

Weightlifting: the right way to pump iron

One of the most obvious aspects of the fitness craze has been the trend toward bodybuilding.

With the development of a host of nationwide exercise emporiums, more and more men are trying to shake the 97-pound-weakling image and develop into the next Arnold Schwarzenegger. And women are participating, too, making trips to the gym and coming away with biceps that arm wrestling champions might envy.

But don't think that such accomplishments are as simple as a half hour or so on the machine at your favorite spa.

"Your average businessman doesn't have the time to train for three hours a day, and that's what it will take to do the most good," says Jeff Miller, weight coach for the track team at United States International University in San Diego. Miller also is a member of the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

"It's not necessary or even advisable to work out every day, but you never want to train less than three

days a week. Six times a week would be the maximum, though some body parts like the abdomen and calves can be worked every day without harm. But you wouldn't want to train some other body parts six days a week."

While isokinetic machines have come in favor with the average businessman who has little free time, dedicated bodybuilders frown upon such mechanical equipment, according to Miller.

"Manufacturers (of such equipment) claim that 15 minutes on their machine is all you need to build up your body. But the gains in working with free weights have been proven to be superior even though most people would rather spend their time at other things."

Miller adds that bodybuilding is only one of three areas that involve lifting weights.

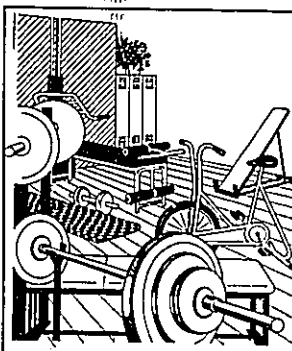
"Bodybuilding is for those who are trying to create a physique, something the businessman or woman would get into," Miller says.

"In power lifting, the goal is to become as strong as you can through

the dead lift, bench press and squat lift."

What would be the regimen for a possibly overweight, middle-age businessman who wants to become involved in bodybuilding?

"As with any exercise program, you should see your physician first," Miller says. "You'll probably start with



something like riding a stationary bicycle, to get the cardiovascular system in shape first.

"The only way to succeed is to progress to heavier weights. By increasing weight, you develop strength."

Bodybuilders who are improving their physique for a specific sport, rather than simply their appearance, also must concentrate on what they need for improvement in their performance.

"For football linemen or shot putters, doing 25 repetitions is ridiculous," says Miller. "They need explosive force and have to work longer to build up the body. Baseball players today are getting into higher repetitions, since they don't need explosive force but do need endurance to last through a long season."

"People are realizing that lifting weights can benefit everybody. It used to be that weightlifters were considered freaks, but now, men and women who don't lift weights in sports are considered the freaks."



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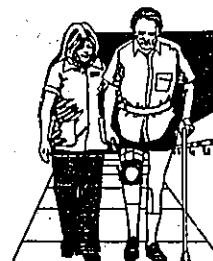


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