

Ironman Articles

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Five Types of Exercise... Which is Best?

With a barbell, while training without the help of assistants, you have only one choice regarding the type of exercise... you are restricted to a "normal" type of exercise, movements involving both positive and negative work.

But if assistants are available, then you have a wider choice. If the weight is lifted for you, then you can restrict your exercise to "negative-only" work.

AND... if you are training with an exercise machine, you can lift the weight with two arms (or two legs) and lower it with one arm (or one leg). Thus providing "negative accentuated" work.

Until recently, those four types of exercise were the only choices available... (1) normal, (2) negative-only, (3) positive-only, or (4) negative-accentuated. But now, a fifth type of exercise has been added to the list of choices... HYPER, a new type of exercise involving both positive and negative work, and providing absolutely maximum levels of intensity during both the lifting and lowering of the weight.

At this time (September of 1973), little or nothing is yet known about the results of training with this new type of exercise... so the real value of such a type of training remains unproven. However, certain basic points related to this type of exercise are already clearly established; so we can, at least, examine these known factors in the light of simple logic.

ONE... for the purpose of increasing muscular size and strength, the results of exercise are closely related to the intensity of work. Low intensity exercise will do little or nothing in the way of increasing strength, regardless of the amount of exercise performed... medium intensity exercise will increase strength, but slowly and only up to a certain limited point... high intensity exercise is an absolute requirement for producing rapid and large-scale strength increases, and it appears that the higher the intensity, the better the results.

HYPER exercises provide maximum possible intensity of exercise, during both the positive and negative parts of the work; so it would appear to be logical to assume that hyper exercises are better than other types of exercise for the purpose of stimulating growth.

Which is certainly an important consideration... but not the ONLY consideration. Low intensity exercise is almost worthless for the purpose of increasing strength simply because it does very little if anything in the way of STIMULATING growth. So it logically follows that hyper exercises, by providing maximum intensity, should produce maximum growth stimulation.

Muscular growth is produced only when two factors are involved... growth must be STIMULATED, but it must also be PERMITTED.

A resting body does not grow in a complete lack of exercise; on the contrary, in a state of total inactivity, muscular size and strength is quickly lost.

AND... exercised muscles do not grow unless growth is permitted by proper rest. In fact, the results of overwork are very similar in the results of total inactivity... losses in muscular size and strength.

Proper exercise must be of high intensity in order to stimulate growth... but it must also be brief and infrequent in order to permit growth.

Hyper exercises raise the level of intensity to a point that was never before possible in a practical manner if at all... so growth stimulation should also be greater than ever. But it is also true that high intensity exercises impose a higher level of demands upon the overall recovery ability of the body; and it remains to be seen just what effect this will have on the ability of the body to grow.

If we can judge by previous experience, then the use of hyper exercises will require a great reduction in the amount of training... because, when the intensity of exercise is increased, the amount of exercise must be reduced. When you train harder, you must train less... and you have no choice in the matter.