

# fit **ness**

**Sexy  
ARMS!  
Flat  
ABS!  
Lean  
LEGS!**

**Burn  
79%  
More  
Calories**  
Six Get-It-Done  
Moves

**How to  
Beat Post-  
Workout  
Pig-Outs**

**No-Gym Shortcut  
to a Hot Bikini Body**

**Summer  
Sizzle**

Easy Tricks to  
Look Gorgeous,  
Not Greasy

**Feeling  
Bloated?**

Surprising Culprits,  
Quick Fixes

**Cellulite  
Solutions**  
(and the Stuff That's  
a Total Scam)

JULY/AUGUST 2013 FITNESSMAGAZINE.COM



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# WEIGHT LIFTING



**ACTIVE THREAT:**  
Getting hurt by a weight, joint injuries, muscle strains

There was a 63 percent increase in weight-room injuries among women over a 12-year period (17 percent higher than in men), a 2010 study found.

Dropping dumbbells or smashing body parts with them accounts for 75 percent of cases. Weight machines can be a hazard as well. "They're designed to fit men's bodies, which can throw off a woman's form when she's using them," says Robert Forster, a physical therapist in Santa Monica, California. "And research shows that, in general, females have less upper-body strength and a smaller bone structure than men do to support weight, which puts them in positions that strain muscles when they lift."

**Workout rescue** Whether you're using free weights or machines, start small (if everyone in class is picking up 10-pound weights, don't be shy about grabbing eight-pounders), ramp up gradually by increasing the number of reps before upping the weight and keep movements slow and controlled. If you have questions, talk to a trainer at your gym. And avoid the following, which Forster says are downright dangerous.

**SKIP KNEE-EXTENSION MACHINE**

Extending the knee from such a flexed position creates compressive forces between the back of the kneecap and the thighbone, eventually wearing down cartilage there. Worst-case scenario: osteoarthritis.

**TRY LEG-PRESS MACHINE OR SQUATS**

They evenly distribute forces throughout your lower body to take pressure off your kneecaps.

**SKIP BEHIND-THE-NECK LAT PULL-DOWN**

The pull-down motion forces shoulder

joints to work in poor alignment; leaning forward strains neck muscles.

**TRY LAT PULL-DOWN DONE RIGHT** Lean back slightly and pull the bar down to the front of your chest.

**SKIP SEATED TORSO TWIST** This exercise puts excessive pressure on lower-back disks, so much so that it can cause a disk herniation.

**TRY SIT-UP WITH ROTATION** Lie flat on your back, do a partial sit-up, rotate to alternate sides to work your obliques in a more spine-friendly position.

**SKIP OVERHEAD PRESS** On a machine or with free weights, this move, which targets deltoids and triceps, impinges on the shoulder joint and wears down tendons in your rotator cuff.

**TRY STRAIGHT-ARM LIFTS** To target your deltoids, stand holding free weights, arms by sides, with thumbs pointing up, then raise weights to shoulder level in front of your body. Do **PUSH-DOWNS ON THE LAT MACHINE** to work your triceps.

# CROSSFIT



**ACTIVE THREAT:**  
Rhabdo, muscle strains, ligament tears, stress fractures

CrossFit is jam-packed with exercises—squats, pull-ups, box jumps—done at a high intensity, a fast pace and with little rest. There's a lot of room for error, and much of it stems from inexperience.

"You're doing complex, difficult, dynamic and explosive multijoint exercises in CrossFit that are demanding on the body and require the proper technique," says Scott Levin, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon in Mount Kisco, New York. He frequently sees muscle strains, particularly in weak or untrained hamstrings and calves; torn ligaments and stress fractures are also on the rise because of CrossFit-type workouts, a study in *Current Sports Medicine Reports* found.

While Shari Becht's case of rhabdo stemmed from a workout she did on

her own, the condition "has been anecdotally associated with extreme exercise programs like CrossFit," says Francis G. O'Connor, M.D., a professor of military and emergency medicine at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland, and an expert on rhabdo. The CrossFit community is on alert. In 2011, *The CrossFit Journal* noted "in recent months, there have been a few incidents of rhabdomyolysis . . . some of which could have clearly been avoided with more precaution and concern for our newest . . . members."

One possible culprit is the pressure on participants to increase intensity and weight too soon. Ultimately, you're responsible for going at your own pace, but you're only as good as the coaches at your gym, says Noal DuBois, the founder of CrossFit Defined in Chicago. "Some gyms celebrate the amount of weight you

lift over proper technique and form or brag about how hard their workouts are," he says.

**Workout rescue** Find a good CrossFit gym by asking if they have an "on ramp" program, which introduces you to new movements, teaches form and position, and analyzes any flexibility issues you may have. "Your coach should be invested in you and your well-being and know about past injuries," DuBois says. (Check Yelp.com reviews to get a sense of the prevailing attitude at the gym.) Each exercise should be modified to match your ability. For example, start practicing Olympic lifts (a move in which you lift a barbell from the ground to your shoulders and then overhead) using a PVC pipe before you progress to an unweighted barbell and, finally, to a weighted one. "If your form breaks—your knees fold in toward each other or your back rolls in—it's too heavy," DuBois says.