My First Half-Century in the Iron Game

ArthurJonesExercise.com

37

In an earlier chapter in this series, I mentioned the utterly stupid conclusions reached by Dr. Richard Berger as a result of a supposedly scientific paper that he published about thirty-four years ago; stupid conclusions which, nevertheless, have generally been accepted without question by most of the scientific community. And now, only yesterday, even more of Dr. Berger's stupid conclusions have come to my attention.

Based upon his own supposedly scientific research, Dr. Berger jumped to the conclusion that dynamic exercise will not increase static (isometric) strength, and then published an article in which he made that claim.

Using his own previously published definition of strength, the ability of a muscle to produce force by muscular contraction, Dr. Berger's published statements literally force me to assume that the man is an outright idiot. As clearly spelled out by me in a previous chapter, it requires 100 pounds of muscular force to lift 100 pounds of weight at any constant speed of vertical movement, which is not an opinion but a simple statement of basic physical law, and thus the fact that a maximum dynamic effort on your part will permit the lifting of 100 pounds, but no more than that, clearly proves that you were capable of producing the required level of muscular force.

Then, if you can later lift 200 pounds of weight in the same manner and at the same speed, it is obvious that your muscles are capable of producing more force than they were able to do earlier. Without this extra muscular force, your dynamic strength could not have been increased. So we thus know that dynamic exercise will, or will if properly used, increase the level of muscular force.

And just what is a test of static strength apart from a measurement of muscular force, albeit an indirect measurement based upon a test of the level of torque produced by the force of muscular contraction? You are, in fact, measuring exactly the same factor, force of muscular contraction. Thus, if dynamic strength goes up, in response to dynamic exercise, you will produce an exactly equal increase in static strength. You cannot increase dynamic strength, positive or negative, without increasing static strength to exactly the same degree. Believing otherwise is clear proof that you are a fool.

Some years ago, some other fool (Berger is not the only fool on the scene) performed supposedly scientific research with a Cybex machine (and his willingness to use such an utterly worthless tool is even more proof of his stupidity) and then announced that exercise performed with a Cybex machine would increase dynamic strength but had no effect on static strength. Which is, quite simply, an impossible result.

But, this supposed scientist then said . . . "A failure to increase static strength is of no importance, since we are interested only in increasing dynamic strength."

But, you might ask, how could he make such a stupid mistake? The answer to which is quite simple: the fact is that the Cybex exercise did absolutely nothing in the way of increasing either dynamic or static strength.

Remember: a Cybex does NOT measure torque produced by force of muscular contraction, instead it records high levels of impact forces produced by sudden stops and starts of the resistance pad. So what happened was this: when first tested, the subjects were hesitant, were afraid to kick the resistance pad as hard as possible, so the resulting impact forces were not as high as they would have been if the subjects tried as hard as possible. But, later, having gotten over their initial fear, the subjects tried much harder and thus produced higher levels of impact forces. But that DOES NOT represent an increase in strength.

If their strength had increased, then the static level of strength would have increased to exactly the same degree. And, since their own tests indicated no change in static strength, then that provides clear proof that there was no change in dynamic strength either. Believe otherwise if you so choose, but if so then you have just proven your own stupidity.

Muscular strength of any kind, dynamic positive, dynamic negative, or static, is one and the same thing: an output of torque produced by the force of muscular contraction, MINUS MUSCULAR FRICTION IF POSITIVE, PLUS MUSCULAR FRICTION IF NEGATIVE, or WITHOUT FRICTION IF STATIC. But, of course, at least 99.9 percent of the current crop of supposed "experts" in this field are not even aware that friction exists in muscles, and damned sure do not understand its effects. Which means that all of their theories and opinions are nothing short of outright bullshit. So listen to such people only at your own risk.

Too strong? No, not strong enough; such supposed "experts" should be burned at the stake, letting them live is far too dangerous. And no possible punishment would be enough to compensate for the harm they are causing millions of people. The potential benefits of proper exercise are valuable almost beyond reckoning, far beyond price, and yet most people are being denied these potential benefits as a consequence of the acts and statements of these supposed "experts." Talk about the blind leading the stupid.

Apart from surgery, which is sometimes necessary but is being grossly overused in this country at the moment, the only treatment protocol for rehabilitation of injuries of any real benefit is exercise.

Other protocols, heat, cold, massage, manipulation, and a long list of other things being widely used at the moment, may sometimes help to temporarily remove or reduce pain; but they are in no sense of the word productive, they do not actually change anything, do not correct the problem. People who do improve when treated in those fashions get better in spite of the treatment, not because of it. Yet all of these treatment protocols have thousands of proponents, supposed "experts" who will unhesitatingly assure you that they know what they are doing, know how to solve your problem.

Sure. Well, in fact, you would probably be better served by going to a Gypsy fortune teller; they, at least, won't hurt you, won't make a bad situation worse.

Human functional ability, the capability of living a normal life, can be improved, or rehabilitated following injury, only by proper exercise. Nothing else helps, nothing else works, and many things being done now are counterproductive.

Which is why I have devoted so much time and money in unending attempts to learn just what is the best form of exercise, and if possible learning why it is best. Now, nearly sixty years after I first became interested in the subject, I still don't know everything that I would like to know, do not understand some things that I have seen clearly demonstrated, but I do at least know a hell of a lot more than I did when I started; I know some things that work well, some that work poorly or not at all, and some that are simply stupid, worthless and/or dangerous. Yet I still read things that fall directly into the category of outright stupidity.

Having first seen the enormous potential benefits of the negative part of exercise in 1972, but having also become aware of problems with the practical applications of negtive-only exercise (primarily the need for helpers to lift the weight), we have devoted a lot of effort in the direction of solving these problems. Wanted to get the benefits without the associated problems.

So far, the best answer seems to be provided by what we call "negative-accentuated" exercise. Which, unfortunately, cannot be provided by a barbell, and cannot be provided by some exercise machines. Such exercise can be provided, however, by any exercise machine that has a common moment arm for both limbs. In a leg-extension machine, for example, providing that the machine has only one resistance pad for both legs, you can perform negative-accentuated exercise by lifting the weight (the positive part of the exercise) with both legs, but then lowering the weight (the negative part of the exercise) with only one leg.

I will go into greater detail about negative-accentuated exercise in the next chapter in this series.