

MICHELLE
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POWER OF THE PINS

Michelle Bridges gives the lowdown on the limbs down low, and how to ensure they look their best this summer!

Nothing, but nothing, is quite as tough as leg training. Even for a hardened long term exerciser like myself, an impending leg weight training session creates the odd butterfly in my stomach as I walk through the gym door, knowing that I'm about to put myself through 45 minutes of, well, pain really.

There's no escaping legs. The leg muscles – quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes and calves form a full 60 per cent of our total body musculature, so you can look forward to your heart working overtime pumping blood to fuel the movements, and your lungs frantically keeping up with the rapid oxygen depletion that comes with bending and straightening those puppies.

But, the truth is legs use so much energy when they're worked, so you can actually end up burning calories like crazy in a relatively short time. Plus there's the added benefit of a shapely pair of pins to show for your efforts of course!

Which brings me to the tetchy subject of size. I hear a lot of girls tell me that they don't train their legs because they don't want them to get large. Big mistake! Leg training will make your legs shapely, taut, even svelte, so unless you're sweating it out in the local powerlifting club you're not likely to be rocking a pair of tree stumps any time soon.

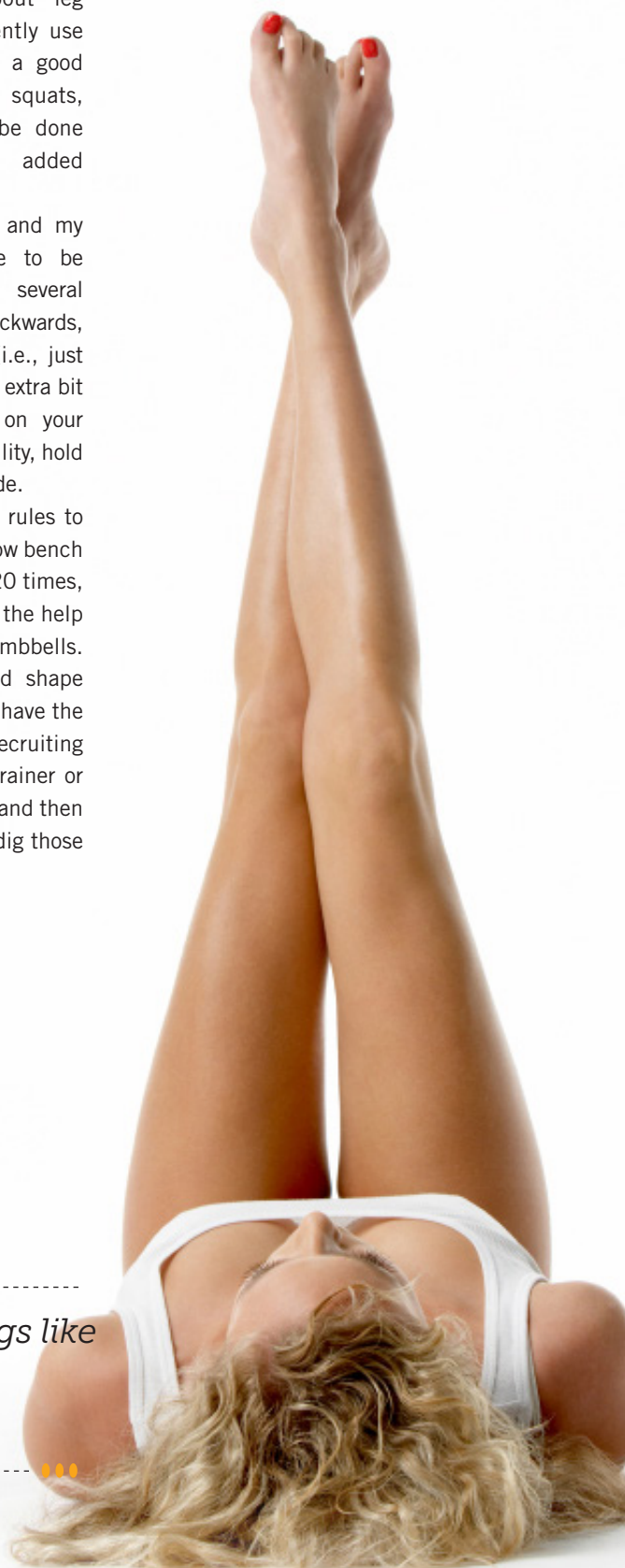
My own trainer ('The Inflictor') identified that my hamstrings were quite weak, and adjusted my routine accordingly, with intensive workouts focusing on them. The result wasn't that they got bigger, rather that they just got a better shape about them.

The other great thing about leg training is that you can frequently use your bodyweight to give them a good workout. Squats, Swissball squats, lunges and step-ups can all be done either with or without the added resistance of weights.

Best bang for buck though, and my personal favourite, would have to be lunges. They can be done in several different ways – stepping backwards, stepping forwards, or statically (i.e., just staying in one spot). And for that extra bit of grunt, rest a light barbell on your shoulders or for a little more stability, hold a couple of dumbbells by your side.

You can also apply the same rules to step ups: stand by the side of a low bench and step up with alternate legs 20 times, and increase the resistance with the help of a barbell or a couple of dumbbells. These exercises will sculpt and shape your legs like no other; and they have the added benefit of significantly recruiting your glutes. Get your personal trainer or gym instructor to show you how, and then – look out summer! It's time to dig those shorts out of the drawer! **OH!**

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PAUL
BROWN

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IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Sticking to your exercise regime can be a 'piece of cake', thanks to these exercise adherence tips from expert, *Paul Brown*.

The number one excuse for not doing enough exercise is a lack of time.

But, the brutal reality is we all get the same 24 hours a day (which, by the way, is 168 hours a week).

Whether you exercise or not, therefore, is a matter of priorities but there is no denying that life in the 21st century is busy and getting busier. We are all under constant pressure to do more and be more, however, the good news is you *can* achieve both.

You can be busy and productive and still look and feel your best in today's fast-paced world because keeping fit and healthy can be achieved and sustained in as little as 30 minutes, three times a week. And as we mentioned in the last issue, this should be your non-negotiable minimum.

While working out for longer and more often *can* be better and bring more results, when your only alternatives are to train every day for hours or do nothing, then neither option is acceptable for any man or woman who has a demanding job or career, a business, a family, studies, hobbies, aspirations of financial security, or other time-draining responsibilities. Before you start saying you've heard this all before, let's get super clear on the facts.

Short workouts require the right intensity (subject to your health and fitness status) and, ideally, include an essential selection of compound resistance exercises to work all the major muscles and joints, while also challenging the cardiovascular system.

Recovery stretches to relax and promote flexibility complete the picture and, when done correctly, can be all that is required. This is potentially a solution that leaves you 166.5 hours a week to get on with your life; only this time with more energy, less perceived stress, feeling healthier, happier and most likely looking better as well.

If you don't make time for your non-negotiable exercise minimum of at least 30 minutes, three times a week, then you may start losing more time away from your work, family, friends and favourite pursuits due to illness, while also becoming less effective and productive as the years tick by.

You know you need regular exercise to be the best you can be – it's about time! **OH!**

PAUL
TAYLOR

THE 80/20 LIFESTYLE:

REPROGRAM YOUR GENES FOR HEALTH,
HAPPINESS AND VITALITY

PART 3:

GUARD AGAINST DAMAGE

We are constantly exposing our bodies and brains to environmental toxins and insults, and they have a number of elaborate mechanisms to both prevent damage and repair any damage that does occur.

It's important to realise that our capacity to guard against damage is limited and if you want long term physical and mental health, it is important to both reduce our exposure to damage and increase our defensive capabilities.

Sleep

We now know that sleep is important for memory consolidation and both physiological and psychological repair. Recent research has shown that when we sleep the brain removes toxins, while lack of sleep causes damage. Aim for at least seven hours of sleep, four times a week.

Environmental toxins

Don't smoke, reduce your exposure to plastics (bottles, containers, etc.), eat organic food where possible, and wash non-organic fruit and vegetables to minimise exposure to toxic herbicides and pesticides.

Choose wild fish rather than farmed, grass fed meats, and minimise your intake of canned and processed foods. Also, be aware that anything you put on your skin or hair can raise toxins, so go for organic soap, deodorant, toothpaste and natural personal care products and cleaning products where possible. When making home improvements, choose non-toxic paints, carpets and sofas and buy a good water filter – and drink from a glass, ceramic or metal water bottle. See www.ewg.org for additional tips about avoiding toxins.

Detoxify

Some things that have been scientifically proven to help you detoxify are sweating (through exercise and/or sauna), drinking plenty of water, and eating lots of dietary fibre and vegetables, as these support the liver to detox. Examples include the broccoli family, onions, garlic, beets, the spice turmeric, as well as citrus fruits and grapes. Avoid alcohol, sugar and processed foods when detoxifying. Some useful supplements include high quality fish oil, chlorella and glutathione.

If you suspect heavy metal contamination, consult a qualified health professional (ideally an integrative doctor) to get a toxicology test and advice on appropriate metal chelation therapy. **OH!**



DR JOANNA
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CAN DIET & LIFESTYLE SLOW THE AGEING PROCESS?

Dr Joanna McMillan explores how diet and ageing can directly impact the ageing process.

We are an ageing population, yet most of us want to live as long as we can, and we don't want to look old, or have our bodies break down on us.

Damage to DNA is ultimately what causes our bodies to age and is at the root of degenerative diseases including cancer and cardiovascular disease. Understanding what causes or accelerates DNA damage, what has the potential to slow it down or increase the repair pathways, and what other factors influence our susceptibility to DNA damage, has the potential to make an enormously important contribution to health over our lifespan.

With new methods of measuring DNA damage, scientists can now assess the impact of various nutritional and lifestyle factors. In the 1960s two B-group vitamins were associated with increased DNA damage; folate and vitamin B12. I attended a lecture recently by Professor Michael Fenech from the CSIRO. He showed data of the DNA damage induced by folate deficiency. Alarming, it was on par with that caused by unsafe doses of ionising radiation!

Most of you will be aware of the importance of folate before and during pregnancy. Particularly in the first three months after conception, DNA replication rates in the foetus are rapid and folate is involved in this process. Where levels fall short, the risk of something going wrong is elevated. We know that taking a folate supplement reduces the risk of neural tube defects, for example. However, this knowledge of how folate influences DNA damage over the years in our bodies makes it one of the most important anti-ageing nutrients.

So where do we find folate? Legumes

such as beans and lentils are one of the best sources. I recommend you include these at least a couple of times a week. Green leafy vegetables are also rich in folate, particularly spinach – a plant food I eat almost every day. Since leafy greens are also rich in many other nutrients I advocate including them in *at least* one meal a day. Egg yolk is rich in folate (if you're still marching with the egg-white-omelette-brigade, I suggest you go back to eating the yolks as that's where all the nutrients are), as is Baker's yeast and liver and kidney. You'll also find folate in broccoli and Brussels sprouts, and several other vegetables and fruits. Eating a broad array of plant foods, including those listed here, will ensure you achieve a folate-rich diet.

Other nutrients that have been shown to influence DNA damage biomarkers include vitamin C, vitamin E, selenium, carotenoids, polyphenols, vitamin B12, choline, zinc, magnesium, niacin, vitamin A, magnesium, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin K and the omega-3 fatty acids. What is important, however, is to understand the optimal intake of each of these nutrients. More is not always better. For example beta-carotene has been shown to be protective up to a certain level of intake, above which it actually *increases* damage. That is why I am extremely hesitant to use high dose supplements of individual nutrients or antioxidants. Until we understand more about the optimal range of each nutrient, you are much better to consume a nutrient-rich diet where nature provides the balance. Only use supplements where there is no risk of harm and potential or proven benefit.

Of course, it's not just diet; other lifestyle factors play an equally, and often greater role. A 2009 study published in



the journal *Preventative Medicine* identified a scored lifestyle index of factors that determined chromosomal DNA damage. In summary from what we currently know the best anti-ageing strategy to minimise DNA damage is:

- don't smoke
- drink alcohol in moderation
- eat a nutrient-dense diet including plenty of foods high in the nutrients identified above (especially folate)
- engage in regular exercise
- avoid working excessively long work hours
- get enough sleep.

Fortunately this advice is in line with our current healthy lifestyle recommendations. The future may hold more specific advice tailored for individuals, so it really is a case of watch this space. **OH!**

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Photo: www.GarethChristianPhotography.com



MANGO SORBET

Serves 2

I love the array of produce that begins to creep back into our grocers and supermarkets as summer approaches, none more than summer fruits! And while peaches, plums, nectarines, melons and lychees all become regular parts of my diet, nothing can beat a sweet, juicy mango. With trays of mangos on sale for only a short period, I like to cut the flesh off as many as I can get my hands on and store it in ziplock bags in the freezer to use in smoothies, baking and, of course, sorbet.

This recipe creates a super quick, healthy and delicious dessert, and you can simply freeze any leftovers in ice cube trays to throw into your next smoothie, or try popping an ice cream stick in each cube before freezing to make kid-friendly frozen treats.

What you'll need

3 cups frozen diced/sliced mango

Juice of ½ lime (max. 1 tbsp)

Juice of ½ orange

60-80ml water

How to make it

- Put the mango, lime juice and orange juice into a food processor or blender and process until mango breaks down into small pieces (about 30-60 secs).
- With the processor still running, add the water 1 tbsp at a time, using only as much as is required to blend the mixture into a smooth consistency.
- Serve immediately.





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EATING FOR FATHERHOOD

Potential fathers, heed these tips for optimum sperm health. Naturopath, *Claudette Wadsworth* explains.

A Danish study concluded that between 1938 and 1990 sperm concentration has fallen from 113 million per millilitre (ml) to 66 million per millilitres, which is actually a decrease of almost 50 per cent in 50 years¹. Based on these statistics, male infertility is on the rise. Nutritionist Claudette Wadsworth explores why this may be, and what you or your partner can do to optimise the quality and quantity of your sperm.

Natural treatments that include diet and lifestyle changes, herbal medicines and nutritional supplements can make a dramatic improvement in sperm parameters. However, you need at least three months of targeted treatments for the beneficial effects to follow through, since it takes 100 days to produce and mature sperm².

In the long term, the key to ensuring high numbers of good quality sperm is to avoid the factors that are known to damage sperm, while increasing the activities that boost and protect sperm. Male issues represent approximately 40 per cent of the reasons behind couples experiencing conception difficulties³, so here are some facts and tips to help you achieve optimal sperm health.

Sperm-Boosters

Heed the following tips to achieve optimal sperm health.

Zinc

Zinc is the number one mineral to assist male fertility. It is essential for all aspects of fertility (both in males and females), contributing to testes and prostate development, sperm count, motility and morphology, to DNA replication for genetic material⁴. Highest food sources include beef, lamb, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.



Healthy diet

The healthier your diet, the better your fertility. Keep it simple with lots of fresh, unprocessed meals containing vegetables, salads, protein, fruit and Omega 3 oils. These can provide all your nutrients and antioxidants. Start cutting out junk food, cigarettes, alcohol, caffeine and sugar.

The good oils

These are oils with anti-inflammatory properties that make up the cell membranes of sperm, keeping them supple and fluid for fertilisation to occur⁵. They include oily fish such as salmon, trout, sardines, mackerel, avocado, extra virgin olive oil, flaxseed oil, nuts and seeds.

Keep cool

As mentioned above, keep cool, wear breathable cotton underwear, and avoid daily saunas and hot spas.

Pump your muscles

When you build muscle, you boost your testosterone levels⁶ so include some

weight training or resistance training, rather than all cardio exercise – mix it up and your entire mind and body will benefit.

Think sexy

Your thoughts and emotions have an enormous impact on your testosterone levels. One study tested men before and after watching a football match, showing a rise in testosterone level after the game⁷. You are the star of your own life, so get out there and embrace it!

Whether you envision being a father now, in 10 years' time or you already have children, everything you do accumulates in your body and impacts on your health. Start making changes today, and your health, the legacy of your future, and the health of your prospective child/ren will thank you for it! **OH!**

Claudette Wadsworth

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THE FOUR Ds FOR WORKPLACE SUCCESS

Justin Tamsett provides these helpful hints to help maximise your workplace productivity.

The best book I have read to help organise my work schedule is *Take Back Your Life* by Sally McGhee. I can't recommend it highly enough!

You just need discipline, in order to successfully implement her concepts.

One of the greatest tips in her book relates to emails. You're not alone if emails and the constant demand to manage the inbox feels overwhelming, sometimes even to the point of feeling like your life is spiralling out of control.

In a bid to create a bit more work/life balance and reduce the stress surrounding emails, Sally recommends the 'Four Ds' approach to email management:

- **Delete it:** If it does not relate to the direction you are heading at that particular moment.
- **Do it:** If you can respond within two minutes and/or file the email.
- **Delegate it:** Send it to someone else to complete and track it.
- **Defer it:** Transfer the email to your calendar of when you will complete the response.

Sally even goes further to suggest that to retain the sense of control, allocate time in your diary to respond to emails, just like the other important appointments, such as meeting with staff and all the other tasks you need to complete during your week.

If you want to be successful in business

and remain healthy, you must implement a system that allows you to remain feeling in control.

Why not try it next week and see how it feels? And be sure to let me know how you go. **OH!**

FIONA
COSGROVE

WHY CHANGE NEEDS A CLEAR VISION

Fiona Cosgrove reminds us why a crystal clear vision is necessary in order to achieve permanent change.

I often refer to the quote by Lily Tomlin: 'I always wanted to be someone; I just wish I'd been more precise'.

Many of us would like to change something in our wellness, whether it be fitness improvements, better eating habits, weight control, stress management or other health behaviours. And most of the time we know *what* to do, but we don't do it.

Perhaps, for better results, we need to focus on *why* we want the change in the first place?

In today's society we are inundated with facts and information about what is good for us. We hear about what we should do, what we shouldn't do... but says who?

Learning how to successfully change our own behaviour is not easy. Think

about losing weight, for example. We know we need to eat less or make better choices, but what do we do instead? Go on a crash diet, deprive ourselves with an eating plan that leads to low energy, feelings of demoralisation, rapid but temporary weight loss, and equally rapid weight regain. And when we fail repeatedly, the vicious cycle reinforces our lack of belief in our ability to take control of our weight.

But, let's rewind a bit. In fact a long way! Before you begin any drastic action, it is a great idea to create a vision of where you would like to be when you are at 'your best'.

To do so, firstly, write down what that would look like. Then ask the deeper question, 'Why is that important to you?' You will find the answer to this question can be quite revealing and it will always be connected with something you value in your life. It might be as simple as 'good health', or it could be 'to be a good role model for my kids', or even 'to walk the talk'.

You may find that without identifying *why* you want to create change, you are on an empty, fruitless mission. This is because it is often our deepest values that provide us with the motivation to start and stay on track to achieving the change we truly desire. **OH!**

