

I have a question about which type of flye movement I should be doing on chest day. Many bodybuilders seem to do dumbbell flyes, but I have noticed all I really get when I do those is an extreme stretch of the pecs. There is no real resistance at the top when you bring your inner pecs together and contract. The pec flye machine and cable crossover seem like a better choice, because they let you squeeze against resistance at the end of each rep. With that in mind, why should I bother with dumbbell flyes? Can't I just do the machine or the cables instead?

You could do the machines and cables, but I still feel you can get a lot out of the dumbbell flye if you do it right. You are correct when you state that due to the direct downward vertical pull of gravity and the arc motion of a flye, there is very little resistance on the pecs as you near the end of the rep. You are forced to contract your pecs to provide that last bit of resistance. Granted, it's not coming from the same direction as it would be using a pec flye machine or a cable crossover, but it's a different type of stimulation. What I would suggest is to alternate the movements. Do a machine or a cable one week, then dumbbell flyes the next. That way you get the best of both types of stimulation.

I am thinking about entering a bodybuilding contest just to challenge myself to get in great shape, as I haven't been very lean for over ten years now and I think it would be just what I need to motivate myself. I just worry that people will laugh at me because I look nothing like the guys in the magazines, and I don't want to be humiliated. In your opinion, should I do it or not?

Absolutely! If anybody laughs, the joke's on them, because they don't have the guts to get up there and put it all out there for everyone to judge and critique. Many times at local contests you will see at least a couple people that don't quite look as big or as lean as the majority of the other competitors. But often, those are the ones that have accomplished the most. Maybe one is a mom that lost fifty pounds and is in the best shape she's been in since she was a teenager. Another could be a guy that was in a terrible car accident and couldn't walk for a year. Others may be overcoming God knows what type of adversity, be it physical, mental, or spiritual. You never know the whole story. Don't worry about what other people are going to think about you and the way you look. If competing is going to be the impetus you need to finally do something about your body and get lean and healthy again, you should definitely go for it. It doesn't matter if you look like the guys in the magazines. You don't usually see anybody like that competing in

a local show anyway. Find a contest that features a novice division, or maybe Masters (you didn't give your age), so that you will be up there with people of similar backgrounds rather than the Open class, where you tend to find the more genetically gifted guys that have been training hard for a long time already and often have been competing for many years too. So go get in the best shape you can and proudly show it off on contest day!

Arms have never grown easily for me, and in fact they have always lagged behind everything else. Believe it or not, my calves are almost an inch bigger than my arms! Pretty sad. So I have tried various methods over the years to bring them up, with mixed success. I usually train biceps with either shoulders or chest, and the same with triceps. One thing I really never gave a fair try with is hitting arms on their own day. I have heard that training both the biceps and triceps together is very effective, is this true? Also, if I train arms on their own day, should that be all I do for them every week, or should I also do a few sets for them on some other day?

Believe it or not, even some of the pro's I train are dissatisfied with their arms and want to improve on them. Actually, if you know the perfectionist mindset that most champions have, it's not much of a surprise. So I have had to come up with effective ways to get their guns growing. We do train arms twice a week. One of those times, it's paired with a larger bodypart; and the other day is an arms-only workout. A common pairing would be chest and biceps, or back and triceps. On those days, we only do two exercises for that muscle for two heavy sets. The arms-only day is more about pumping and volume. We will do four exercises each for bi's and tri's for about four sets each. Supersets are common. We might superset a biceps and a triceps exercise, biceps with biceps, or triceps with triceps. It's never the same exact workout twice. This strategy has worked very well for just about everybody I've ever worked with.

I had serious knee pain for a couple years and I thought it was from squatting. So I stopped squatting and just used the leg press and hack squat. The knee pain persisted, so I just did the leg press. Since the pain wouldn't go away, I was at a loss as to what was causing it. Then I read something about how heavy leg extensions can really tear up your knee tendons and ligaments if you start the motion from a point any further back from where your lower leg is straight up and down. I have always been able to use the stack on just about any leg extension machine I have tried for anywhere from 10 to 20 reps, and took pride in that. But after reading this, I adjusted the pad so I started the reps more forward and only used about a two-thirds range of motion, and also didn't go as heavy. My knee pain went away in less than a month! So I guess my question is, do you

still think a person can get the same benefits from the leg extension without using a complete range of motion?

I had almost the same thing happen to me way back when I started bodybuilding in the mid-70's after a couple years of Olympic lifting and powerlifting. The other guys were telling me to start leg day with heavy leg extensions to failure. Man, my knees were killing me after a while and I didn't put two and two together for a couple months. I think you should use a complete range of motion on leg extensions, but there is one rule that you must follow. If you start with the leg extension, you have to use light weight and high reps and squeeze the quadriceps at the top of each rep. The knee was never meant to have to extend against that much force, such as the stack of a leg extension machine. You can come back to it at the end of the workout and go heavier, but don't try to see if you can use the whole stack just to do it. If you do sets of 12-20 and keep the reps slow with a good squeeze, you should not need as much weight. You could probably cut at least a third of what you normally use off and get even more out of it.

Charles, are there any new supplements you are using right now that you are excited about? I am particularly interested in anything that could be of benefit to the mature trainer. I am 46 years old and have been training since I was in high school. I think my test levels are still pretty high, but I am always looking for anything that can give me a little boost.

As a matter of fact, I have been using a nitric oxide product made by Nutrex called Niox for about a month, and I have put on about four or five pounds of quality muscle. That may not sound like much to you young kids, but come back and talk to me when you're almost sixty and have been lifting for almost forty years! For my protein powders, I use a couple different ones by Optimum Nutrition and love them. For me, they have the best taste, and my stomach handles them well. Neither company sponsors me, just so you know. I am giving you an unbiased comment on which supplements I am currently using and feel are worth trying.

Got a question for Charles? Email it to him at editor@musculardevelopment.com and you

The Bodybuilding Wizard Trainer of Champions By Charles Glass

Written by Robbie Durand

could see it answered right here in MD!