

# **Nautilus Bulletin #1**

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## Irregularity of Exercise

For the purpose of physical training, if weeks didn't exist, then it might have been necessary to invent them – because the vast weight of evidence clearly shows that a seven-day cycle of training is almost perfect for the production of best results from physical training. This is primarily true, it seems, because it provides needed irregularity of training.

The human system very quickly grows accustomed to almost any sort of activity – and once having adapted to such activity, then no amount of practice of the same activity will provide growth stimulation, although it will help to maintain levels of strength that were built previously. Thus it is extremely important to provide as many forms of variation in training as are reasonably possible; but in practice this does not mean that the training program needs to be – or should be – changed frequently. On the contrary, the same basic training routine will serve a man well for his entire active life.

Another apparent paradox? Only an apparent one; in the first place, the "double progressive" system of training provides a great deal of variation in training – secondly, the three-times-weekly training schedule provides even more variety – and finally, if the training program is varied somewhat one day weekly, then all of the variety that is needed is well provided.

In the "double progressive" system of training – and this is the basic principal behind all forms of worthwhile exercise – no two workouts should ever be exactly the same. Basically, the system works as follows; a weight is selected that will permit the performance of a certain number of repetitions – but then all possible repetitions are performed with that same resistance, with a constant attempt to increase the number of repetitions being performed. Then, when a certain number of movements become possible, the resistance is increased by a certain percentile – and this will have the effect of reducing the number of possible repetitions.

Some sort of progress should be observed in almost every workout, either the number of repetitions or the amount of resistance should be increased – or both. Even though the movements remain almost exactly the same, the workload is constantly increasing – exactly in proportion to the increases in strength that are being produced; such increases literally must be in proportion – nothing else is even possible.

Thus great variety is provided by this system of training; but caution must be observed to avoid falling into a pattern of performing your workouts in a routine fashion – without really making each set of every exercise a truly maximum effort.

Even more variety of training is provided by the three-times-weekly schedule; a first workout is performed on Monday, then two days later a second workout is performed on Wednesday, then two days later a third workout is performed on Friday – thus, on Sunday, the system is expecting and is prepared for a fourth workout, but it doesn't come. Instead, it comes a day later, on Monday of the next week – when the body is neither expecting it nor prepared for it. This schedule of training prevents the body from falling into a "rut" – since the system is never quite able to adjust to this irregularity of training, and great growth stimulation will be produced as a direct result.

Then, if the actual training program itself is varied insofar as the number of sets and/or the number of repetitions are concerned during one of the three weekly workouts, all of the variety and irregularity of training that are required will be produced.

## The Arthur Jones Collection

Yet many thousands of weight trainees – especially bodybuilders – practice six or seven weekly workouts; and in almost all cases, such workouts quickly degenerate into a form of rather hard manual labor – and although some results will be produced, they will not be anything on the order of the results that would have resulted from a properly designed and executed training program. It thus takes such trainees four or five years to produce exactly the same degree of results that could have been produced – and should have been produced – by less than a full year of proper training.

A properly planned and executed training program is nothing short of brutally hard work – results will be produced almost in direct proportion to the actual intensity of effort above a certain point, and no results will be produced by any amount of work below a certain intensity of effort – and I think that most trainees are simply not willing to work as hard as is required for best results.

Where at all possible, it is usually desirable to inspire a sense of competition; but in practice this frequently leads to very poor training habits – emphasis should be placed on form, and no credit should be permitted for the employment of "cheating" methods. While cheating methods should be used – and are of great value if used properly – they should only be employed at the end of a set of exercise movements that have been performed in near perfect form; at that point in the exercise, cheating makes it possible to induce even more growth stimulation than would otherwise have been possible – but if cheating methods are employed to the exclusion of movements performed in good form, then very little in the way of growth stimulation will be induced, and, secondly, it will then become literally impossible to measure the progress of individual trainees with anything approaching accuracy.

And it is essential to carefully observe the progress of all types of physical training – because the requirements for exercise vary to a rather great degree among any group of individuals, although nowhere close to the degree that a lot of people believe. Increasing the workload may produce literally striking results in some individuals, either increasing the rate of growth enormously or stopping it cold in its tracks – and such results can be produced by a variation of less than fifty percent in the workload; thus it is obvious that constant and careful attention must be paid to the true rate of progress of all trainees – and this is only possible when performances are measured on a realistic basis, which is simply impossible if cheating methods are permitted during strength tests, or if they are practiced and recorded during regular workouts and used as the basis for computing rates of progress.

So practice cheating methods – but only after all possible movements have been performed in good form – and then record only the properly performed movements for record keeping purposes.