach and motivational speaker.



JIM POPE is ranked number 31 in the world by the International Federation of Sport Climbing.

safety of crash mats, without the initial fear and distraction of roped climbing.

Climbing centres can differ, so ask about the colour coding of the boulder problems wherever you go, but often greens represent the easiest routes. The holds are made of textured plastic and climbers often use chalk to help maintain contact. Each colour-coded series of problems are known as circuits and the aim is to complete all routes of one colour before progressing to the next.

When struggling to make upward progress, climbers look to their feet rather than their next handhold. Precise placement of your toes and developing skills such as flagging will see you to the

top of boulder problems where more clumsy climbers might fail.

Pushing performance

After your first few visits to the wall, you'll want to invest in a pair of rock boots - precision-fit rubber-soled shoes - though you could try renting a pair initially. Placing the inside edge (getting only the rubber along the length of your big toe) on footholds will keep your hips and centre of balance closer to the wall, reducing the weight put on your arms. Placing the outside edge on footholds (getting only the rubber along the length of your little toe in contact with the wall) will





Pro climber Ben Heason enjoys a spot of deep-water soloing on the Croatian coast.

rope up with you, will later allow you to experience real-world climbing, where cliff faces don't have handy ropes hanging down from the summits.

Ready to rock

Here in Australia, our diverse landscape offers up a bounty of climbing routes that would be hard to find anywhere else in the world, and the sport of climbing has been a popular pastime here since the late 1800s. Over time, it developed into a sport in its own right. Traditional, or "trad" climbing - confronting natural rock faces by stuffing those colourful devices hanging from harnesses into its crevices - is still the gold standard of vertical adventure, but you can also find climbers navigating bolted rock faces - where the emphasis is more on absolute difficulty - as well as tackling "multi-pitch" climbs in places like the Blue Mountains and Mount Arapiles, where you'll find what is arguably some of the best climbing in the world.

Your experience on indoor climbing walls will help with technique, strength and balance. But the subtleties of using nature-weathered holds on a plethora of rock types - from quartzite and sandstone to limestone and granite, to name just

"THE PROBLEM-SOLVING ELEMENT MAKES CLIMBING MORE SOCIABLE THAN THE GYM."

open your hips and allow you to reach diagonally, firing up your back muscles.

You'll need a harness, too, if you want to climb higher than the bouldering wall. It's also time to learn the figure of eight knot (to attach yourself to the rope) and how to belay, so you can secure others whilst climbing. The whole process shouldn't take longer than an hour, but you will need some expert guidance from a member of staff.

"Top rope" climbing will allow you to gain confidence without falling any distance, while managing the lactic acid pumping through your forearms. And "lead climbing", where you take the

Pro tips



BEN HEASON:

◆ "Climbing is accessible for men of all fitness levels. Anyone who plays sport regularly is going to have a decent BMI and will pick it up quickly. Cyclists, runners, gymnasts, dancers and divers will get on really well. It's common to get elite climbers trying problems next to beginner climbers at indoor walls and offering friendly advice. The problem-solving element makes it more sociable than the gym."

JIM POPE:

◆ "Every climb is different, so all body types will fit a certain climb. Short people might struggle with long reaches, but taller people might struggle with more bunched-up positions. Sports that require good strength-to-weight ratios will set you up perfectly for climbing."



Room with a view: Heason and co relax on their "portaledge" by Angel Falls, Venezuela.



a few - and in varying locations, from seaside cliffs to mountain crags, can be far more motivating than pulling on plastic. You can even try “deep water soloing” - a form of solo rock climbing where you rely on water at the base of the climb to break any falls. Guidebooks cover the obscurest of craggy outcrops, with details of specific route location, difficulty and potential danger.

Tokyo bound

Climbing will be represented for the first-ever time at the Tokyo Olympics

this winter. There will be three events: bouldering, lead (sport) climbing and speed climbing. Speed climbing is like the bad cousin in the climbing community, seen as a bit of an outlier sport that has only been included to please fans. But visually, as the athletes sprint to strike a buzzer at the top of the wall, it should be edge-of-the-seat stuff. There will be only one gold medal per gender, awarded to the highest scorer across the three disciplines. If you fancy your chances, the Aussie climbing team has nearly decided on their squad for the Games - you’d better get cranking! ■

Pro tips

Pope climbs the “Thick End of the Wedge” in the Peak District, UK.

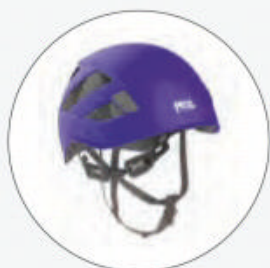


BEN HEASON:
◆ “Speed, lead climbing and bouldering could not be a more perfect addition to Olympic sport with the Games’ motto of ‘Faster, higher, stronger’. Conveying technicalities to non-climbers will be a challenge and I hope it doesn’t eclipse the achievements of the outdoor sport. But the fact that the biggest names in the sport, such as Adam Ondra and Alex Megos, are taking it seriously, despite the inclusion of speed climbing, gives the Olympic event legitimacy.”

JIM POPE:
◆ “Climbing is a new and tiny sport in the Olympics, so there will only be 20 male and 20 female competitors from around the world, and only two athletes per gender per country will compete in any given event. I don’t compete in the triple discipline format that will feature in the 2020 Olympic games. However, in 2024 they are splitting the disciplines to a format that suits me better, so I’ll be training hard to make it to Paris!”

“THE FACT THAT THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE SPORT ARE TAKING IT SERIOUSLY GIVES THE OLYMPIC EVENT LEGITIMACY.”

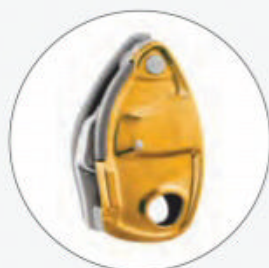
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BOREO Helmet

■ The BOREO helmet provides optimal protection against lateral, front and rear impact due to its lower-in-the-rear design that offers reinforced protection for your head.

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GRIGRI+ Belay Device

■ A belay device with assisted braking and anti-panic handle. Compatible with single ropes from 8.5 to 11mm. Its wear plate makes it suitable for use in the gym or at the crag.

petzl.com.au



KAB Rope Bag

■ Two distinct compartments allow the user to separate climbing equipment from other items. Thanks to its gusseted design, the volume quickly adjusts from 20 to 26 litres.

petzl.com.au



ADJAMA Harness

■ Designed for technical mountaineering, trad climbing and multi-pitch climbing, the ADJAMA is equipped with adjustable leg loops that adapt to all climbers.

petzl.com.au



Climbing chat

Belay – to secure a roped climber with a friction device attached to your harness.

Beta – the tactics and technique needed to climb a particular route or problem.

Bouldering – climbing without ropes above a safe landing.

Crimp – to grip a hold with the tips of your fingers to add extra power.

Crank – to pull as hard as possible on a hold to make upward progress.

Dyno – a dynamic lunge where the climber releases all points of contact with the rock to reach the next hold.

Flag – to extend a leg away to your side when climbing to keep balance.

Flash – to climb a route or problem on the first go.

Free climb – to climb an outdoor route using just the natural features of the rock face, using a rope as back-up in case of a fall.

Jam – wedging your hands in a holdless crack to help pull yourself up.

Leading – where the climber trails a rope behind them as they ascend, with a partner paying out rope through their belay device. Unlike top roping, detaching from the wall or cliff will mean you fall twice as far as your last point of protection.

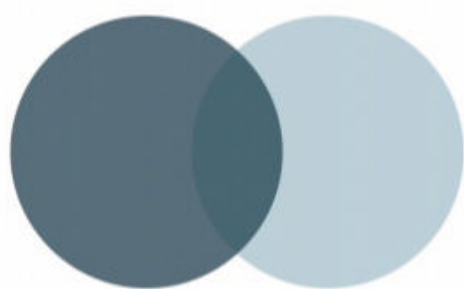
Overhang – a climb that is more than 90 degrees.

Problem – a bouldering term to describe a sequence of holds to climb to the top.

Top rope – climbing where the rope from your harness passes freely through a carabiner at the top of the wall and down to your partner. They'll take in rope through their belay device as you climb, and then let it out again to lower you.

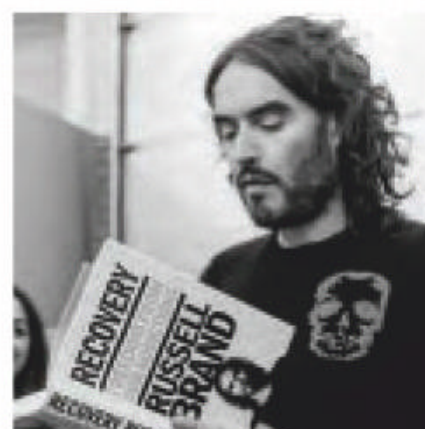
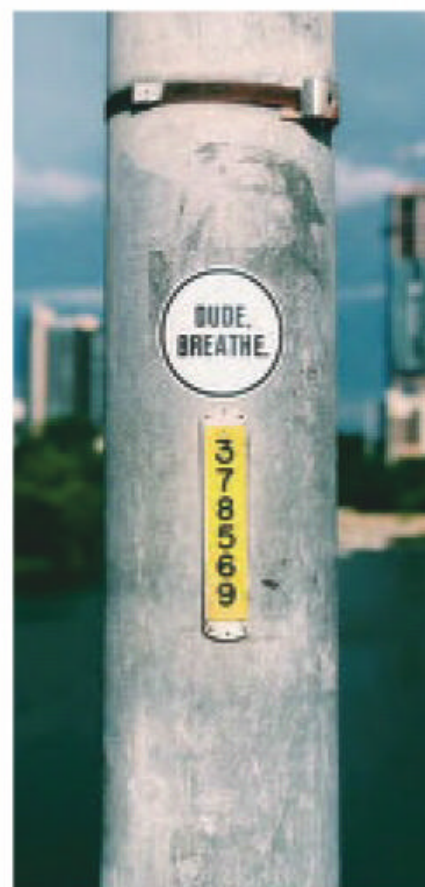
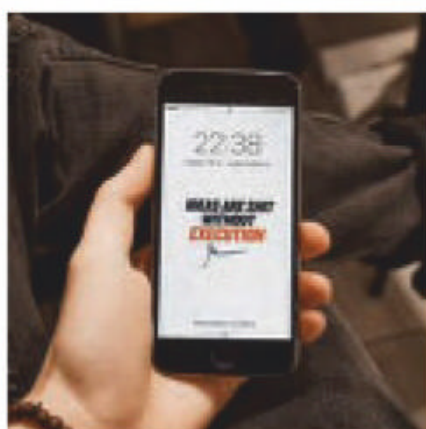
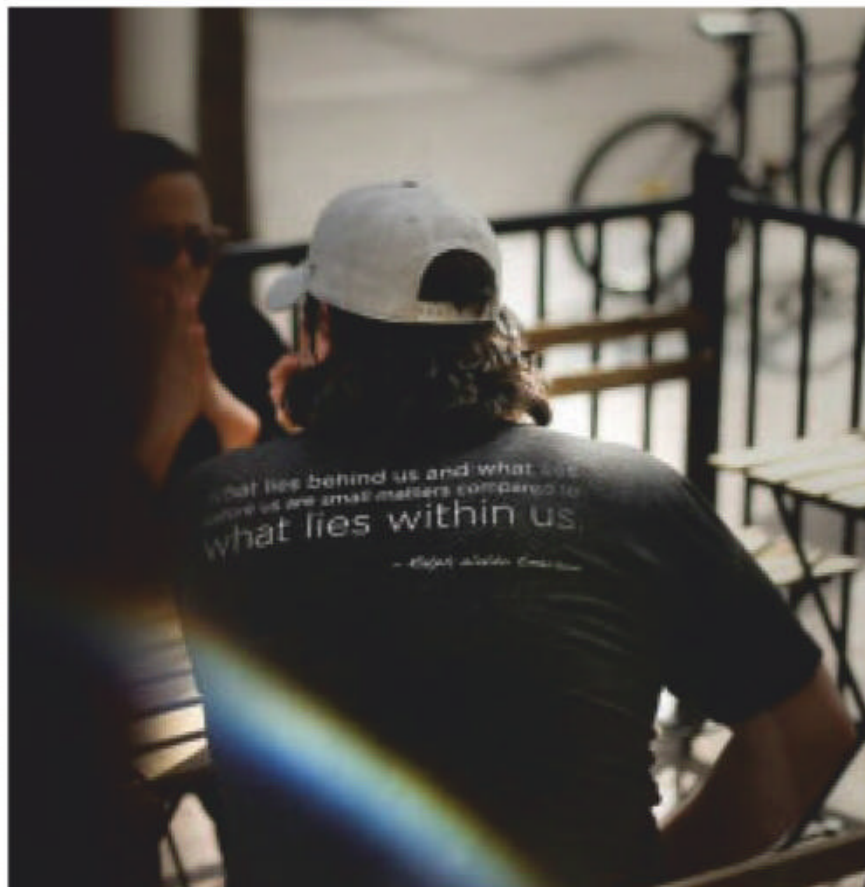
Slab – a climb less than 90 degrees.

Spotting – to position yourself slightly behind the potential fall line of a boulderer to help take some of their weight, protect their head and control their landing.



Self-improvement delusion

We're a quarter of the way through the year already – how many New Year's resolutions have you kept? Here, Matt Ayres asks whether striving for happiness through endless self-help books, apps and podcasts can actually have an adverse effect on our sense of wellbeing. Is our endless struggle for perfection only leaving us sadder and more frustrated?



NEW YEAR = A NEW LIFE!

**“DECIDE TODAY
WHO YOU WILL BECOME,
HOW YOU WILL LIVE,
& WHAT YOU WILL GIVE.”**

Tony Robbins



Tony Robbins' net worth of \$500 million proves self-help is big business.





At the beginning of 2019, I decided it would be the best year of my life.

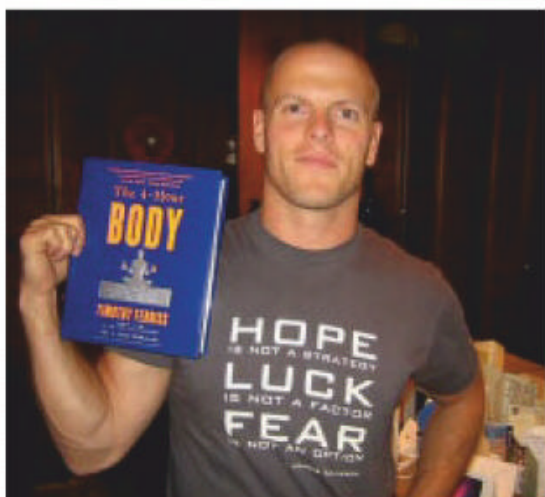
With a list of New Year's resolutions nearly as long as the half marathon I'd be signing up for, I set about making "Operation Self-Improvement" a reality. Meditation apps were downloaded and motivational podcasts were neatly arranged into playlists, ready to spur me on during 6am runs in the wintry drizzle. Bestselling self-help books were bunged haphazardly into my Amazon basket – a bulging library I was certain would change my perspective on my career, my health and my life in general.

I'd be learning a language, naturally (Japanese couldn't be that hard, could it?) and while I was at it, why not turn the average two-bedroom house I'd recently bought with my girlfriend into the dream home we'd been planning?

Call it post-Christmas optimism or new-year naivety, but I felt genuinely psyched up to transform my life in the way that so many lifestyle gurus had promised was possible. I just had to make a bit more time, work a little harder and stay focused on making good things happen.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU?

Of course, I knew I wasn't the only person setting aspirational goals as 2019 rolled around. I also knew that the statistics for succeeding with New Year's resolutions



Tim Ferriss has penned five bestselling books.

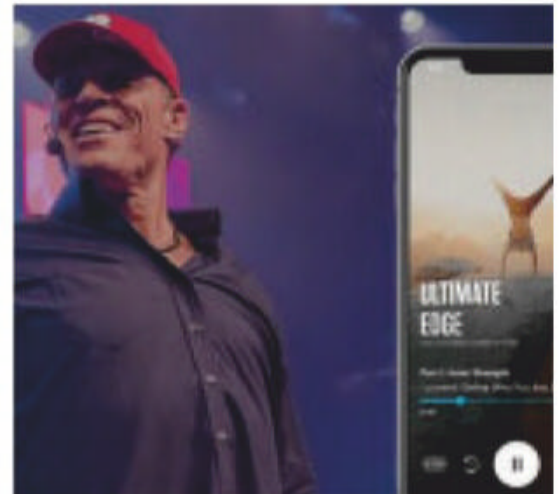
were less than promising. Data by fitness app Strava suggests that by January 12 each year, most of us have already failed to keep our resolutions. Elsewhere, a study undertaken by the University of Scranton, US, shows that only around 8% of people manage to achieve the goals they set for themselves at the start of the year.

Somehow these figures didn't put me off as I began my own self-improvement journey in the first month of 2019. And while I jogged and journalled my way through January, I was struck by how many other people seemed to be doing the same thing as me.

Every other Instagram post I scrolled past showed a friend at the gym, an acquaintance discussing their healthy new morning routine or an inspiring personal essay about the importance of following your dreams. Since when did we all become so obsessed with bettering ourselves?

"Self-improvement is deeply embedded in many cultures," explains Niels Eék, psychologist and co-founder of personal development app Remente. "We're surrounded by advertising and social media that offers us a highly selective and frequently unrealistic image of what the world looks like. By comparing ourselves with these distortions, we feed our perfectionist tendencies."

On its surface, self-improvement might seem like a good way to make positive changes in our lives and feel happier.



Tony Robbins has been a self-help superstar since 1988.

Yet for many, the constant pursuit of personal growth appears to be having the exact opposite effect.

We may not have as much power over our lives as we think we do. Money, health, social status and personal circumstances are often affected by forces outside our control. But when the world conspires against the optimistic plans we've made, it can still feel like a personal failure.

"The self-improvement industry places immense pressure on us to be perfect," suggests behaviour-change psychologist Dr Aria Campbell-Danesh. "We face unhelpful expectations to 'have it all': to look perfect at all ages, to be perfect partners, perfect parents and to have successful careers."

"Striving to reach extreme and unattainable standards can have a powerful knock-on effect on our self-esteem. When we inevitably fall short of these standards, we feel inadequate."

WHAT'S 'APPENING?

Our collective obsession with social media appears to be amplifying the problem. A study by researchers from the University of Pennsylvania, US, found that people who reduce their social media activity to a maximum of 30 minutes per day feel happier, with lower reported levels of depression, anxiety and loneliness.

Unfortunately, most of us are more addicted to these apps than ever – 90%

40%

The rate the most popular self-care apps have been growing year-on-year.

\$13bn

How much the self-improvement industry is expected to be worth by 2022.

94%

of millennials commit to personal improvement goals each year.

09:56

Tele2 LT 4G

83 %

HOW BAD
DO YOU
WANT IT?

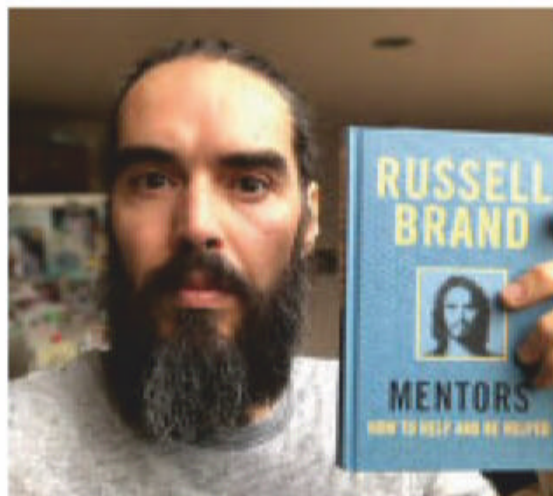
John

Press Home to unlock

Our smartphones are feeding our self-improvement obsession.



“Putting too much pressure on yourself to change and improve can become obsessive.”



Russell Brand has rebranded himself as a quasi-guru.

of millennials are active social media users. The heaviest users spend approximately 225 minutes (that's 3.75 hours) on their smartphones every day, touching their screens around 5427 times in the same period.

Comparing ourselves to the people we follow online means we frequently fail to live up to the unrealistic expectations we set for ourselves, which makes us unhappy. We want to change things, so we set ourselves new (often unrealistic) goals to improve. And when these plans fail, the vicious cycle of so-called self-improvement starts all over again.

It's not just our phones and social media habits that have brought about our ongoing obsession with personal growth. In fact, self-improvement dates back to long before we were all glued to our screens.

The first book of its kind, *Self-help*, by Samuel Smiles, was published in 1859. Now considered the blueprint for a genre that's evolved into a \$10 billion industry, Smiles' book outsold Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* the year it was released, and quickly popularised the notion of self-improvement.

Books including Dale Carnegie's *How To Win Friends and Influence People* and Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich* propelled the self-help movement to new heights throughout the 20th century. More recently, Tony Robbins' *Awaken The Giant Within* and Tim Ferriss' *The 4-Hour Work Week* have won their authors cult-like followings. Through TED Talks, podcasts, online courses and exotic life-transformation retreats, the ideas proposed by self-help's biggest names have been enthusiastically guzzled up by an army of online consumers.

You only need to visit your nearest bookshop to see how popular self-help is today. From the Dalai Lama to Russell Brand, everyone seems to have a book extolling the values of personal development, authenticity and #selflove. Popularised Scandinavian concepts of wellbeing like “hygge” (cosiness and small pleasures) and “lagom” (moderation; just the right amount) have entered our everyday vocabulary. Mindfulness and meditation have become big business, too - meditation app Headspace has more than 31 million people using its platform and the company is currently valued at more than \$100 million.

THE PAIN OF PROGRESS

There's no doubt that books, podcasts and apps were a motivator for me as I went about my own year of self-improvement. A voice in your ear or words on a page can make you feel like the new habits you're forging are real and lasting. But with so many celebrities and influencers urging you to follow their own particular approach to personal development, the constant pressure to improve can also become mentally draining.

“Putting too much pressure on yourself to change and improve can become obsessive,” says cognitive behavioural therapist Claudia Prothero, whose work involves helping people to overcome the unhelpful aspects of perfectionism. “There is a temptation to keep moving the bar higher, not stopping to celebrate successes. The process then becomes about finding faults, focusing on areas we believe we are lacking in.”

I can definitely relate. By the time March 2019 rolled around, my new and improved life was getting tiresome. Trying so hard to be happy and successful was exhausting. I didn't feel better. In fact, all I could think about was how little I'd achieved, and how much further I had to go.

The realisation that self help might not be the life-changing panacea its authors proclaim was beginning to dawn on me. In fact, reading self-help books could actually be doing me more harm than good. In a pilot study, researchers from the University of Montreal, Canada, found that self-help readers were more prone to symptoms of stress and depression. The results also showed that positive qualities

such as self-discipline, emotional stability and self-esteem were not being improved by reading self-help books.

Psychologist Iris Mauss suggests that the more we pursue our own happiness, the less likely we are to achieve it. In a controlled study, Mauss asked a group of participants to read an article highlighting the importance and benefits of happiness. By the end of the test, people who had read the article felt more isolated, disconnected and dissatisfied than those who hadn't, suggesting that valuing happiness may be a self-defeating exercise.

If this is the case, it's no wonder my pursuit of self-improvement was getting me nowhere: by actively striving to become happier, I was paradoxically shooting myself in the foot. Perhaps the key to being happier is to simply appreciate what we have, rather than always looking for more.

“When we start with gratitude, we appreciate what we have in this moment,” agrees Dr Aria Campbell-Danesh. “We find joy in our lives right now. We can still move towards our goals, without tying our happiness to them. The journey becomes more enjoyable.”

REAL LIFE GETS IN THE WAY

Unsurprisingly, my starry-eyed idea of a perfect year didn't pan out. 2019 ended up being a mixed bag, with more disappointments than successes and a constant series of reminders that I was failing to live up to the lofty goals I'd set for myself. The house I live in isn't nearly as Pinterest-worthy as I would like it to be. I only know a handful of Japanese phrases and my daily meditation ritual has made way for video games and Netflix. Some guru I'd make.

What I've learned is that it's OK to be content with what you have, and to appreciate the little things that make life good. The highlights of my year ended up being morning coffee dates with my girlfriend, evenings spent laughing over beers with friends and bushland runs listening to favourite music.

I also managed to finish that half marathon I'd signed up for in January. So maybe it's OK if you made one or two resolutions for 2020. Just don't expect to change your whole life in a single year. ■



●● 3 keys to contentment

START SMALL

“Trying to change too much too quickly is a mistake,” says Dr Aria Campbell-Danesh, psychologist and author of *A Mindful Year*. “Studies into the psychology of habits show that the simpler the action, the quicker it becomes second nature. So start small, wherever you are, to bring more harmony into your life.”

EXPECT SETBACKS

“Reward yourself for taking action, even if things don’t turn out perfectly,” says Niels Eék, psychologist and co-founder of personal development app Remente. “It is vital to break the cycle of striving for self-improvement and perfection. Try this by doing things that are a little out of your comfort zone, and reflect on the outcome of completing tasks that you’re unable to do perfectly.”

APPRECIATE THE PRESENT

“Spend time doing simple activities that make you feel calm and happy in the here and now,” says Claudia Prothero, cognitive behavioural therapist. “Make happiness something you can recognise in your current life, rather than something you are constantly striving for and working towards.”

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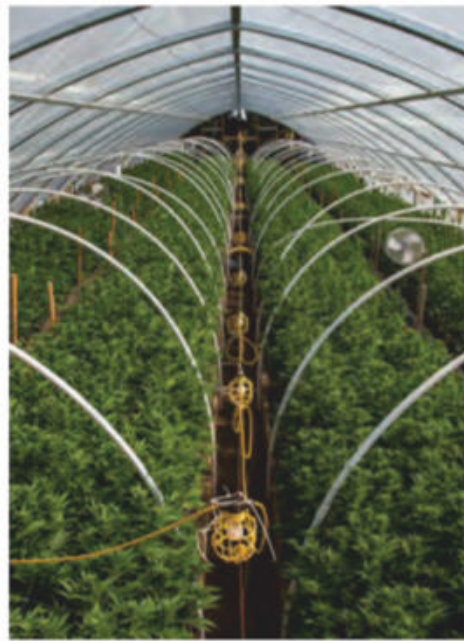
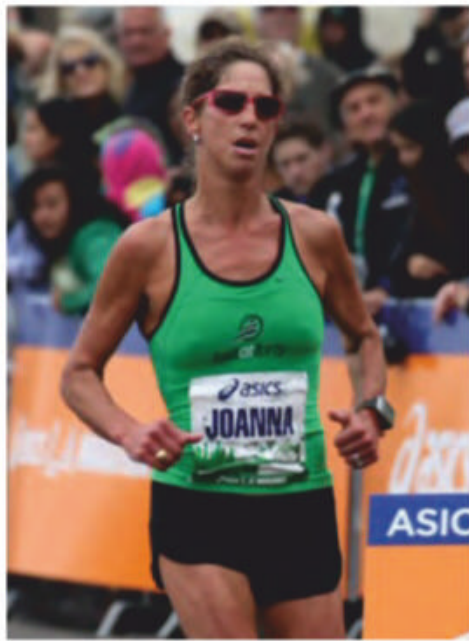


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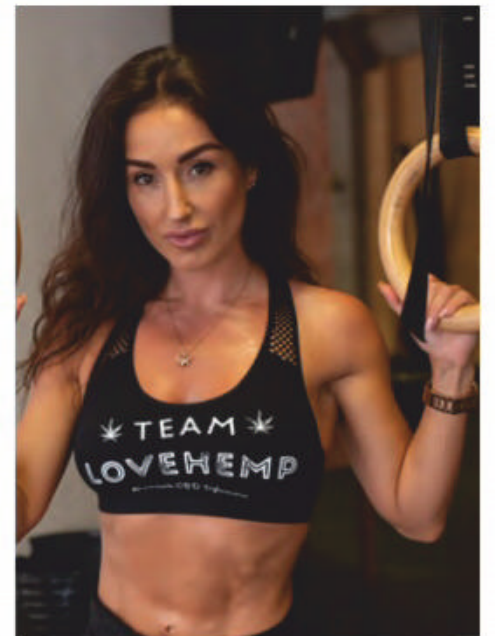
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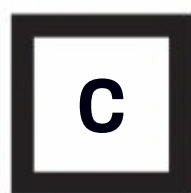


The good oil?

It's used by elite athletes, the World Anti-Doping Agency removed it from the banned substance list in 2018 and it's easy to buy, but how much credible evidence is there behind CBD oil?



Is it a drug? Is it a medicine? No, it's a "recovery super supplement" – and no, it won't get you high.



CBD – or cannabidiol – is the new kid on the mainstream recovery block and, like so many other get-fit-quick supplements, there is a lot of hype around it. The substance is one of more than 100 chemical compounds (known as cannabinoids) of the cannabis plant. Unsurprisingly, despite not being addictive or psychoactive, it is accompanied by a lot of baggage.

In Australia, CBD is categorised as a drug, but in other countries it's available in many forms, from drops and oils, to creams, sprays, drinks and gummies. The list of supposed benefits is extensive, with better sleep, reduced inflammation, pain and anxiety relief high among them. Some brands also suggest CBD can reduce the severity and frequency of seizures, protect the brain, promote healthy skin, alleviate nausea, benefit heart health and control weight.

There's backing from professional athletes, too, since the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) cleared it, with advocates in sports from UFC to triathlon, golf and rugby. English rugby player George Kruis, elite American ultra runner Avery Collins and UFC legend Nate Diaz are among the big names. Former players from the NFL in the US, where opioids have reportedly been in widespread use as painkillers, have also been outspoken in favour of CBD.

SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE?

Research into CBD and other cannabinoids began in the 1940s, and cannabis has long been purported to provide various health benefits. Therapeutic cannabis use in the NFL and professional baseball has reportedly been widespread for years, but the science behind what CBD extracts actually do is limited. Even if you're convinced of the benefits, knowing how much and which delivery methods to use, and which are trustworthy brands to buy, is confusing enough to leave anyone fuzzy headed.

"People have to be aware that the evidence is very low," says Dr Gabriella Gobbi, professor of psychiatry at McGill University in Canada. "We need more research to try to prove if it works, which dosage works, which formulation – there are many things to explore."

Dr Gobbi has studied the effects of CBD in rats and found it reduced anxiety and gave pain relief without the psychoactive high and euphoria associated with another cannabis compound, tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. She has secured funding for a human clinical trial and the US government is also backing other new studies, but the results could be years away and the main body of research is yet to establish specifically what CBD does when taken by people.

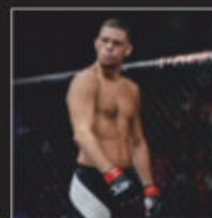
Some researchers think the compound interacts with the endocannabinoid system, which plays a role in regulating a range of functions such as sleep, mood and pain management. However, with much of the research done on rodents, it might not be as encouraging as it sounds. "Very often the effects in animals are not replicated in humans," Dr Gobbi says. "In particular, for psychiatric diseases like anxiety and depression, there is a strong placebo effect, so the transfer of effects from animal studies often fails."

Athletes championing CBD



Kamaru Usman

● Current UFC Welterweight Champion Kamaru Usman, AKA the "Nigerian Nightmare", uses Love Hemp CBD for aches and pains.



Nate Diaz

● UFC star Nate Diaz is a poster boy for CBD, famously smoking a CBD joint at a post-fight press call after losing to Conor McGregor in 2016.



George Kruis

● UK rugby player George Kruis founded fourfivecbd with his teammate Dom Day after both struggled with sport-related injury and pain.



Dr Joanna Zeiger

● Former triathlete Dr Joanna Zeiger first began using CBD to deal with chronic pain, and now researches cannabis and its benefits for athletes.

ON A HIGH

Despite the general lack of evidence for CBD benefits in humans, the market boomed at the end of the last decade. And the global cannabis market is thought to be worth US\$150 billion today, with estimates this will increase to US\$272 billion by 2028. Powerful international pro-cannabis lobbies may have helped to drive sales, but countless stories of the benefits also explain the growth.

"There is a massive amount of anecdotal evidence," says George Kruis, who founded the UK brand fourfivecbd with his former rugby union teammate Dom Day. "Most of our customers take it for either pain or sleep and I find it helps me with sleep, putting me in a calmer state."



95%

OF CANNABIS USED
IN OZ IS OBTAINED
ILLEGALLY.

42%

OF AUSSIES SUPPORT
LEGALISING
MARIJUANA.

Making CBD products

Cannabis plants, which are often cloned in farming to concentrate the cannabidiol level, are stripped and their flowers are ground. Other organic compounds are extracted and fatty acids removed before distillation. Then, depending on the company, tests take place on the oil before the CBD is added to shop-ready products.



From left: CBD gummies, oils, sprays and other products are legal in the UK and US; bodybuilder, nutritionist and CBD advocate Abby Pell.

Day was rehabilitating from a knee operation at the UK Premiership club Saracens when he encountered CBD, shortly after WADA took it off its banned list. He first tried it through vaping (which he doesn't advise) and claimed that the results were "pretty instantaneous".

Dressing-room chatter led to Kruis experimenting with it and now Day, who takes it morning and night, claims around 400 professional athletes are using or have used their CBD products.

"I'm a little bit of a hippy at heart," says Day. "I'm into my yoga, meditating and so on, and that's probably what got me over the line on CBD, but now it's a case of educating people about how positive the benefits can be. It's not one of those fad medicines that will come and go. We firmly believe it's here to stay and it'll be a big part of people's nutrition moving forward."

SLOW BURNER

Bodybuilder and nutritionist Abby Pell is another advocate for CBD products, as she's interested in making her clients healthy without the use of medicine. Pell came across it when looking into the potential benefits of cannabis for her mum, Penny, who was being treated for cancer.

"I first started using it for recovery," says Pell, an ambassador for Love Hemp. "It's a great anti-inflammatory and would help with my training. I've used it when I'm stressed and struggling with sleep, too. It's not something you take and feel an immediate effect. It's a lot more subtle, but kind of builds up in your system. I noticed the impact when I first ran out following a few weeks of taking it - I didn't feel quite as good. My equilibrium was restored in mind and body when I got some more."

Day, Pell and Kruis all experienced the effects of CBD differently, and that is one of the grey areas to consider for anyone trying it out. The rugby players recommend experimenting with different doses and taking it at different times of day to establish what works best.

Another problem, if you are thinking of trying CBD, is the lack of strong product regulation. "There are a lot of people who have jumped in the last three or four months with dollar signs in their eyes," says Day. "They're essentially putting in no CBD at all or very little compared to what it says on the label and it's so damaging."

Test surveys in the US and UK have confirmed Day's claim and found other alarming contents, including illicit levels of THC, alcohol, solvents and heavy metals above food safety recommendations.

OFFICIAL WARNING

The government here has approved a few specific cannabinoid-based products as prescription medicines for sufferers of chronic pain, severe forms of epilepsy, nausea from chemotherapy, and muscle stiffness and spasms from multiple sclerosis. Aussies can only access medicinal cannabis via their doctor, who will make an application for you through the Special Access Scheme or Authorised Prescriber Scheme. You need a script and it needs to be filled by a pharmacist who's registered to dispense cannabis products through the Department of Health.

So does all this mean you should jump online and see what you can find on the sly? The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) warns on its website: "TGA cannot vouch for the quality, safety and effectiveness of unapproved products because they have not been evaluated by us." Also, "Personal import of medicinal cannabis products is subject to strict controls including import permit requirements from the Office of Drug Control and applicable state and territory requirements." There's also a chance products bought online will contain THC, and may only contain very small amounts of CBD.

The THC issue has been a thorny one for the CBD market. Until recently, many have seen the laws as open to interpretation on allowable levels below 0.2% (which is insufficient to produce a high) and included the psychoactive compound in their products. fourfivecbd was among them, and Day says these "full spectrum" products produce an enhanced effect because the different chemical structures interact. However, his company also makes a virtue of the fact that it triple tests its CBD for accurate THC levels. Its products for athletes and those who are drug tested contain none at all.

Sports bodies, such as UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) and the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), urge caution. "Despite the permitted status of CBD, there is still a risk to athletes," states UKAD. "Athletes must consider the risk of inadvertently ingesting a CBD product that either has a higher THC concentration than expected or contains another cannabinoid that is prohibited."

All cannabinoids other than CBD are prohibited in sport and USADA says they can stay in your system long after use. It also claims it's almost impossible to obtain pure CBD extract or oil from the cannabis plant.

Confused? There's more. The World Health Organisation (WHO) says CBD is "generally well tolerated with a good safety profile", but a Harvard Medical School publication claimed nausea, fatigue and irritability are potential side effects. And while CBD has a lot of fans and potential, it's still not easily accessible in Australia - so unless you've got chronic health issues, it might be worth exploring other alternatives. ■

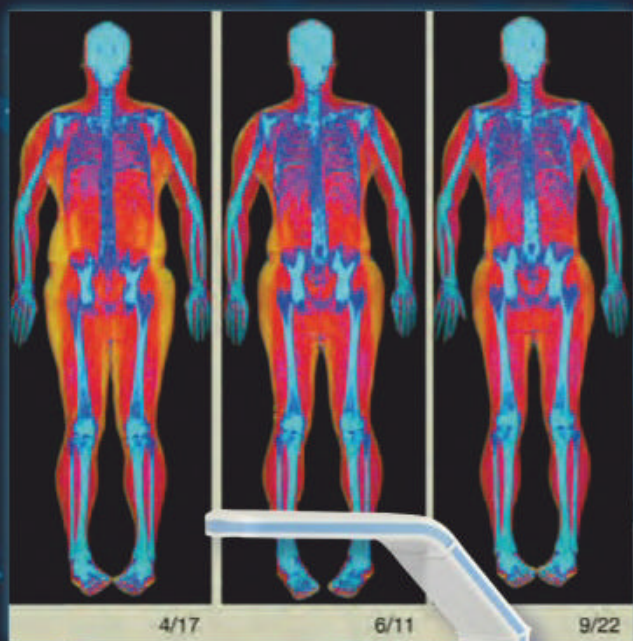
Reported benefits of CBD

- Better sleep
- Reduced inflammation
- Pain and anxiety relief
- Healthier skin
- Nausea relief
- Hunger relief
- Seizure prevention
- Brain protection

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"What gets measured gets managed"

MY SCAN: 5TH DEC 2019

Fat Mass (kg)
14.9 kg

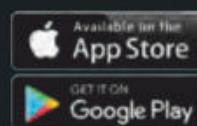
Lean Mass (kg)
15.1 kg

% Fat (%)
19.7%

TORSO

Fat Mass (kg)	8.9kg
Lean Mass (kg)	27.0kg
Lean + BMC (kg)	27.6kg
Total Mass (kg)	36.5kg
% Fat (%)	24.4%
Est.VAT	123.0cm ²

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One extreme



WITH AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ATHLETES AND AMATEURS ALIKE PUSHING THEIR BODIES TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL EXTREMES



to another

IN PURSUIT OF EVER TOUGHER FITNESS AND ENDURANCE CHALLENGES, SAM HANCOCK FINDS OUT WHAT DRIVES THEM.

Triathlon, Ironman, ultramarathon events across deserts, the Arctic and the Alps...

Extreme exercise events have become the new normal in the world of fitness. No longer satisfied with making it from the couch to five kays, fit blokes (and fit women) across the globe are now setting their sights on ever more arduous goals that push the human body to seemingly superhuman heights. But is this rise in extreme endurance events taking things too far? Or are we simply doing what our bodies have been designed to do?



“So delighted.” When Alex Honnold became the first person in history to free climb (without ropes) El Capitan's 900-metre vertical rock face in Yosemite National Park, that was his response when the film crew for *Free Solo* - the smash-hit documentary that tracked Honnold's feat - his girlfriend and family asked how he was feeling. “So delighted.”

Having just risked his life to such an extreme degree, and achieved such an historic goal, it seemed a strange, almost passive, answer.

Yet this nonchalant attitude perfectly sums up the way the majority of us now see and consider extreme exercise. It's now so ingrained in day-to-day life, we've adopted an almost unreactive outlook on people's endeavours to put their bodies and minds through some of the world's toughest challenges.

And who's to say that's a bad thing? Perhaps our drive to push ourselves, both physically and mentally, is a healthy sign we're not sitting still and succumbing to the many ongoing health crises that are now rampant around the Western world.

Supported by science

In a study completed earlier this year to determine if extreme exercise was detrimental for middle-aged hearts,

Free Solo stats

- ▶ **914 metres** The height of the vertical granite wall known as El Capitan.
- ▶ **3 hours, 56 minutes** The time it took Honnold to reach the peak.
- ▶ **\$20,000,000** The amount earned by *Free Solo* at the box office. It won an Oscar for Best Documentary.



“THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES IS MORE AGAINST THE WAY OUR BODIES ARE MEANT TO RUN THAN DOING EXTREME EXERCISE.”

Dr Benjamin Levine, director of the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine in Texas, US, defined “extreme” as “eight or more hours a week of activity at an average of 10 metabolic equivalents, or METS.” Of course, extreme looks different to everyone, and your weekly 5k may well be someone else's weekly sub-three-and-a-half-hour marathon (more on that particular chap shortly).

The study itself, which focused on male hearts, found that no amount of extreme exercise was bad for men aged between 40 and 80. As with anything in life, though, there are ups and downs when it comes to the world of extreme exercise.

Hugo Delamain, a public servant who completed the Half Ironman earlier this year (a 1.9km swim, 90km cycle and half

marathon) and has run three marathons before that, says exercise in any form can only be a good thing for our bodies.

“I mean, what is too much?” says Delamain. “To me, the unhealthiest thing we do is sit at a desk for eight hours a day. The way we live our lives is more against the way our bodies are meant to run than doing extreme exercise. Sure, too much of anything can become unhealthy, and when I was training for the Ironman, there were times I was training twice a day and my health started to go a little bit - nothing dramatic, I just kept getting ill and constantly felt tired - but you learn how to train properly and what your body is really capable of.”

Delamain also says having a solid training regimen that includes “hard

exercise” makes work life better: “Once you've got through that tough workout, you know you've already pushed yourself further than you thought you could, so the rest of the day is going to be OK.

“There's also the educational side to it, which I see as another bonus. You can transfer loads of skills from training into your working life, like preparation and making sure you don't waste time worrying about things you can't actually control: whether it's going to rain or not, for example.”

Sense of purpose

The conversation surrounding mental health often comes back to exercise and



DO YOU DARE?

Ultimate events

Hairiest ride

■ **Portal Trail in Utah**
(pictured) This trail drops 305m in 1.6km, with the trail exposed to a 400m cliff. People have fallen and died attempting it.

Extreme ultra

■ **6633 Arctic Ultra**
Regarded by many as the toughest, coldest, windiest ultra distance footrace on the planet, the 6633 is over either 193km or 611km, with both races crossing the line of the Arctic Circle.

Highest race

■ **Everest Marathon**
Obviously climbing Everest is no longer enough – now you can run around it. The race starts at the Everest Base Camp at almost 18,000 feet (5486m) and finishes at Namche Bazaar at 11,306 feet (3446m).

Ups and downs

■ **Badwater 135**
The course starts in Death Valley, the lowest elevation in North America, and finishes on Mount Whitney, the tallest mountain in the continental US. Over the race, you'll cover three mountain ranges.

the benefits it can bring. Countless celebrities, from the likes of Ryan Reynolds to Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, have spoken out to say they use exercise, sometimes in extreme forms, to help battle ongoing issues they might be struggling with. Perhaps, then, we are so accustomed to the idea of extreme exercise because it’s been put to us as such a positive thing: push yourself and see if it makes a difference.

Chris Slack, who in December rowed unassisted across the Atlantic Ocean as part of the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, along with three childhood mates, says extreme exercise is “all part of seeing how far I can push myself out of my comfort zone and away from routine”. He continues, “It’s very easy to get comfortable, but it isn’t until you really push yourself to your limits that you realise what you’re capable of achieving and also what it is in life that’s really important to you.”

For Slack, exercise hasn’t become extreme - it’s always been that way. “People work to live now, a lot more than they live to work, as well as the fact they have greater exposure to challenges around the world because of the internet, particularly social

Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge stats

- ▶ **1.5 million** Each team will row in excess of this many oar strokes over a race.
- ▶ **5000 calories** Rowers burn in excess of this per day.
- ▶ **12kg** Amount of body weight each rower loses, on average, while crossing the Atlantic.



“IT’S ALL PART OF SEEING HOW FAR I CAN PUSH MYSELF OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE AND AWAY FROM ROUTINE.”

media,” he says. “Platforms like Twitter and Instagram encourage people to take on extreme challenges they might never have known existed before.”

Chloe Oldfield, a sports psychologist, says as well as social media playing a crucial role in the rise of extreme exercise in the past decade, human nature can’t be ignored.

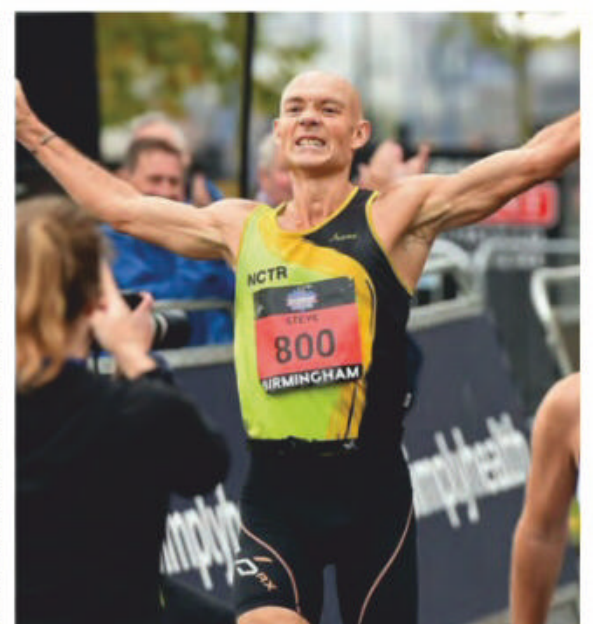
“We have a natural inclination towards challenging ourselves - growth and mastery and stuff like that,” she says. “When you hear someone talking about the Ironman or something like the Marathon des Sables, it’s difficult to appreciate the negative experiences that person has had during that challenge; instead we romanticise it

and begin thinking we want to emulate that person and their achievements.”

Put simply, Oldfield says, people are usually very proud of what they’ve achieved, as well as amazed by what they’ve pushed themselves to do, and that feeling can become infectious.

Serious sacrifices

However, when *MF* spoke to Steve Edwards, the man who’s attempting to run 1000 marathons in under three-and-a-half hours, it’s clear the feeling can also be overwhelming. When Edwards explains the lengths to which his achievements have driven him - from physical injuries to psychological



Steve Edwards crosses the line at the Birmingham Marathon in 2017 to record his 800th sub-3:30 finish.

challenges and sacrificing time with his wife and other family members - the inevitable strain of extreme exercise becomes obvious.

"Choosing to live this kind of lifestyle is a big decision that anyone needs to think about very carefully," he says. "Yes, I'm immensely proud of what I've achieved and what I'm going to achieve - but it comes at a price. My body has been pushed to its limits more than once, and I've had to put running before a lot of things: like spending time with my family. You can't set these records without doing that."

Edwards, who works in IT and is, at the time of writing, on marathon number 895, agrees with Oldfield that it's his own drive and curiosity about what he's capable of that means he's got this far. But, he says, the danger is where and when that ends.

"I try not to think too far ahead because you never know what might happen.

All I know is I want to carry on running as an activity into old age - so long as my body lets me. That's the only thing I'm aspiring to do. What I've been thinking lately, though, is what happens when I get to 1000? What will be next? Will I be satisfied? That's a difficult question because I know what I felt like at 500 when my wife asked what I was going to do next... I was almost scared to tell her. She knew already, but telling her I was only halfway to where I wanted to be was a scary moment." Ultimately, Edwards says, it's about discipline and dedication: "Those two things can go a long way."

Oldfield, whose clients are often those who feel run down or burned out, says people burn out when they've left little room to exist outside of their discipline - "when they haven't given themselves regular down time to consider life outside of exercise". On the whole, though, she

says "people do things for an internally created source of motivation, so for example: 'I relish the challenge, I love the outdoors, I want to reach my potential'... at the end of the day, having an internally valued motive is a very valuable thing. It helps people get from A to B every day."

Delamain, Slack, Oldfield and Edwards - as well as Honnold - all acknowledge the ups and downs when it comes to extreme exercise. In their own ways, they have all encountered the highs and lows of pushing their bodies and minds to the extreme.

At one point in *Free Solo*, before Honnold completes the free climb that has now come to define his career, he tells the camera: "Each day, there is a chance you might die. And there's nothing wrong with that."

You never know when your day might come, he says, so why not live doing what you love? There's really nothing too extreme about that, now, is there? ■

MF TOP PICK

Challenge yourself: Oxfam Trailwalker

■ So maybe you can't see yourself doing the Marathon des Sables - a six-day, 251km ultramarathon held each year in the Sahara Desert - but there is an endurance event that's well within the reach of the regular fit bloke, and you'll be raising money for charity while you're at it.

The Oxfam Trailwalker is Australia's original charity team endurance event, where teams of four walk 100km of bush trail in under 48 hours. It's not a relay. Your team has to start together, stick together and finish together - it's tough, but with the right training and attitude, it's totally doable. Each team must also commit to raising a minimum amount to support Oxfam's work around the world.

Oxfam Trailwalker now raises more than \$6 million each year in Australia alone, and globally, the events have raised more than \$210 million for Oxfam's work in support of people living in poverty around the world. Sign up at trailwalker.oxfam.org.au



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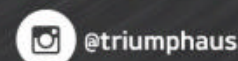
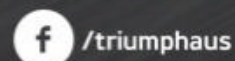
NEW
ROCKET 3 GT

THE ULTIMATE HIGH PERFORMANCE MUSCLE ROADSTER IS HERE.

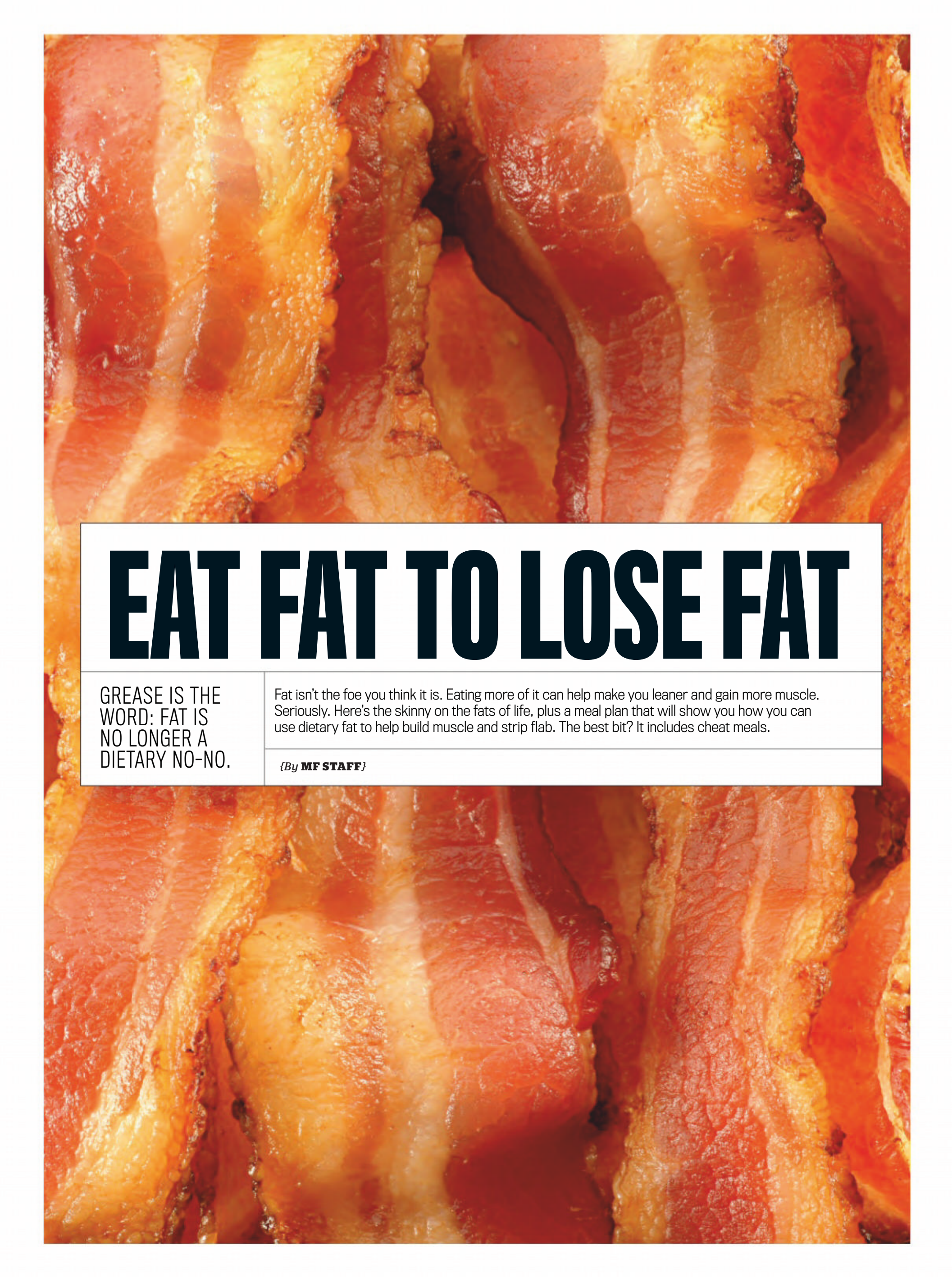
The all-new Rocket 3 R & Rocket 3 GT herald the genesis of an all-new motorcycle legend. Equipped with an all-new 2500cc Triple engine, the biggest production motorcycle engine in the world, delivering the highest torque of any production motorbike – 221Nm @ 4,000rpm. With truly imposing muscular presence and magnificent style, the new Rocket 3 line-up combines the highest level of specification and technology with all of Triumph's phenomenal handling.

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EAT FAT TO LOSE FAT

GREASE IS THE
WORD: FAT IS
NO LONGER A
DIETARY NO-NO.

Fat isn't the foe you think it is. Eating more of it can help make you leaner and gain more muscle. Seriously. Here's the skinny on the fats of life, plus a meal plan that will show you how you can use dietary fat to help build muscle and strip flab. The best bit? It includes cheat meals.

{By **MF STAFF**}

Remember when you first heard fat was bad?



Probably not - it's been drilled so deep into nutritional dogma that it's hard to tell exactly when fat became public enemy No 1.

A good place to start is the 1980s, when the US National Academy of Sciences told the world that everybody should go on a low-fat diet. Butter, yoghurts and oils were suddenly on par with arsenic, and carbs quickly filled the gaps left by fat. Soft, fluffy foods became healthy substitutes for anything greasy and men began worrying if their Foreman grills had enough tilt. Funny thing is, this mass carb-loading overlapped perfectly with the rising obesity boom. Keep reading to appreciate the levers and pulleys behind this coincidence and find out how the world's nutritional whipping boy is fighting for a pardon that'll help you build more muscle.

MATTERS OF FAT

You've heard that fat clogs arteries, causes heart disease and can put you on track to becoming *The Biggest Loser's* next pin-up. Well, it's time to refresh your brain's Wiki page on lipids. After a review of 21 studies in *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, fat has got a reprieve - the research found there was no significant evidence to link dietary saturated fat with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. The lab coats' post-mortem did find a more likely culprit for degenerative disease: refined carbs. Yes, that's you, Mr Baguette. But how does the traditional carb- and protein-heavy diet most lifters use to tighten their sleeves work?

HOW CARBS BUILD SIZE

Step 1 You eat a big bowl of carb-rich pasta, a sandwich or fried rice.

Step 2 The carbs hit your stomach and are converted into energy (glucose) your body absorbs. This is shuttled into your blood-stream and muscles to fuel your bench press.

Step 3 Your pancreas is alerted to the influx of glucose, pumps out insulin to clear away any excess and tells your body to stockpile it.

Step 4 When the glucose storage depots in your muscles and organs are full, the rest is squirrelled away into a little roll on your belly.

Step 5 Testosterone is then released, triggering muscle-building; glucose also helps your body absorb protein. But if you don't strike the right balance of calories, carbs and protein, you'll find your fat levels unbalancing the scales.

Step 6 While this is happening, serotonin - your feel-good chemical - gets released. This makes you feel happy, comfortable and relaxed. Not the right mindset for the gym.

Step 7 The result: muscle. But this also adds an almost equal portion of fat and you may end up feeling lethargic. Yes, you can cut carbs to get lean, but this comes at a cost: muscle.

HOW CUTTING CARBS WORKS

After you've loaded up on mountains of carbs and protein to bulk up, the easy solution to get ripped for summer is to cut out carbs. This isn't as cut and dried as it sounds. "Your body will have become used to all this extra energy, so when you cut out



carbs, you will often feel lacklustre," says sports nutritionist Matt Lovell. This means you can lose motivation, strength and are likely to be grumpy. "Your testosterone will drop and you'll have so little energy, your body will have to scavenge oomph from the protein you eat or the protein stored in your

FAT FACTS

Measure up How much dietary fat is in your favourite fat-filled goodies?



Coconut oil
13g fat per tbsp



Butter
11.5g fat per tbsp



Heavy whipping cream
5.6g fat per tbsp



Cheddar cheese
9.3g fat per 28g slice



Raw almonds
14.4g fat per 28g serve



muscles,” says Lovell. “This means that while you’re losing fat, you’re also losing muscle.” There’s no doubting this line of attack works: you will end up with more definition than the dictionary. However, you’ll have had to sacrifice a few centimetres off your guns to get your six-pack. Luckily, there is a simple way to hang onto your brawn and burn any wobbles: eat more fat.

MAKE A FAT FRIEND

Dr Mauro Di Pasquale, former world champion powerlifter and author of *The Anabolic Diet*, was tired of seeing bodybuilders with pot-bellies who lost upwards of 15kg of muscle when they ripped up for contests. Being a molecular biologist, he’s come up with a strategy that has you eating fat to add muscle and get more ripped. It’s based on a simple rule: follow a high-protein, high-fat diet all week, then a high-protein, high-carb diet all weekend.

Part of the reason this works is because lifters with the highest fat intakes also have the highest T levels, says a study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. “The high-fat portions bump up testosterone, a growth hormone, and tell your body it doesn’t need to store fat because it’s getting plenty, so it can be used as fuel,” says Lovell. When the weekends come, you’ll gorge yourself on your favourite carbs and fats, which get shuttled to your carb-depleted muscles and promote growth thanks to the T-surge. The cherry on top? This carb-loading will also make Monday’s pump your biggest ever.

HOW TO ADJUST IT

Calories are still calories, so if you’re trying to lose weight, drop 1000 calories from your daily intake. And if you’re trying to bulk up, then ramp up the size of your T-bone steaks.

WHAT’S SUP?

Include these in your daily plan:

- 1. Whey protein** Check the tub for any hidden carbs and sugars.
- 2. Multivitamins** If there’s a shortfall in your diet, they’ll pick up the slack.
- 3. Fish oil** It help you recover faster and research in the *Federation of the American Societies for Experimental Biology Journal* found it fights obesity.



Must be yolking
Eggs contain around 5g fat, but only a small proportion of this is “bad” saturated fat.

EAT THIS

Your nutritional breakdown

	Carbs	% fat	% protein	% carbs
Weekdays	30 grams	55-60	30-35	5-8
Weekends	No Limit	30-40	10-15	45-60

■ “You’re allowed a few carbs during the week, so limit these to the ones you get from vegies (drizzled with olive oil, of course) because you’ll still need enough vitamins and minerals to keep your immune system strong,” says sports nutritionist Matt Lovell. Vegies included in the eating plan (see over page) all have the lowest carb content. Don’t waste your carb allowance at the local takeaway chip shop.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Genetics influence cholesterol, so have your cholesterol checked before and then after 4-6 weeks.
- Get a complete physical. It’s particularly important for older blokes to make sure your uric acid and thyroid levels are normal.
- Look out for hidden carbs, in supps, store-bought salad dressings and sauces.
- Fat doesn’t mean trans fats. When fat is listed, try to get it from natural sources, such as animal products and olive oils.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The good More energy and less hunger. Fat is dense in energy, so your energy levels won’t yo-yo. You won’t feel heavy after a meal and you’ll wake up with heaps of pep.
The bad A tough first week, as your body adjusts to the new fuel sources.

The ugly Erratic bowel movements. Your guts will take time to get used to things, so take a fibre supplement.

The money Carbs are cheap and healthy; protein isn’t. You’ll be eating more animal products that are more exxy, so bulk-buy.

Your plate-by-plate eating plan

THIS PLAN IS TAILORED FOR AN 80KG BLOKE WHO WANTS TO ADD UPWARDS OF FOUR KILOS OF MUSCLE AND 10% MORE STRENGTH, AND LOSE 2-3% BODY FAT.

MONDAY

Breakfast

4 fried eggs in butter with 4 slices of bacon

Snack

Packet of beef jerky, a few slices of cheese

Lunch

Avocado, tuna, spinach salad

Snack

Slices of salami, handful of pecans

Dinner

Rack of lamb with broccoli, corn and cabbage

TUESDAY

Breakfast

3 boiled eggs with 2-3 fillets of herring

Snack

25g dry-roasted peanuts, glass of milk, 100g cottage cheese

Lunch

200-300g of sliced beef in a wrap with avocado, mustard, onion and spinach

Snack

Beef jerky, apple

Dinner

Sirloin steak strips (marinade in soy sauce and pepper) served over broccoli and cauliflower. Drizzle with garlic and olive oil

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast

3 eggs, scrambled, with a slab of cheddar cheese

Snack

Avocado with cooked prawns and olive oil

Lunch

Sashimi with dried edamame

Snack

100g mixed nuts

Dinner

Chicken stir-fry on a bed of asparagus, celery, spinach, onion and capsicum

THURSDAY

Breakfast

4 eggs poached on bed of smoked salmon

Snack

Tin of oysters in oil

Lunch

Sliced lamb kebab with extra meat (eat half the wrap)

Snack

Beef jerky, apple

Dinner

4 pork chops with cauliflower, broccoli and asparagus

FRIDAY

Breakfast

4 fried eggs with 4-6 rashers of bacon

Snack

Avocado and tuna mixed with olive oil

Lunch

Beef chilli with beans (no rice or pasta)

Snack

100g cottage cheese on crackers

Dinner

400g salmon steak, Brussels sprouts, leeks and mushrooms

SATURDAY

Breakfast

2-4 slices of toast with jam, bowl of cereal

Snack

Peanut-butter bagel

Lunch

Chicken fried rice (Chinese-style)

Snack

Banana, yoghurt and cereal

Dinner

Your favourite cheat meal (pizza, burger, etc)

SUNDAY

Breakfast

Pancakes with syrup, banana

Snack

Carrots dipped in hummus

Lunch

Roast lunch

Snack

Cheese and crackers

Dinner

Your favourite cheat meal (creamy pasta, chips, etc)

Slow food

If you're going a burger, avoid the trans fat-filled fast food ones.



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Plant-based pros

Are the increasing number of athletes opting for a vegan approach doing so at risk to their performance? Will Unwin reports.

Once the misunderstood and often mocked approach of so-called eco warriors, veganism is now mainstream.

While there are various reasons to remove, or at least cut down on, meat and other animal products, an increasing number of athletes are doing so for performance purposes alone. However, individual needs vary from sport to sport.

A cyclist, for example, needs an average of 6071 calories per day on a ride, while a soccer player burns around a third of that during a 90-minute match. Regardless of which diet you follow, getting the requisite energy and nutrients can be a tricky business, so cutting off numerous foods limits options, meaning careful planning and research is key.

Foregoing meat and dairy foods can be a tough decision for anyone, but for an athlete with crucial performances on the line, it's a potentially career-changing move. Professional cyclist Adam Hansen, who has taken part in 29 Grand Tours, has been dairy-free for the majority of his life, but he's only recently made the step to cut out fish as well.

"I actually had a blood test done and my goal was to improve every marker," he explains. "I went through everything and while I had good results, I just wanted to improve even more. I worked with a doctor to cut out certain food groups. I had damaging chemicals like mercury in my system, which I found out was from seafood. So as I began cutting things out, I took a back step and thought, holy moly... I'm a vegan! Then, of course, looking into it more, you find out the ethical side of it and it's very hard to turn a blind eye."

Meanwhile, Spanish footballer Joan Román, who has previously played for Manchester City and Barcelona, was influenced by a teammate to move on from meat. "We researched, we read articles, we watched documentaries," he says. "I started off by taking out milk and dairy because it was already affecting my digestion a little bit and from there I started to feel much better, so then I started trying to not eat red meat. After that, I took all the meat out and



Patrik Baboumian is one of the strongest men on the planet. He's also a vegan.

in the end I decided to take the fish and the eggs out, too. The main reason was because of health and how I was feeling, but in the end I was aware of how the meat and dairy industry work, how they treat animals and how it affects the environment, and it all clicked in my head. I couldn't look back after that."

Informed decision

That said, without their fine-tuned physiques and ability to perform under pressure, athletes wouldn't be athletes, so changing winning formulas is a risky move. Food is fuel for any sportsman, and putting in the wrong stuff will have a negative impact on livelihoods and

careers. In short, the details matter. "You need to take care of what you eat and how you eat," says Román. "As sportsmen, we burn more energy and put our bodies through more stress than normal people, so we need to take care."

Performance nutritionist James Sinclair - himself a former Premier League footballer - says honest self-assessment is essential before making big changes: "If a footballer, for example, was to come to me with the idea of becoming a vegan, first I would ask their reasons for the change, what their goals are, what they're looking at achieving while switching to a plant-based diet and why they believe that going vegan is right for them. From these simple questions, I can get a better idea of whether it's a sensible choice, from a purely performance perspective, or not."

Sinclair continues: "For footballers, I would advise hesitancy implementing such a change during the course of the season. Long-term monitoring would be necessary to see if the player develops any nutrient deficiencies, which can be combated with WADA and Informed Sport-approved supplements."

For all the athletes *MF* spoke to, however, the impact of going green was tangible. All say they not only noticed marked improvement in performance, but quicker recovery from both training and injury, too.



Strongman diet

Patrik Baboumian reveals his 5000 calorie-a-day eating plan:

Breakfast (pre-workout)

Shake - 80g protein, 5g creatine, 3g beta-alanine.

Post-workout

Fruit smoothie with frozen fruit, berries, protein powder, glutamine, beta-alanine, creatine, powdered dried greens, turmeric, cinnamon, BCAA, orange and mango juice, and water.

Lunch

Vegan sausages, falafel, low-fat oven fries, grilled veg.

Snack

Shake - 50g protein, 5g fat.

Dinner

Tofu, veg - including zucchini flavoured with curry paste to provide fat - and potatoes.

Snack

Large serving of peanuts and a protein smoothie.





From left: Joan Román in action for Greek club Panetolikos – the Spanish winger has been vegan for years; Venus Williams went vegan after being diagnosed with an incurable autoimmune disease; Pro Aussie cyclist Adam Hansen stumbled upon veganism after tests to improve his performance showed it was the best option.

Power plants

Patrik Baboumian is an Iranian-born German-Armenian international strongman competitor who appears in the recent pro-vegan film *The Game Changers*, which attempts to show the benefits of a plant-based diet for athletic performance.

At first, though, Baboumian chose veganism for ethical reasons: “When I made the decision, I wasn’t expecting anything to happen to my training, I was probably expecting my performances to decrease as I was brought up with the idea that you need animal protein to build up muscle and strength.”

But Baboumian has held five world strength records during his career – all while a vegan. “What actually happened was the opposite: I increased size and strength. I put that down to the fact meat puts a huge toll on the digestive system. When you get rid of the meat in your diet, it increases your appetite and you eat the right things. I ended up giving my body more calories – more fuel – and if you give it good fuel, you’re going to reach new heights.”

It’s true, though, that many key nutrients are found mainly in meat and dairy. For example, creatine, vitamin B12 and omega-3 acids.

“B12 is a vital micronutrient that plays a specific role in the synthesis of DNA,” explains Sinclair. “As the only natural source of vitamin B12 can be found in animal and dairy products, it is estimated that about 50% of vegans are vitamin B12 deficient. This can result in pernicious anaemia, which has detrimental effects on immune function.” Fortunately, the solution is simple: regular supplementation with B12 tablets.

All in the head?

As well as the immediate impact on his performance, Hansen thinks the plant-based lifestyle extended his cycling career. The Australian rode the 2019 Tour de France, finishing 68th, at the ripe old age of 38. “I really feel I have added years to my life, and that was one of my goals,” he says. “Not to just live longer, but to live younger longer. As for my racing years, I’m confident it will add many seasons to my career.”

Again, though, Sinclair offers a slightly more sceptical take. He thinks the positive effects of changing to a plant-based diet could be mental rather than physical. “I believe that there would

be a placebo effect,” he says. “It’s all about context, and firstly you would have to consider what the individual’s previous diet consisted of: perhaps they were consuming a diet that was low in nutrients and lacking a variety of fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables. In that instance, switching to a diet with increased fresh produce is going to give you an immediate sense of improved health.”

On the subject of placebo, while there is clear evidence that removing meat can lower inflammation in muscles, there’s no solid research to suggest a plant-based diet repairs injuries quicker. But Baboumian begs to differ. “My body,” he says, “is able to better recover from injury and those mini-traumas you have as a basic part of your training process. The recovery is definitely much more efficient than before I went vegan. And that’s not just compared to my meat-eating days, but also my days as a vegetarian. My recovery is way better now.”

“I used to be forced to take painkillers from time to time, and I know other strongman competitors do the same. That’s because your body is under so much pressure, stress and trauma. When I went vegan, I was able to completely lose the painkillers.”

There is no medical evidence to support his belief the diet alone has allowed him to wean himself off painkillers, but even if the effects are indeed largely placebo, that is not to discredit them. If you feel better for it – even if the change is mental rather than physiological – that’s no less beneficial.

Green gains

The key for anyone looking to remove meat and dairy from their diet entirely is to fully research what is needed for a healthy, balanced vegan diet. “When you switch to a vegan lifestyle, especially as an athlete,” says Joan Román, “you need to know the impact of what you eat and understand that your food can affect every aspect of performance.”

The three sportsmen we spoke to all acknowledged the importance of saving the planet as a key part of their lifestyle adjustments, but since turning vegan each of them also feels it’s helped them reach new heights in terms of performance. For some, cutting out meat and dairy may well have a negative impact on energy or recovery, but if elite athlete testimony is anything to go by, they could be the exception rather than the rule. ■



The Game Changers is streaming on Netflix.

Garden of plenty

Forget endless bowls of lentil stew. There's now a bumper crop of plant-based products and meal solutions available for the health-conscious dude.



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Not sure if something's vegan? Check the label under "allergen information": if the product contains dairy, eggs or seafood, it will be stated under its allergen ingredients list.



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Vegie Delights offer a huge range of plant-based meat alternatives, from burgers and roasts to mince, sausages, hotdogs and meatballs. All 100% vegan and high in protein with added iron, B12 and zinc. vegie delights.com.au



The Alternative Sausage

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Barbecue guilt-free with these 100% plant-based and Aussie-made snags. They pack a punch in protein and are free from GMOs, preservatives, artificial colours and flavours. So good, they won the 2019 Peta Australia award for Best Vegan Meat. altmeatco.com



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Body Science Clean Vegan Protein

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A clean plant-based protein made with premium whole ingredients, it's naturally sweetened and gluten-free, with no added sugars, artificial colours or flavours and no gums or fillers. bodyscience.com.au



Fry's Sausage Rolls

ROLL WITH THE GOOD TIMES

Meat-free sausage rolls? Now we're talking! Fry's also make plant-based meat pies, burgers, schnitties, nuggets and pizza, just in case you were wondering. Now even your cheat meals can be clean and green. Oh yeah, baby. fryfamilyfood.com



Macros Meal Delivery

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

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Alternative Dairy Co.

MELTING MOMENTS

One of the toughest things about being vegan? No cheese. But the Alternative Dairy Co's vegan cheddar tastes about as close to the real thing as you can get – plus it actually melts, so cheese toasties ahoy! altdairyco.com



Pana Organic

SMOOTH OPERATOR

And just to make sure that you can enjoy all the good things in life, Pana Organic brings you vegan chocolate. It's dairy-free, but smooth, rich and silky, plus packed with antioxidants, amino acids vitamins and minerals. pana-organic.com

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The Body Book

Bigger arms in four weeks

TRY THIS MONTH-LONG WORKOUT DESIGNED TO PACK ON LEAN MUSCLE ON YOUR BICEPS, TRICEPS AND SHOULDERS.

H

If you want to look better with your shirt on and off, you're going to need bigger arms. And shoulders, for that matter.

Which is why this month's big workout is designed to add serious muscle size to your biceps, triceps and shoulders in just four weeks. You'll train these muscle groups not once but twice a week to give them the added stimulus they need to grow bigger and stronger in the shortest possible time. In addition to two arms and shoulders workouts a week, there's a chest and back session and a legs and abs session, so while the main muscle-building focus is on your arms and shoulders, you'll be targeting your other major muscles for growth too.

How the plan works

This month's four-week workout is made up of four sessions a week. Workout one targets your arms and shoulders; workout two, your chest and back; workout three, arms and shoulders again; and workout four, legs and abs. This approach means your biceps, triceps and shoulders are trained directly twice a week, and this increased gym time and increased training volume will prompt these muscles to grow bigger far more quickly than you thought possible.

Each workout is made up of five moves. The first two moves are big, compound lifts done in straight sets of eight reps of five sets. The final three moves, which are more isolation-focused, make up a tri-set, which means you'll do them in order without resting until you've completed all the reps of the third move. The first two moves of the first arms and shoulders workout are shoulder-focused, with the tri-set working the arms. This is reversed in the second arms and shoulders session. Simply do the workouts in order, sticking to the sets, reps, tempo and rest periods detailed, and transform your torso with more muscle mass across the board.

Tempo training

■ To get the full effect from these workouts, you need to stick to the four-digit tempo code for each exercise. The first digit indicates how long in seconds you take to lower the weight, the second how long you pause at the bottom of the move, the third how long you take to lift the weight and the final digit how

long you pause at the top. The accumulated time under tension increases your heart rate to burn body fat and break down muscle tissue so it's rebuilt bigger and stronger. Keep each rep smooth and controlled so your muscles – not momentum – do the work, and move through a full range of motion.



Workout 1

Chest and back

1 BENCH PRESS

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Lie on a flat bench holding a barbell with your hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Brace your core, then lower the bar towards your chest. Press it back up to the start.



2 BENT-OVER ROW

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

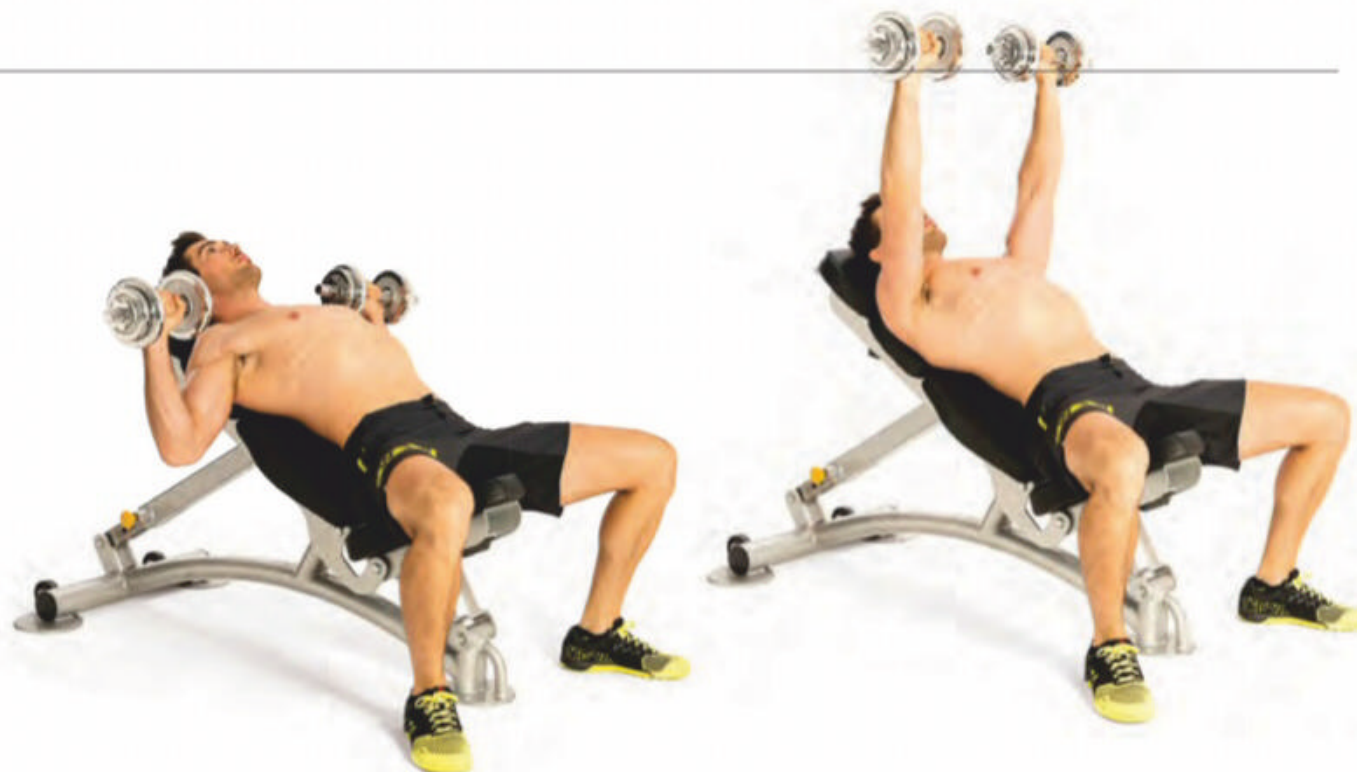
Hold a barbell with an overhand grip, hands just outside your legs. Bend your knees slightly, brace your core, then pull the bar up, leading with your elbows. Lower it back to the start.



3A INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2010 Rest 0 sec

Lie on an incline bench holding a dumbbell in each hand by your shoulders. Brace your core, then press the weights up until your arms are straight. Lower them back to the start.



3B INCLINE DUMBBELL FLYE

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2010 Rest 0 sec

Lie on an incline bench holding a dumbbell in each hand above your face, with your palms facing and a slight bend in your elbows. Lower them to the sides, then bring them back to the top.



3C ONE-ARM ROW

Sets 3 Reps 12 each side
Tempo 2111 Rest 60sec

Kneel on a bench with one hand on it for support, holding a dumbbell in the other hand. Keeping your chest up, row the weight up, leading with your elbow. Then lower back to the start. Complete all the reps on one side, then switch.



Workout 2

Arms and shoulders

1 CHIN-UP

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Hold a chin-up bar with an underhand grip. Brace your core, then pull yourself up until your chin is higher than the bar. Lower until your arms are straight again.



2 TRICEPS DIP

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

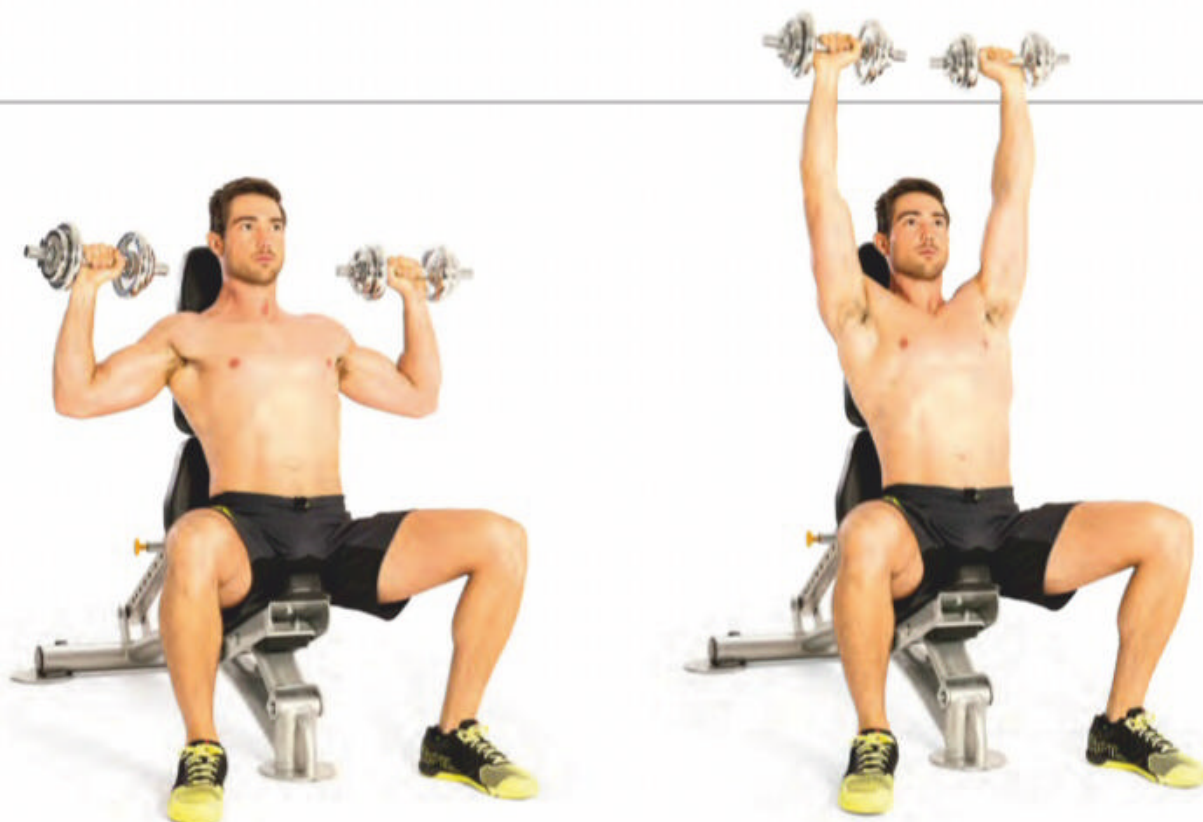
Grip rings or parallel bars with your arms straight. Keeping your chest up, bend your elbows to lower your body as far as your shoulders allow. Press back up powerfully to return to the start.



3A SEATED DUMBBELL OVERHEAD PRESS

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2010 Rest 0 sec

Sit on a bench with a dumbbell in each hand at shoulder height. Keeping your chest up, press the weights directly overhead until your arms are straight, then lower them back to the start.



3B LATERAL RAISE

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 0 sec

Stand tall with a light dumbbell in each hand with palms facing. Keeping your chest up and a bend in your elbows, raise the weights out to shoulder height, then lower back to the start.



3C REVERSE LATERAL RAISE

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 60 sec

Bend forwards from the hips with a light dumbbell in each hand, palms facing. Keeping a bend in your elbows, raise the weights out to shoulder height, then lower back to the start.



Workout 3

Legs and abs

1 BACK SQUAT

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Stand tall with a bar across the back of your shoulders. Keeping your chest up and core braced, squat down as deep as you can. Drive back up through your heels to return to the start.



2 FRONT SQUAT

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Stand tall holding a bar across the front of your shoulders with elbows up. Keeping your core braced, squat down as deep as you can. Drive back up through your heels to return to the start.



3A GLUTE BRIDGE

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 0 sec

Lie with your upper back supported on a bench and a barbell across the top of your thighs. Thrust your hips up, squeezing your glutes at the top, then return to the start.



3B GOOD MORNING

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2010 Rest 0 sec

Stand tall holding a light barbell across the back of your shoulders, feet shoulder-width apart. Keeping your core braced, bend forward slowly from the hips, as far as your hamstrings allow but not past horizontal. Return to the start.



3C BARBELL ROLL-OUT

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 60 sec

Kneel on the floor holding a barbell with both hands. Roll the bar forwards so you lower your torso, keeping your core braced. Then use your abs muscles to return to the start.



Workout 4

Arms and shoulders

1 OVERHEAD PRESS

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding a barbell across the top of your chest with hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Keeping your chest up and core braced, press the bar overhead until your arms are straight, then lower it back to the start.



2 RACK PULL

Sets 5 Reps 8
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Stand tall in front of a barbell resting on safety bars at knee height. Using a double overhand grip, bend down and deadlift the bar up, squeezing your shoulder blades together at the top.



3A SEATED DUMBBELL CURL

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 0 sec

Sit on a bench with dumbbells by your sides, palms facing forward. Keeping your elbows tucked in, curl the weights up, squeezing your biceps at the top. Lower them back to the start.



3B STANDING DUMBBELL CURL

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2111 Rest 0 sec

Hold dumbbells by your sides with straight arms, palms facing forwards. Keeping your elbows tucked in, curl the weights up, squeezing your biceps at the top. Lower them back to the start.



3C TRICEPS EXTENSION

Sets 3 Reps 12
Tempo 2010 Rest 60 sec

Stand tall holding a dumbbell over your head with both hands, arms straight. Keeping your chest up, lower the weight behind your head, then raise it back to the start.



Full throttle

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How to do the workout

■ TABATA is a highly effective way to torch fat... but only if you commit. Lacklustre efforts won't cut it; you need to work as hard as you can for each set. Do each exercise for 20 secs, rest for 10, then move immediately on to the next move. Good luck!

1A. PLYOMETRIC SPLIT SQUAT

MUSCLES WORKED:

glutes, hamstrings, quads, calves, core

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

● Begin by standing with your right leg forward, bent at the knee and foot flat on the floor. Your left leg should be positioned behind you, also bent at the knee, with your toes on the floor.

● Drive up through both feet at the same time, as explosively as you can so that you take off from the ground.

● While in the air, quickly switch the position of both legs, so that when you land your left leg is now forward and your right leg is behind.

● Land softly through bent knees and immediately repeat the movement.





1B. PUSH-UP WITH TOE TOUCH

MUSCLES WORKED:

pecs, triceps, traps, delts, core

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

● Assume the usual push-up position with your hands and feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart.

● Keeping good form, lower your torso until your chest lightly touches the floor.

● Push back up to the start position, then drive your hips up in the air while simultaneously reaching one hand back towards the opposite foot.

● Return to the push-up position. That's one rep.

● Now repeat the process using the other hand.



1C. 180 JUMP SQUATS

MUSCLES WORKED:

quads, hamstrings, glutes, calves

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- Begin in a squat position with your chest up and your feet flat on the ground.
- Using your arms for momentum, drive up into the air and quickly turn your torso 180 degrees to face the other direction.
- Land through soft knees and immediately go into the next rep while keeping the pace up throughout the set.



1D. PUSH-UP TO SIT OUTSIDE

MUSCLES WORKED:

pecs, triceps, delts, core, quads, hamstrings

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- Begin by doing a deep push-up.
- At the bottom of the movement, lift one hand from the floor, bending the elbow and pulling it back while lifting your chest.
- At the same time, turn your torso, kick the opposite leg underneath you and out straight.
- Quickly return your hand and foot to the starting position, do another deep push-up and repeat on the other side with the other arm and leg.





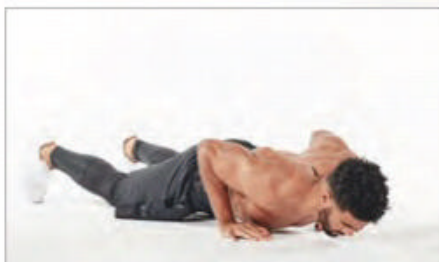
1E. STAR JUMP

MUSCLES WORKED:
 delts, traps, abductors, lats, adductors, calves, core

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- Stand tall with your feet together and your arms by your sides.
- Bend your knees and squat down while running your hands down towards your ankles.
- Drive up and jump into the air, while opening your legs to the side and lifting your arms to a horizontal position.
- Land through soft knees and go immediately into the next rep.



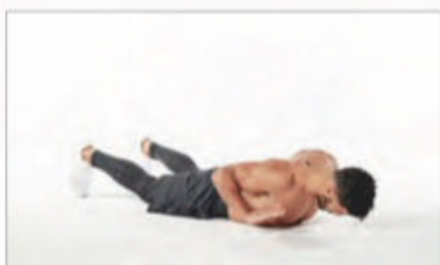
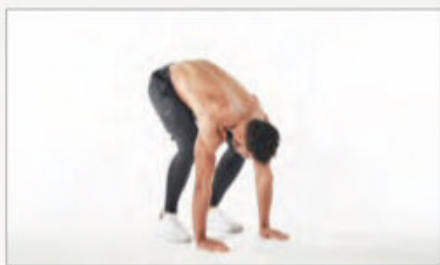
1F. WINDMILL PUSH-UP

MUSCLES WORKED:
 pecs, triceps, traps, delts, core, rhomboids, lats

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- From a push-up position, slowly lower your chest to the floor.
- Pause while keeping the tension and then explosively drive back up to the start.
- Once there, take one hand off the ground and out to the side while opening up your chest.
- Once your arms are stacked one on top of the other, pause and then slowly return to the start position. That's one rep.



1G. “BASTARDS”

MUSCLES WORKED:
quads, glutes, hamstrings,
core, chest, triceps,
pecs, calves.

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- Standing tall with feet hip-width apart, bend your knees and place palms flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
- Hop your legs back at the same time to assume a push-up position.
- Do a scapular retraction push-up (where your chest gets all the way down to the ground, then you lift your hands off the floor by pulling your elbows back and squeezing your shoulder blades together).
- Push yourself up and hop your feet back to your hands.
- From that crouched position, point your fingers to your temples with your elbows wide and drive up through your legs to jump in the air.
- Bend your knees as you land and go straight into the next rep. Easy...





1H. WALKOUTS

MUSCLES WORKED:

pecs, triceps, delts, lats and core

Reps: 20 secs

Rest: 10 secs

- Bend down to touch your toes.
- Now, begin to “walk” your hands out from your legs, gradually dropping your hips as you go (making sure you keep your hips in good alignment and not sagging to the floor).
- Keep walking your hands out past the usual push-up position and see how far you can go. (As long as you don’t collapse in a heap on the floor, you’re doing it right.)
- Once you’ve reached your limit, walk the hands all the way back to your legs while lifting your hips at the same time.
- Appreciate the stretch in your hamstrings and lower back at the top for a second, then go straight into the next rep.



BEAT THE CLOCK TO beat your gut

FOCUS ON TIME AND SPEED – NOT WEIGHT OR VOLUME—TO LOSE FAT FASTER.



When you put a time constraint on your workout, you work more efficiently and you work harder, and that's the game changer, because the intensity of your workout is really what supercharges your capacity to burn fat both during your training sessions and in the hours after they're over. So instead of focusing on the weight or volume of your reps, race the clock and work harder.

How it works

■ These workouts will feel more like a game than a training session. You'll either work to complete as many rounds of a circuit of exercises as possible in a specified time, or you'll try to do a set number of rounds in as short a time as possible. We bet you'll be so focused on keeping up your pace that you won't even notice how much harder you're working.

Directions

Perform each workout (Days I, II, and III) once per week, resting a day between each session. You can add these routines to the end of your existing weight workouts, or you can perform them separately as conditioning sessions.

Complete one set of each exercise in turn (known as a circuit), resting as needed between rounds. One time through the circuit is one round. On Day I, do as many rounds as possible in 10 minutes; on Day II, complete five rounds in as little time as possible; on Day III, do as many rounds as you can in 15 minutes.



DAY I

1 BARBELL THRUSTER ▲

Reps: 5

Grasp the bar with hands shoulder-width apart and raise your elbows until your upper arms are parallel with the floor. Take the bar out of the rack and let it rest on your fingertips. Step back and set your feet shoulder-width apart. Squat as low as you can without losing the arch in your lower back. Then come up explosively and press the bar overhead. Lower it back to your shoulders. That's one rep. If you're new to thrusters, use an empty barbell to start. If you're more experienced, use 45 kilograms.

2 PULL-UP

Reps: 10

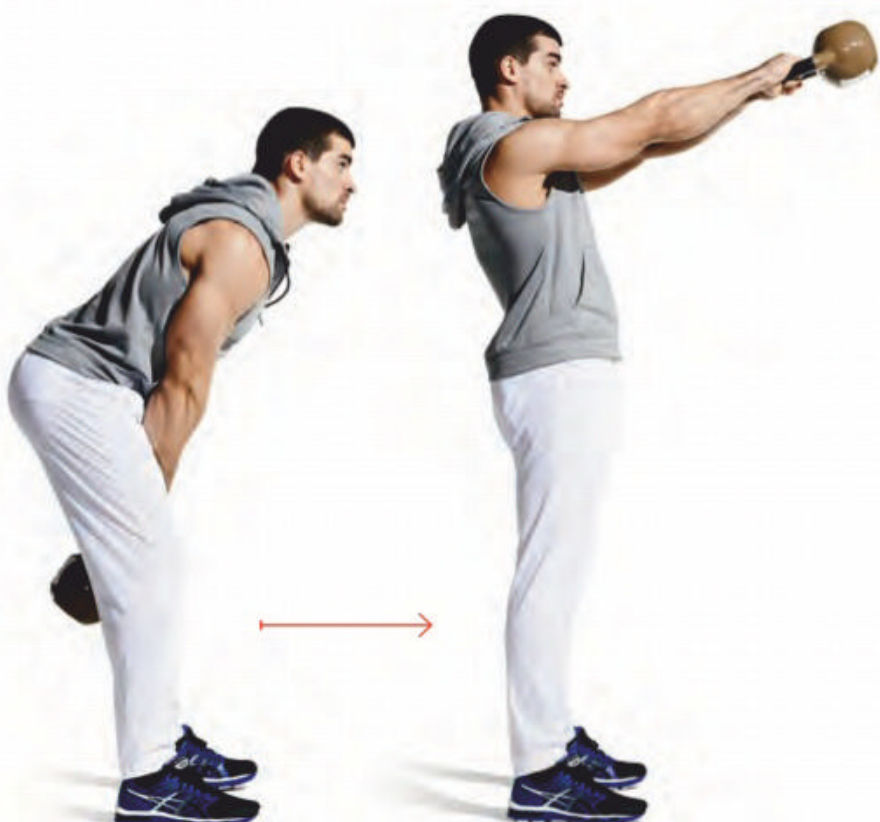
Hang from a bar with hands outside shoulder width and palms facing forward. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as you pull yourself up until your chin is over the bar. You may alternate your grip each round if you like (switching to chin-ups, for example).



3 KETTLEBELL SWING

Reps: 20

Stand with feet hip-width apart and the weight on the floor. Grasp the handle with two hands, both palms facing you, and, keeping your lower back flat, extend your hips to raise it off the floor. Take a deep breath and bend your hips back, allowing the weight to swing back between your legs. Explosively extend your hips and exhale – allowing the momentum to swing the weight up to eye level.



DAY 2

1 OVERHEAD SQUAT

Reps: 5

Grasp the bar with hands double-shoulder-width apart and press it overhead. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointed outward. Bend your hips back and squat as low as you can without losing your back's arch.



FOR ALL THREE EXERCISES, BEGINNERS SHOULD USE A 20- TO 30-KILO WEIGHT. INTERMEDIATES CAN USE 45-55 KILOS.

2 FRONT SQUAT

Reps: 10

Set up as you did for the barbell thruster on Day 1 but perform only the squat, not the press.



● Body Book Burn it off

3 SQUAT

Reps: 15

Grasp the bar with hands as far apart as is comfortable and step under it. Squeeze your shoulder blades together and nudge the bar out of the rack. Step back and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointed slightly outward. Take a deep breath and bend your hips back and then bend your knees to lower your body as far as you can without losing the arch in your lower back. Extend your hips to come back up.



**A TIME LIMIT
WILL MAKE
YOU TRAIN
HARDER.
NO TEXTING
BETWEEN
SETS
ALLOWED.**

DAY 3

1 PUSH PRESS

Reps: 5

Grasp the bar with hands shoulder-width apart so your forearms point to the ceiling. Dip your knees to gather momentum and then explosively press the weight straight overhead.



2 FARMER'S WALK

Reps: walk for 50 metres

Pick up the heaviest dumbbells you can handle and walk as quickly as you can. Stand tall with your chest out. Aim to use dumbbells that together total 70% of your own body weight.



3 ROWING MACHINE

Reps: row for 500 metres

Set the drag on the machine to between three and five, grasp the handle and sit back so your torso is almost vertical. Drive with your feet to push your body back and then row the handle to your sternum.



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¼ cup apple juice
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Place all ingredients in blender. Blend on high until smooth. Serve.

Makes 1 smoothie:

311 calories
70g carbs
5g protein
3g fat



WHY IT WORKS

01

Apple

The humble apple is genuinely bursting with good stuff, including pectin, a type of fibre that helps lower cholesterol.

02

Banana

Nanas are high in potassium, which helps to maintain healthy blood pressure, and can reduce arterial stiffness.

03

Greek yoghurt

A US study found that eating Greek yoghurt may reduce plaque build-up in the arteries, reducing risk of heart attack and stroke.

04

Rolled oats

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05

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High Performance Guide

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>> onemusic.com



OneMusic
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>> bodyscience.com.au



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>> trailwalker.oxfam.org.au



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>> alize.com



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>> macros.com.au



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High Performance Guide

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>> southerncomfort.com



LEVEL LEMONADE

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>> level-lemonade.com



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Simon Newton

MF sits down with Simon Newton, bodyguard for the likes of Bella Hadid and Rita Ora, to discuss his unique line of work and seriously strict fitness regimen.

Newton knows a bodyguard has to look the part.



How did you get into the bodyguard business?

“I started in the British Army. When I left, I got a job for a London-based private security company. I did that for three years and then got a job as a bodyguard in Afghanistan, where I was based for two years. After that, I moved back to London and started my own business over here.”

What's the job spec?

“There's a lot that goes into it that people don't realise, but when we're talking about celebrity protection, appearances do come into it, because people judge you by what you look like. If you're paying hundreds of pounds a day for a bodyguard, you're going to want them to look half decent. You're expected to look physically fit. You don't have to look like a supermodel or anything, but you do need to look like you're able to do what you're there to do.”

What do you do?

“It depends who you're looking after, but we deal with all the transportation, making sure everything's safe and in order. With celebrities, it takes a lot of planning and the most amount of work we do is when we're moving from place to place, because that's when there's the most risk.”

Is it tiring work?

“What people don't realise is that we have to be up before the client gets up and we have to stay awake until they go to bed because they can't really do anything without us.”

“It happens quite a lot where you get booked for, say, 10am and then they don't end up going out until four in the afternoon, so you've already been on the job for six hours and haven't even done anything. Then they go out, because they've been in bed all morning, and don't get in until six the next day, so 18 to 19-hour days are not uncommon.”

Do you train a lot to stay in shape?

“I'm a little bit extreme with my training, but I've always been really into fitness - since before I joined the army. Every morning, I do a bit of cardio before breakfast: 30 minutes of a brisk walk or a gentle jog, nothing too exciting. Then I have breakfast and go to the gym for an hour or an hour and a half, which is just pure weight training.”

What's your weights program?

“I follow a standard body-part split: chest, back, arms, shoulders, legs. And every evening, I do another hour's cardio. I don't lift very heavy, I just look bigger because I'm quite lean. I don't know why people always use bench press as a marker, but I'm often asked, ‘How much do you bench?’ The truth is I don't! On chest day, I do seated machine press, then incline press, cable flyes and then a peck deck. For every body part, I stick to just four exercises, and do four sets of 12 reps on each. I concentrate on getting the stretch and the movement right, rather than lifting big.”

How about nutrition: are you as strict with that?

“I eat six to eight small meals a day. I don't eat sugar or many carbs in the week, and if I do drink it's just vodka or another low-calorie spirit. I don't touch beer.”

“In the morning, I'll have 80g oats and two scoops of protein. Then I'll have 200g chicken and veg or 200g fish and veg three times through the day, and after training I'll have a banana and two scoops of protein. My last meal in the evening is 200g beef with veg.”

“Normally meal five on a Sunday is my cheat meal. That's whatever I want, but it has to be just one meal. I always have big ideas about all this food I'm going to eat, but because I'm used to eating little and often, I might get through half a burger and a couple scoops of ice cream and then I'm done.”

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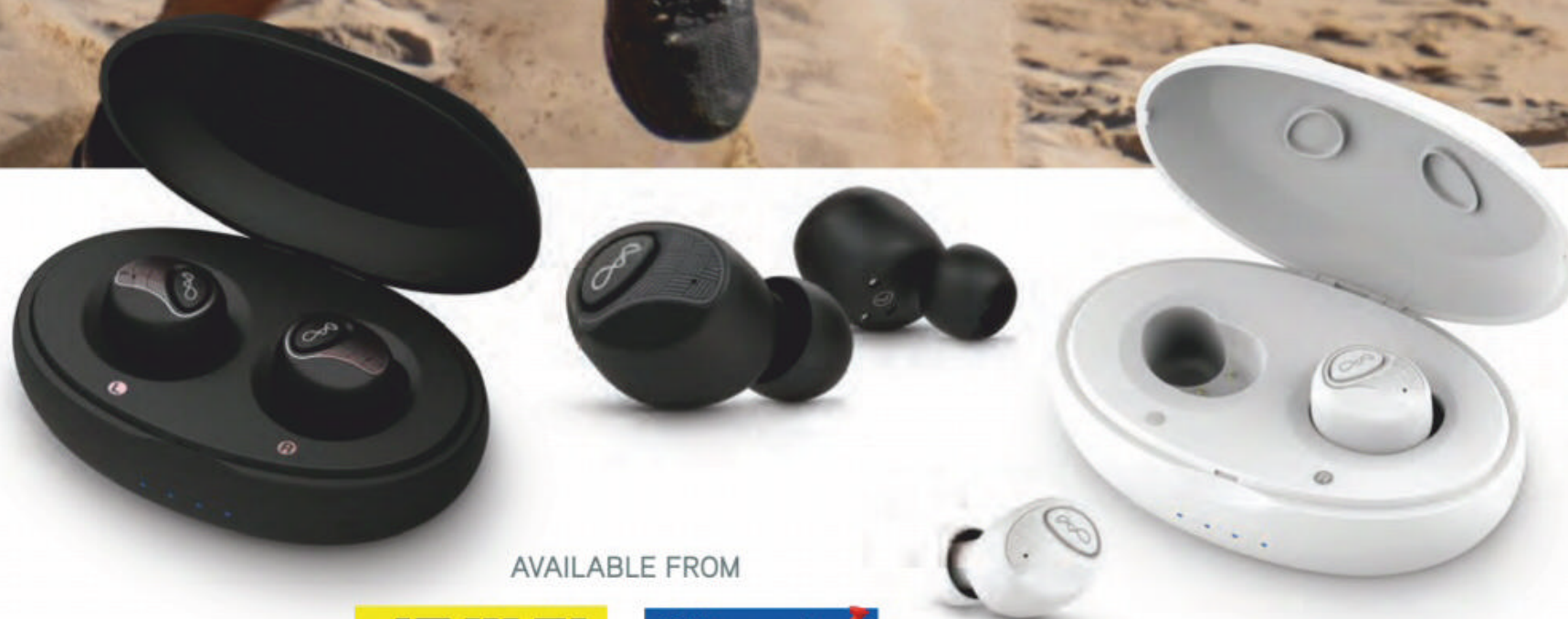


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