

101 *Natural* Remedies



for
Pain Relief

101 *Natural* Remedies for Pain Relief



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This publication is presented for information purposes, to increase the public knowledge of developments in the field of strength and conditioning. The program outlined herein should not be adopted without a consultation with your health professional.

Use of the information provided is at the sole choice and risk of the reader. You must get your physician's approval before beginning this or any other exercise program.

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Introduction

For the past ten years Rick Kaselj has specialized in exercise rehabilitation and fitness. He works in one-on-one and group rehabilitation settings, educating and training people who have been injured at work, in car accidents, and during sport activities.

Rick has combined his rehabilitation experience and passion for research to develop a variety of courses and presentations for fitness professionals, Kinesiologists, and healthcare providers.

Although health care professionals can assist you with your health, ultimately your own health is your responsibility. In this guide Mike Westerdal of Critical Bench and Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS have teamed up to share the top 101 natural remedies for pain relief that we have collected over the years that will help you take matters into your own hands. Perhaps you can avoid appointments, surgery or medications if you explore some other options that are available.

We are all unique and absorb information differently. This book was formatted to be easily digestible so that you can read it tip by tip as you have time. Each day or week chose one tip and implement it.

Let's get started!

To your health and strength,

*Mike Westerdal &
Rick Kaselj, MS*



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101 Natural Remedies for Pain Relief

1 **ICE/HEAT:** Stiff or sore muscles can be caused by strain or injury. Sometimes there is no pain—just stiffness. Muscle pain or stiffness is often the result of inflammation. For minor injuries, stiffness, soreness or just plain muscular tiredness, you can use ice/heat to reduce inflammation and alleviate pain. First, as soon as possible after the injury apply ice using either an ice pack or by placing ice in a sealable plastic bag. To avoid skin damage, you should wrap the ice in a light towel. Place the ice pack directly over the injured spot and leave it there for ten to 20 minutes. The cool from the ice will help reduce the inflammation.

Alternatively, you can also take a cold shower. Next, you can apply heat to the injured spot. If you use a commercially available heat pack be sure to follow the directions. If you don't have a store bought heat pack you can make your own by soaking a towel in hot water. Check the temperature of the towel with your finger before placing the hot towel on the injury. Place the heat pack or towel directly on the injured location and keep it there for about ten minutes. Another option is to take a dip in a hot tub after using the ice treatment. Be sure to limit your hot tub time to no more than 20 minutes. For best results alleviating pain and reducing inflammation, apply ice/heat three to four times daily.

2 **GETTING A MASSAGE:** A professional massage can work wonders on sore, stiff or aching muscles. Therapeutic massage comes in a variety of forms such as Swedish, Deep Tissue, Shiatsu, Sports Massage, Hot Stone and many more. Besides relaxing the muscles, massage also increases



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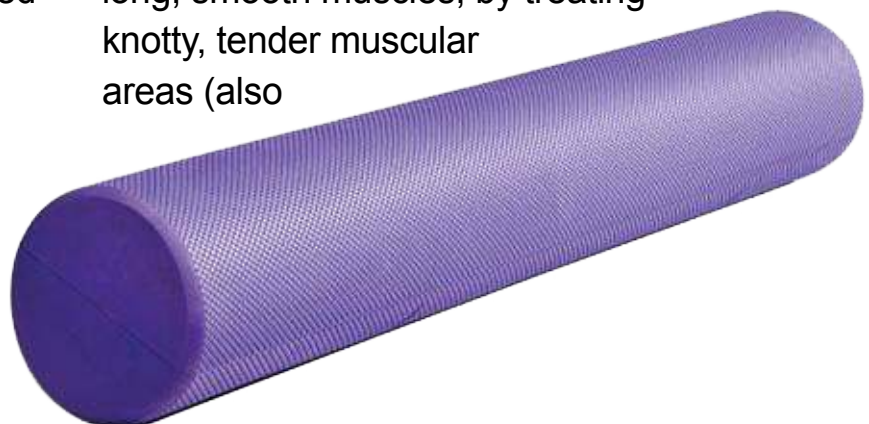
blood flow throughout the body. Some studies show that post-training massage can reduce inflammation, speed up muscle recovery and even increase the volume of mitochondria in muscle tissues. The higher volume increases oxygen intake and boosts muscle growth.

3 SELF-MASSAGE: If you don't want to spend money on a professional massage, you can always perform self-massage and realize many of the benefits of a professional massage. You can perform self-massage on nearly any accessible part of your body including the neck, shoulders, arms, thighs, lower back, legs and more. There are a variety of techniques for performing self-massage but in general, most include applying varying degrees of pressure and while performing some sort of movement. Even with a self-massage, you can realize many of the same benefits of professional massage such as increased blood flow and relaxed muscles.

4 SMR – SELF MYOFASCIAL RELEASE with Lacrosse Ball: SMR is a form of soft tissue therapy that can relax tired, stressed muscles and help alleviate pain. SMR

using a Lacrosse Ball has shown to be a particularly effective self-administrated therapy for helping to alleviate pain. It is similar to using a foam roller except that the ball provides for more focused pressure points. To perform SMR using a Lacrosse Ball you simply place the ball between a hard surface and your body (e.g., back, buttocks, legs, shoulders, feet etc.) and move your body to direct pressure to the areas where you are feeling pain.

5 FOAM ROLLING: The inexpensive and highly versatile foam roller can be a real lifesaver when it comes to alleviating pain from an injury or overtraining. Foam rollers come in a variety of sizes and varying levels of firmness. It is a cylindrical piece of high-density foam that is either smooth or has ridges. They are ideal for alleviating pain and tension in the legs, buttocks, lower and upper back. The foam roller helps to create and maintain long, smooth muscles, by treating knotty, tender muscular areas (also



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called trigger points) with deep tissue massage. Here are some benefits of long, smooth muscles:

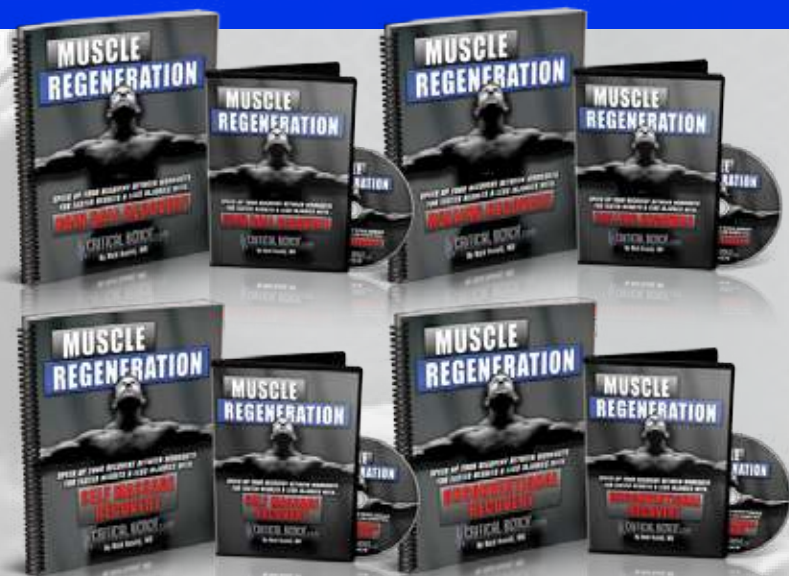
- » Longer, smoother muscles are stronger
- » Long and smooth muscles help your body become more injury-resistant as strength, mobility and posture are improved
- » Long and smooth muscles train more readily
- » Long and smooth muscles recover faster, so you can train again sooner
- » Long and smooth muscles don't become as sore as knotty muscles
- » Short, knotty muscles are pulling your skeletal-framework out of proper-alignment, so longer muscle can improve posture
- » Longer muscles allow for a greater mobility
- » The act of foam rolling itself trains balance, encourages symmetry and improves body-awareness
- » Long and smooth muscles themselves are more injury-resistant than short, knotty muscles



MUSCLE REGENERATION

RICK'S MUSCLE REGENERATION KIT

which includes videos and examples for foam rolling recovery, pain ball recovery, self massage recovery and some special unconventional recovery techniques you've definitely never seen before. Each component comes with exercise descriptions and video demonstrations.



<http://www.criticalbench.com/gains/muscleregen>

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6-8 **TOPICAL CREAMS:** These over-the-counter creams can be beneficial in helping to alleviate muscular aches and pains. Most non-prescription (over-the-counter) topical creams are based on natural ingredients. Topical creams, painkillers, or analgesics are sprayed or rubbed into the skin where the injury or pain is located. Although all are designed to relieve pain, different products use different ingredients.

When used moderately, and in accordance with the label directions, these topical medications are relatively safe. They should not be used long term or in excessive quantities. It's also important to realize that many of these medications mask or suppress the natural pain signals of the body, and ignoring pain can increase your risk of further muscle or joint injury.

If you do use these medications for temporary pain relief, it's important to rest your sore muscles, so try to avoid intense exercise until soreness subsides.

Side effects from these medications may include burning, stinging or irritated skin. Never use these medications on broken or irritated skin. Do not heat or ice your injury

if you are using topical creams and always wash your hands thoroughly after applying creams, lotions or gels. Persons who are allergic to aspirin should not use topical creams containing salicylates. Here are the most common ingredients found in ones available without a prescription.

6 Counterirritants. Ingredients such as menthol, methylsalicylate, and camphor are called counterirritants because they create a burning or cooling sensation that distracts your mind from the pain.

7 Salicylates. These same ingredients that give aspirin its pain-relieving quality are found in some creams. When absorbed into the skin, they may help with pain, particularly in joints close to the skin, such as the fingers, knees, and elbows.

8 Capsaicin. The main ingredient of hot chili peppers, capsaicin is also one of the most effective ingredients for topical pain relief. When first applied, capsaicin creams cause a warm tingling or burning sensation. This gets better over time. You may need to apply these creams for a few days up to a couple of weeks before you notice relief from pain.

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9 **POSTURE:** Poor posture can both cause and exacerbate muscle pain. Posture is the position in which you hold your body when you are standing, sitting or lying down. Developing proper posture involves training your body to stand, walk, sit and lie in optimal positions that place the least amount of strain on supporting muscles and ligaments during movement or weight-bearing activities. When you maintain proper posture you: keep your bones and joints correct alignment so that muscles are being used properly; decrease stress on your ligaments; prevent the spine from becoming fix in abnormal, uncomfortable or painful positions; reduce the likelihood of fatigue by using your muscles more effectively and maintaining them in the optimal position; help prevent muscle aches and pain; and reduce the likelihood of muscular injury.

Tips for maintaining proper posture:

- » Don't sit for too long without a break—get up, stretch and walk around every once in a while
- » Proper sitting positions: Sit with your back straight and your shoulders slightly back. Your buttocks should

RUB ON RELIEF

A personal favorite is, [“Rub On Relief”](#): It has 8 homeopathic ingredients including belladonna, menthol, ingatia, msm, rhus tox, phosphorous, naja, and lachesis mutus. It's natural and not only covers the pain but helps heal it. It doesn't smell and it doesn't burn or freeze your skin. There are no side effects and [you can read all about the ingredients here](#). It's not available in stores but you can purchase it here.



[CLICK HERE](#)

touch the back of the chair. Distribute your body weight evenly on the chair and don't slouch. Keep your feet on the floor.

- » Proper standing position: Stand upright with both feet on the floor to distribute

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your weight evenly on each leg.

Maintain your back in upright position and do not slouch. Place your arms in a comfortable position.

- » Proper sleeping position: It is important that you sleep in a position that is comfortable for you. However, try to sleep in a position that helps you maintain the curve in your back. In general, you should try to not sleep on your side with your knees drawn up to your chest. In addition, you may want to avoid sleeping on your stomach, especially on a saggy mattress, since this can cause back strain and can be uncomfortable for your neck.

10 **REST & SLEEP:** Rest and sleep are two vitally important tools at your disposal for minimizing muscle-related aches, pains and injuries. The majority of the body's

healing processes take place while we are at rest and sleeping. Overtraining and depriving your body of rest and sleep are critical—and common—mistakes that contribute to injuries, aches and pains. As much as possible take frequent breaks and allow for a restful sleep each night. In general, most people require from six to eight hours of sleep each night.

Sleep tips:

- » Don't drink too much alcohol
- » Avoid heavy meals before sleep
- » Invest in a quality, comfortable mattress
- » Turn out the lights
- » Reduce or eliminate sounds that might disturb your sleep
- » Exercise daily
- » Avoid sleep medications
- » Try meditation and relaxation techniques to improve your sleep and make it easier to fall asleep
- » Try natural herbs such as chamomile, melatonin, valerian root or kava to induce sleep
- » As much as possible reduce stress in your life and do your best to set aside the day's worries when you lie down to sleep



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Shoulder Hurt?

Take This
4 Question Quiz
To Find Out
If You're At Risk
For More Serious
Shoulder Injury.

<http://www.criticalbench.com/FMSP/>

11 **DESTRESS:** Stress is a major contributor to injuries, aches and pains. When we are stressed we lose focus and are more likely to injure ourselves. Also, because it saps vital resources, stress inhibits the body's ability to heal itself after an injury. Lastly, stress inhibits the body's ability to release endorphins, which not only make us feel better but also contribute to the healing process. Quiet time, meditation, prayer, exercise and vacation can all alleviate stress.

Here are some quick stress relief tips that can naturally help alleviate pain:

- 11 Take a deep breath:** Taking a deep breath is a simple, effective way to calm your mind and give you perspective
- 12 Shout:** Bottling up emotions is unhealthy so it's okay to privately 'shout' out your frustrations and let it all out
- 13 Visualization:** This is a powerful technique that can alleviate stress. When you're feeling stressed, take a few minutes to visualize yourself in a restful, peaceful place where you can let the stress 'float away'
- 14 Music:** Tune into your favorite music for a few minutes to help you focus and to help wash away pain. Music therapy has been proven to reduce anxiety, depression, pain and improve sleep. Research shows that music helps whether you're making it or just listening
- 15 Spend time with your pet:** Spending time with a pet has proven to be extremely beneficial to reducing stress. In particular, petting a beloved pet can dramatically lower stress levels
- 16 Drink tea:** A relaxing tea such as

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chamomile can help relieve stress.

There are dozens of different varieties of teas that can help alleviate stress. Read the labels and choose your favorite

17 | Aromatherapy: Lavender, eucalyptus and other scents are relaxing and calming. Look for candles, essential oils or diffusers

18 | Prayer or Meditation: Let Go and Let [God](#). When you trust that God has it all under control it can be extremely comforting.

Additionally spending as little as five minutes meditating can lower stress levels.

19 | Laughter: Watch your favorite comedy or engage in any other activity that makes you laugh. Laughter has been shown to trigger the release of stress-relieving endorphins

20 | Socialize: Spend time with family, friends or loved ones to reduce stress levels

21 | Get outside: Spend time outdoors walking around or relaxing in a spot that you enjoy

22

DEEP BREATHING: Deep abdominal breathing can relieve muscle tension,

trigger the release of endorphins and boost the body's self-healing capabilities. The manner in which you breathe affects the entire body. Breathing exercises are a great way to relax, reduce tension and relieve stress. Practice deep breathing at a regular time and in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed. Loosen or remove any tight clothes you have on, such as shoes or jackets.

Make yourself feel completely comfortable. Sit in a comfortable chair and maintain proper yet comfortable posture. Place your arms on your thighs or in your lap.

Deep breathing tips:

- » Fill your lungs with air, without forcing. Imagine you're filling up a bottle, so that your lungs fill from the bottom
- » Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth
- » Breathe in slowly and regularly counting from one to five and then let the breath slowly escape, counting backwards from five to one
- » Repeat

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23-32

STRETCHES TOP 10: As the day goes by and if you are active, your muscles shorten and tighten up. This leads to unnecessary stress being put on your joints, tendons, ligaments and muscles which leads to pain, decreased of performance and increased risk of injury. Stretching helps reverse this.

Exercise #1: Standing Calf Stretch



Start



End

Purpose:	To lengthen the calf and decrease the tension in the calf and lower body.
Starting Position:	Begin in standing beside a wall.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Bring your hands against the wall at just below shoulder height. Move one leg straight behind you and move the other leg forward. Almost like you are trying to hold up the wall.2. You should feel a light stretch in your back leg.3. Hold for 30 seconds and perform twice, daily.
Progressions:	You can perform just on the injured side. Progress to three repetitions.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	<p>Light Stretch – The stretch should not be a strong stretch. This decreases the effectiveness of the stretch.</p> <p>Collapsing in the Lower Back – Doing this will increase the stress on your lower back and increase the risk of irritation.</p> <p>Locked Knee – The knees should be bent and relaxed.</p> <p>Back Foot Position – Your back foot should be pointing straight ahead and your heel should be on the floor.</p>
Video of this exercise: http://vimeo.com/29740547 / Password: 1Exercise http://vimeo.com/38052714 / Password: Golf4	

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Exercise #2: Standing Hamstrings Stretch



Start



End

Purpose:	To lengthen the hamstrings and decrease the tension in the hamstrings and lower body.
Starting Position:	Begin in standing with one leg out straight and the toe pointing upwards.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Your upper body is tall and you are bending at the waist until you feel a stretch in the hamstrings (behind the thigh).2. Hold for 30 seconds and perform twice, daily.
Progressions:	You can perform just on the injured side. Progress to three repetitions.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	Light Stretch – The stretch should not be a strong stretch. This decreases the effectiveness of the stretch. Collapsing in the Lower Back – Doing this will increase the stress on your lower back and increase the risk of irritation.

Video of this exercise: <http://vimeo.com/34137784> / Password: 6jump

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Exercise #3: Standing Hip Flexor Stretch



Start



End

Purpose:	To stretch out the muscle around the hip that are tight, specifically psoas (hip flexor).
Starting Position:	Begin in standing with one leg out straight and the toe pointing upwards.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Activate your abdominals and contract your seat on the right leg.2. Move your hips forward until you feel a light stretch in the front of your right hip.3. Hold for 30 seconds and perform twice on each site, daily.
Progressions:	Perform just on the injured side. Progress to three repetitions.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	Light Stretch – The stretch should not be a strong stretch. Stretching too much will decrease the effectiveness of the stretch.

Video of this exercise: <http://vimeo.com/32967585> / Password: 7squat

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Exercise #4: Standing Quad Stretch



Start



End

Purpose:	To lengthen the quadriceps and decrease the tension in the quadriceps and lower body.
Starting Position:	Begin in standing.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Grab one leg with the same side arm at the front of the foot and have the hand pull the heel towards the seat.2. You should feel a light stretch in the quads.3. Hold for 30 seconds and perform twice, daily.
Progressions:	You can perform just on the injured side. You can perform three repetitions.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	Pain-free Movement – Perform the exercise in pain-free ranges of movement. If you feel pain, decrease the range of motion. If you still feel pain, discontinue the exercise. Light Stretch – The stretch should not be a strong stretch. This decreases the effectiveness of the stretch.

Video of this exercise: <http://vimeo.com/34138654> / Password: 6jump

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Exercise #5: Standing Soleus Stretch



Start



End

Purpose:	To stretch out the muscle under the calf in order to decrease the stress on the knee.
Starting Position:	Begin in a standing position with your hands on the wall.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Now take a half a step back with your right leg.2. Make sure your toes are pointing straight ahead and bend at your knees with more of your weight on your right foot.3. You are looking for a light stretch under the calf.4. Hold for 30 seconds and perform twice on each site, daily.
Progressions:	Perform just on the injured side. Progress to performing three repetitions.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	<p>Pain-free Movement – Perform the exercise in pain-free ranges of movement. If you feel pain, decrease the range of motion. If you still feel pain, discontinue the exercise.</p> <p>Light Stretch – The stretch should not be a strong stretch. Stretching too much will decrease the effectiveness of the stretch.</p>

Video of this exercise: <http://vimeo.com/34138925> / Password: 6jump

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Exercise #6: Full Back Extension (739)



Start



End

Purpose:	To improve movement in the lower back.
Starting Position:	Start in a standing position with hands at the top of your pelvis.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Arch back in a slow and controlled manner as far as you can.2. Hold the end position for a second and then return to the start.3. Perform 1 set of 5 repetitions, daily.
Progressions:	Perform 10 repetitions Do the exercises 2 to 3 times a day
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	Gentle Movements – Don't over do the exercise as it could irritate your lower back and increase your low back pain. Be gentle, move slowly and look for a light stretch.
Video of this exercise: https://vimeo.com/52710970 / Password: lbp3	

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Exercise #7: Hands Behind Head and Arching Back



Start



Middle



End

Purpose:	To improve movement in the mid back.
Starting Position:	Begin sitting with your head straight..
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Move your hand behind your head. Then bring the elbows back in a slow and controlled manner and arch back with your mid back.2. Perform 1 set of 5 repetitions, daily.
Progressions:	Progress to 10 repetitions Perform 2 to 3 times during the day.
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	Hands Behind My Head Bothers Me – Then you can put your hands on your hips and move your elbows back. Mild Discomfort – It is fine to have mild discomfort but the pain should not be debilitating. If you have debilitating pain, radiating nerve symptoms or dizziness, discontinue the exercise immediately.

Video of this exercise: <https://vimeo.com/56346414> <https://vimeo.com/60779790> / Password: TOS786

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Exercise #8: Wide Knee Rocking Side to Side (716)



Start (FRONT)



Middle (FRONT)



End (FRONT)



Start (SIDE)



Middle (SIDE)



End (SIDE)

Purpose:	To dynamically stretch the hip rotators.
Starting Position:	Start by lying down on your back with your knees bent and your feet at shoulder width apart.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rock your knees to one side in a controlled manner until you feel a light stretch.2. Hold the position for one second and then rock the knees to the other side until you feel a light stretch.3. Perform 1 set of 5 repetitions on each side, daily.
Progressions:	<p>Move your feet wider apart</p> <p>Increase how far you drop your knees to one side</p> <p>Increase to 10 repetitions</p> <p>Just perform on injured side</p>
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	<p>Light Stretch – You should feel a light stretch. A strong stretch will not lengthen the muscle out.</p> <p>Gentle Movements – Don't over do the exercise as it could irritate your lower back and increase your low back pain. Be gentle, move slowly and look for a light stretch.</p>
Video of this exercise: https://vimeo.com/52612814 / Password: lbp3	

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Exercise #9: On Wall Rotating Legs In and Out (719)



Start



Middle



End

Purpose:	To dynamically stretch the hip rotators.
Starting Position:	Start by lying down on your back with your legs straight and on the wall.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rotate your legs out in a controlled manner until you feel a light stretch.2. Hold the position for one second and then rotate your legs in until you feel a light stretch.3. Perform 1 set of 5 repetitions on each side, daily.
Progressions:	<p>Increase to 10 repetitions</p> <p>Move your seat closer to the wall</p> <p>Just perform on injured side</p>
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	<p>Light Stretch – You should feel a light stretch. A strong stretch will not length the muscle out.</p> <p>Gentle Movements – Don't over do the exercise as it could irritate your lower back and increase your low back pain. Be gentle, move slowly and look for a light stretch.</p>
Video of this exercise: https://vimeo.com/52613946 / Password: lbp3	

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Exercise #10: On Stomach Heel to Seat with Pull



Start



Middle



End

Purpose:	To work on end range flexion (bending of the knee).
Starting Position:	Lying on the floor on your stomach.
How to Do the Exercise:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pull your heel towards your seat as far as you comfortably can in a slow and controlled manner.2. Reach back with your arm and pull back on your ankle so your heel moves to your seat.3. Hold at the end position for a second and then return back to the start.4. Perform 5 repetitions of this exercise, daily.
Progressions:	<p>You can progress to 10 repetitions.</p> <p>You can progress to performing a set of the exercise a few times during the day.</p> <p>Progress to the exercise: Sitting on Heels</p>
Contraindications & Common Mistakes:	<p>Pain-free Movement – Perform the exercise in pain-free ranges of movement. If you feel pain, decrease the range of motion. If you still feel pain, discontinue the exercise.</p>

Video of this exercise: <https://vimeo.com/45717280> / Password: 67rec

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EXERCISES TOP 10: Movement is life. If you don't move you get stiff and the body stops functioning. Just like a car that sits in the garage for too long without getting used, your body too will have a lot of issues after long periods of inactivity. Don't you find that the more active you are the better you feel? Movement heals the body. Below you'll find 10 exercises that can be performed for a full body workout three times per week.

10 Exercises for Pain Relief

- 1.) Hard-style Push Up
- 2.) Horizontal (Inverted) Row
- 3.) Split Leg Squat
- 4.) Lying bent knee Windshield Wiper
- 5.) Oblique Bridge with Legs Scissored
- 6.) Squat to Calf Raise Combo
- 7.) High Low Plank Drill
- 8.) Step Up with 1 Arm Press
- 9.) Single Leg Cross Reach and Curl
- 10.) Reverse Hyper Extension on Stability Ball



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Hard-style Push Up



Start



Finish

The body must be in a perfect plank position. Place hands underneath your shoulders, squeeze the glutes, heels pressed together, keeping elbows in and shoulders in socket. Head is neutral and abdominal muscles are fully contracted to create a straight line from head to toe. Lower body until only a few inches from the floor and press out, exhaling as you press. Imagine you are pressing the floor away from you.

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Horizontal Row



Start



Finish

The body must be in a perfect supine plank position. Hands are slightly wider than shoulder width on the bar. Feet should be close together. Abdominals are fully contracted and glutes are engaged. The body should be at a 45° angle. Pull the chest to the bar as you exhale.

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Split Leg Squat



Start



Finish

With perfect spinal alignment, head neutral, shoulders back, chest up and out, position one leg forward and the other leg back. Bending both knees simultaneously, legs should both be bent at approximately 90% angles. The forward thigh and body should form a straight line. Avoid making contact with the ground on the rear leg. The rear foot should have the heel off the ground throughout the exercise.

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Lying bent knee Windshield Wiper



Start



Finish

In a supine position on the floor, bend the knees to 90 degrees and pull them towards your chest. Arms should be out to the side at 3 and 9 o'clock to help stabilize the body. Rotate the hips and knees from side to side maintaining a sturdy upper body position. The shoulder blades should not come off the floor.

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Oblique Bridge with Legs Scissored



Start



Finish

Lay on your side, bottom leg slightly forward and top leg slightly back, place your forearm on the ground perpendicular to the body. Shoulder to elbow should be vertical underneath the body. Raise hips off the floor until the body forms a perfect straight line. Abdominals, glutes, and leg muscles should all be contracted while statically maintaining the bridge position. Hold this for 10-20 seconds on each side.

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Squat to Calf Raise Combo



Start



Finish

Feet should be approximately shoulder width apart. Standing tall with arms out in front, lower the body down, sitting into a deep squat, keeping the knees in line with the feet and eyes focused on the horizon. Bend until thighs are parallel to the floor and push upward, moving the body back to starting position however at the top you will continue to elevate onto the balls of your feet, forcing your calf muscles to contract intensely at the top of the movement.

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High Low Plank Drill



Start



Finish

The body must be in a perfect high plank position. Place hands underneath your shoulders, squeeze the glutes, heels pressed together, keeping elbows in and shoulders in socket. Head is neutral and abdominal muscles are fully contracted to create a straight line from head to toe. Instead of performing a push up, select an arm and place your forearm onto the ground, followed by the other side. Now the body is in perfect low plank position. Continue to keep all the muscles fully engaged and go back to the high plank position. Repeat this many times with a right left approach and then switch to a left right approach to keep balance throughout the body.

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Step Up with One-Arm Press



Start



Finish

Using a board from 6-18 inches off the floor, place one foot on the board with a weight/dumbbell in the opposite hand. As you step off the floor with the bottom leg, press the weight into the air. As you reach the top of the press, the foot should be on top of the board. Tempo is very important in exercise and should be focused on with this particular lift. Do a desired number of repetitions and repeat with the other leg and opposing arm.

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Single Leg Cross Reach and Curl



Start



Finish

Standing tall, pick one leg up off the floor and slowly raise it behind you as you bend from your hips with a slight bend in the knee. While holding a dumbbell, reach the opposite hand from the leg you are standing on towards your foot. Maintain a strong spine, engage the glutes and contract the abdominals. Reach the dumbbell to the planted foot and return to a strong standing position. As you approach the top of the lift, curl the dumbbell. Try to do this without allowing the raised leg to touch the floor. Repeat this for several repetitions before changing hands and feet. Remember to move from the hips with a subtle bend in the knee to properly engage the glutes and hamstrings throughout the exercise.

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Reverse Hyper Extension on Stability Ball



Start



Finish

Find a suitable stability ball to work with, something 55cm or bigger preferably. Place the stability ball on top of a sturdy board or step for greater elevation if desired. Lay prone over the ball with your toes touching the floor and feet about 12-18 inches apart. Hands should also be on the floor slightly wider than shoulder width. The body is now in an inverted V shape. Engage the glutes and hamstrings as you raise the legs up. Bring them up as high as you can comfortably but avoid hyper extension. This movement is designed to engage the erectors, glutes and hamstrings all at once. The posterior chain should feel fully contracted throughout the exercise. Return to starting position and repeat for 10-20 repetitions.

If you have knee pain after workout you may want to [tweak these three exercises](#) if you're currently using them.

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WEIGHT MANAGEMENT:

Being overweight or obese not only puts us at risk of injury and development of chronic illnesses but it also reduces the body's ability to heal itself after an injury. First, excess weight places more pressure on your joints, organs and overall, the body's metabolic systems, essentially putting more wear and tear on your body. There are lots of ways to lose weight but all of them have one important point in common—each day, you have to burn more calories than you eat. It's really that simple. You cannot lose weight if you don't burn more than you consume. You also won't 'convert' fat into muscle by maintaining a burning/consumption balance each day.

Here are some simple weight loss tips to help you on your way:

- » Cut your daily calorie consumption by as little as 100 to 200 calories each day by cutting back on calorie-rich salad dressings and toppings
- » Drink more water to help you feel full and satisfied
- » Eat plenty of green vegetables such as broccoli (steam the vegetables and skip the cheesy sauces)

- » Eat an apple instead of fat-laden potato chips
- » Avoid processed foods and eat whole, unprocessed foods as much as possible
- » Cut back on the sugar
- » Don't drink sugary sodas and don't drink diet sodas. Both are bad for you and studies have shown that people who regularly drink diet sodas actually put on weight rather than lose it
- » Eat a healthy breakfast every day
- » Eat health fats every day. All fats are not created equal. Always avoid saturated fats but be sure to include some healthy, unsaturated fats in your diet each day. This is important for both losing weight and gaining muscle
- » Replace starchy carbs with complex carbs. Instead of eating processed carbs like those you find in white bread and white rice, choose complex carbs from whole grains and brown rice



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- » Replace quick-cooking oatmeal with regular oatmeal. Quick-cooking oatmeal can cause your blood sugar to spike much higher than regular, slow-cook oatmeal. Make the switch and you'll lose a few minutes but you'll gain with more even blood sugar levels and you will feel fuller longer
- » Eat sweet potatoes without butter and brown sugar. Sweet potatoes are high in fiber, meaning you'll feel full longer. Sprinkle a bit of cinnamon on top for flavor and you'll have a delicious, healthy side dish
- » Skip the low-and nonfat foods. Food manufacturers generally replace fat with sugar or artificial ingredients. You are better off sticking with the higher fat versions but eat them in moderation. Studies show that people usually consume larger portions when they are eating low- or fat-free foods
- » Stop eating fast foods and junk foods. They just aren't conducive to weight loss or overall good health
- » Get more active but be sure to watch your calorie intake too. Remember, you have to burn more than you consume to lower your weight
- » Don't look for a magic bullet or the next miracle diet. They're all garbage



and will do nothing to help you in the long run.

44

HYDRATION: Our bodies are mostly made up of water, which is why it's important to stay hydrated throughout the day. Staying hydrated creates an environment that supports healthy operation of the body's systems while also flushing out toxins. Common signs of dehydration include:

- » Thirst
- » Dry, sticky mouth
- » Fatigue
- » Headache
- » Constipation
- » Dry skin
- » Dizziness/Lightheadedness

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There really is no hard and fast rule regarding how much water you should drink each day. The fact is that it will vary from person to person depending on metabolism, intake and activity levels. People who are sedentary are going to require less water than those who are physically active each day. Here are some tips for staying hydrated throughout the day:

- » Drink a tall glass of water every morning when you first wake up
- » Carry water in a reusable (not disposable) bottle with you wherever you go
- » Serve water with every meal. Not only will you help keep yourself hydrated, you will also be less likely to overeat
- » Keep a constant supply of water at your desk or within easy reach throughout the work day

Although plain or unflavored sparkling water should be your first choice, you can also get hydrated



by eating the following foods—all of which contain significant amounts of water:

- » Hamburger
- » Chicken breast
- » Soup, stew, broth
- » Jell-O
- » Grapefruit
- » Grapes
- » Watermelon
- » Fruit juice
- » Sports drinks or flavored waters
- » Smoothies

45–67

FOODS:

Despite the fact

that eating is one of the most important things we do every day, a lot of people don't really pay attention to the kinds of foods they regularly put into their bodies. They do this for years and then wonder why they're fat, sloppy, constantly getting sick, prone to allergies, loaded with health problems and just generally a mess. There are those of us though who recognize the importance of foods, understanding that they are the foundation of healthy living and fitness. For the body builder or strength athlete, this is especially true.

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Knowing that eating right is a good start but it's not enough. Today more than ever, there are so many different varieties of foods on the shelves in grocery stores that it's absolutely mind boggling and overwhelming. Because it is so confusing, a lot of guys ask for my advice about what kinds of foods they should be eating and specifically, they ask if there are certain foods that they should be eating every day.

The answer to that question is a resounding 'yes,' there are certain foods that you should be eating every day. Understand that this is my list—search online and you're bound to find different opinions about what are the best foods for you to eat on a daily basis. For me though, the list below represents my personal top ten foods that you should be eating just about every day. The list is presented in no particular order so don't think that just because it's at the top or bottom of the list, a food is more or less important.

45 Eggs: For the longest time, the media gave eggs a really bad reputation. Supposed 'experts' claimed that eating eggs increased levels of 'bad' cholesterol in the body, resulting in all sorts of health problems. These



'experts' said that the bad stuff was concentrated in the yolks and that if you just ate the egg whites, you'd get all the benefits (e.g., protein). New research though says that regularly eating eggs doesn't boost bad cholesterol at all. Overall, eggs are inexpensive, low in calories, contain the highest-quality protein you can find and are loaded with vital nutrients—albeit in small amounts—such as folate, riboflavin, selenium, B12, and choline.

46 Broccoli: This versatile green veggie is loaded with phytochemicals and antioxidants, including indoles, isothiocyanates, quercetin, glutathione, beta carotene, vitamin C, folate, lutein, glucarate, and glutathione.

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47 | Nuts and seeds: Like some other foods, nuts have gotten a lot of undeserved bad press. In reality, nuts—almonds in particular—are very good for you and a small handful should be eaten every day. Nuts—particularly almonds—are cholesterol-free, a good source of dietary fiber and are high in monounsaturated fat (the good fats). Nuts and seeds also are loaded with antioxidants, arginine-rich protein, magnesium, copper and zinc.

48 | Chicken: This super food has been a bodybuilding staple for years. Chicken is loaded with muscle-building proteins and packed with vitamins and minerals. Recent studies have shown that it's even okay to eat the skin now and then. It's got a lot of fat but it's the kind of fat that when eaten in moderation, can really ramp up muscle growth.

49 | Apples: This delicious fruit is a great source of both soluble and insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber helps to prevent cholesterol buildup in the lining of blood vessel walls and insoluble fiber provides bulk in the intestinal tract,

holding water to cleanse and move food quickly through the digestive system. They're also nutritious and a great way to take care of snack cravings.

50 | Leafy dark greens: The dark leafy greens such as kale, collards, spinach, turnip greens, mustard greens, and Swiss chard are jam-packed with vitamins A, C, and K, folate, potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, lutein, and plenty of fiber.

51 | Carrots: It looks like Bugs Bunny was on to something—carrots really are good for you. They're loaded with antioxidants like beta-carotene as well as vitamins A, K and C.



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52 | **Plain, low-fat or non-fat yogurt:**

Plain yogurt is a healthy, nutrient-dense food that is another excellent source of high-quality protein, along with calcium, potassium and riboflavin. Scientists have also found that yogurt with active cultures (probiotics) may contribute to a healthy digestive system.

53 | **Whole oats:** This super food has a lot of soluble fiber, which reduces the risk of heart disease. And though they do contain lots of carbohydrates, their release is slowed by the fiber content, meaning you don't get an insulin spike. Speaking of which, when going for oats, don't go for the 'quick oats,' because they do cause your insulin levels to spike.

54 | **Sweet potato:** Another great food for the bodybuilder or strength trainer, the sweet potatoes makes it on to the list due to its high dietary fiber content, along with being an excellent source of vitamins A and C, as well as iron and calcium.

55 | **Alaskan Salmon (wild is best):** Rich in healthy, unsaturated fats and high in

Omega oils, wild Alaskan Salmon not only supports overall health, but it also boosts the body's ability to recover from injury. Salmon helps metabolic systems achieve optimal performance while also supporting good joint health.

56 | **Fresh whole fruits, vegetables:**

Nothing beats fresh-picked whole fruits and vegetables for good health for supporting the body's pain management systems. Buy organic whenever possible because non-organic fruits and vegetables will contain pesticide residues, some of which have been shown to damage human immune systems. Avoid processed fruits and vegetables as much as you can.

57 | **Bright multi-colored vegetables:**

Vibrant, colorful vegetables such as peppers, tomatoes, squash, and leafy vegetables have high quantities of antioxidant vitamins and lower levels of starch." Bell peppers are available in a variety of colors, while hot peppers (like chili and cayenne) are rich in capsaicin, a chemical that's used in topical creams that reduce pain and inflammation.

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58 | Green tea: Green tea is rich in antioxidants and supports a healthy immune system. Green tea is also rich in antioxidants, which help support metabolic responses. Drinking green tea can help relax tired, sore muscles while also stimulating the body's natural responses to recover from pain and injury.

59 | Olive oil: This amazing oil not only supports a healthy heart but it has also been shown to be effective in fighting inflammation. In fact, a 2010 Spanish study found that the Mediterranean diet's myriad health benefits may be largely due to its liberal use of olive oil, especially the extra-virgin kind. The compound oleocanthal, which gives olive oil its taste, has been shown to have a similar effect as NSAID painkillers in the body.

60 | Old fashioned oatmeal: Unlike quick-cooking oatmeal—which is high in sugars and simple carbohydrates—old fashioned oatmeal is rich in healthy, complex carbs that will leave you feeling full for longer while also supporting healthy metabolic function. And when your metabolism

is functioning at its optimal best, it is better able to manage pain and quickly recover from muscular stresses or injuries.

61 | Soy: Several studies have suggested that isoflavones, estrogen-like compounds found in soy products, may help lower CRP (*C-reactive protein*) and inflammation levels in women—and a 2007 animal study published in the *Journal of Inflammation* found that isoflavones also helped reduce the negative effects of inflammation on bone and heart health in mice. Avoid heavily-processed soy whenever possible, which may not include the same benefits and is usually paired with additives and preservatives. Instead, aim to get more soy milk, tofu, and edamame (boiled soybeans) into your regular diet.

62 | Low-fat dairy: Milk products are sometimes considered a trigger food for inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, because some people have allergies or intolerances to casein, the protein found in dairy. But for people who can tolerate it, low-

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fat and nonfat milk are an important source of nutrients. Yogurt can also contain probiotics, which can reduce gut inflammation. “Foods with calcium and vitamin D, such as yogurt and skim milk, are good for everyone,” says Karen H. Costenbader, MD, associate professor of medicine and rheumatoid arthritis doctor at Harvard Medical School. In addition to their anti-inflammatory properties, she says, “it is important to get enough calcium and vitamin D for bone strength, and possibly reduction of cancer and other health risks.”

- 63 | Tomatoes:** Juicy red tomatoes are rich in lycopene, which has been shown to reduce inflammation in the lungs and throughout the body. Cooked tomatoes contain even more lycopene than raw ones, so tomato



sauce works, too—and a 2012 Iranian study found that tomato juice consumption was also beneficial.

- 64 | Beets:** This vegetable’s brilliant red color is a tip-off to its equally brilliant antioxidant properties: Beets (and beetroot juice) have been shown to reduce inflammation, as well as protect against cancer and heart disease, thanks to their hearty helping of fiber, vitamin C and plant pigments called betalains.
- 65 | Garlic and onions:** There’s a good reason why these pungent vegetables are known for their immunity-boosting properties. In test-tube and animal studies, garlic has been shown to work similarly to NSAID pain medications (like ibuprofen), shutting off the pathways that lead to inflammation. Onions contain similar anti-inflammatory chemicals, including the phytonutrient quercetin and the compound allicin, which breaks down to produce free radical-fighting sulfenic acid.

- 66 | Berries:** All fruits can help fight inflammation, because they’re

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low in fat and calories and high in antioxidants. But berries, especially, have been shown to have anti-inflammatory properties—possibly because of anthocyanins, the powerful chemicals that gives them their rich color. Studies have shown, for example, that red raspberry extract helped prevent animals from developing arthritis; that blueberries can help protect against intestinal inflammation and ulcerative colitis; and that women who eat more strawberries have lower levels of CRP in their blood.

67 | Tart cherries: In a 2012 presentation, Oregon Health & Science University researchers suggested that tart cherries have the “highest anti-inflammatory content of any food.” Studies have found that tart cherry juice can reduce the inflammation in lab rats’ blood vessels by up to 50%; in humans, meanwhile, it’s been shown to help athletes improve their performance and reduce their use of anti-inflammatory pain meds. Experts recommend eating 1.5 cups of tart cherries, or drinking 1 cup of tart cherry juice, a day to see

similar benefits. And yep, they’ve got to be tart—sweet cherries just don’t seem to have the same effects.

And just as there are foods you should be eating to help reduce or alleviate pain, there are also foods that you should not be eating. The top ten foods to avoid include:

68 | Processed foods: If you want to increase your body’s natural ability to manage pain, then you ought to avoid processed foods. When manufacturers process foods they strip out all of the natural nutrients and add in artificial ingredients and chemicals. These artificial ingredients throw the body’s metabolic systems off-track and inhibit its ability to effectively manage pain. This is in addition to numerous other side effects including weight gain and increases in the likelihood of developing chronic illnesses such as diabetes.

69 | Refined sugars: Refined sugars are loaded with empty calories, and are treated with a host of potentially toxic chemicals. If you must use

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sugar, stick with natural, organic and unrefined products.

- 70 | Margarine:** Margarine is a butter substitute that has been around since the late 1800s. It is made from vegetable oils, animal fats or a mixture of both. Its manufacturing process involves the addition of hydrogen atoms to the fat molecules, making them more saturated and raising the point at which they melt. As a result, margarine remains a solid at room temperature.

This process is known as "hydrogenation," and requires the presence of a metal catalyst and temperatures of about 500°F (260°C). All cooking oils contain fats. But as you should already know by now, all fats are not the same. Some fats are healthier for our bodies than others. Margarine is far and away the worst oil on the list. Most of margarines are loaded with trans-fats (the really bad fats), along with lots of artificial ingredients so do yourself a favor and just avoid them. When you want to spread something on your bread or pancakes, you're far better off choosing butter.



- 71 | French fries:** Fries are high in saturated fats, which inhibit the body's ability to manage inflammation. They are also loaded with empty calories, which contribute to excessive weight gain.
- 72 | Fast foods:** Fast foods are also high in saturated fats as well as lots of artificial ingredients and empty calories that make for easy weight gain while also throwing metabolic systems out of balance.
- 73 | White bread:** Unlike whole grain breads, white bread has been stripped of its nutrients. White breads are high in processed sugars, contain

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lots of empty calories and do little to satiate hunger. Stick to whole grain breads.

- 74 | Pasta:** It's okay to eat pasta once in a while but when you do, stick with whole grain pastas, rather than refined white pastas. Non-whole grain pastas are higher in sugar and simple carbs meaning that they digest quickly, contain lots of empty calories and leave you feeling hungry again after a short while. Sugars and simple carbs do not support a health metabolism, which is essential for the body to use its own resources to recover from injuries and manage pain.



- 75 | Ice Cream:** Most ice creams are high in refined sugars and unhealthy

saturated fats. And the ones that are low in fat or sugar usually get their flavor from unhealthy artificial ingredients. Consuming these ingredients contributes to weight gain and inhibits the body's natural pain relief responses.

- 76 | Yellow cheeses:** if you crave cheese, stick with the white varieties rather than yellow cheeses (including American) or Cheddar cheese. The yellow cheeses tend to be high in saturated fats and overall, have more artificial ingredients than white cheeses. Both saturated fats and artificial ingredients interfere with metabolic systems that manage natural pain relief responses.

- 77 | Snack foods:** Snack foods such as chips, cookies, crackers and other similar foods contain a lot of trans fats and refined sugars. These are both ingredients that inhibit the body's ability to manage pain. They also contribute to weight gain, which further reduces the body's pain management capabilities while also increasing the likelihood of injury.

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79–92

SUPPLEMENTS: The human body is nothing less than amazing. All we have to do is take care of it by providing it with proper nutrition, exercise and plenty of rest, and it takes care of everything else. For instance, when we catch a cold, we don't have to "tell" the body what to do—it already knows how to deal with the situation. At the first sign of a cold, it issues marching orders to its defense systems and they take over.

It's the same with recovery after training. We don't need to tell the body what to do. It knows what to do and just asks that we provide it with the optimal conditions in which to do its job. The body gets its fuel to facilitate the recovery process from the foods we eat. That's why it's especially important for health enthusiasts to focus on eating lean proteins, complex carbohydrates and unsaturated fats.

It is from these that the body manufactures the tools of recovery. And in our case, the tools of recovery are the substances that our muscles need to recover and get bigger and stronger.

78 | Oils that are high in unhealthy fats such as vegetable and corn:
Vegetable and corn oils are high in saturated and trans fats, both of which contribute to poor heart health and weight gain. More important, they interfere with the smooth flow of metabolic systems that support recovery from injuries. Stick with healthy oils such as olive oil and others that are high in healthy unsaturated fats.

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In a perfect world, we would get 100% the substances we need to recover from the foods we eat. Sadly, in today's modern world that's not always possible. Modern technologies and processes allow us to have convenient access to food that wasn't possible a couple generations ago, but along the way, a good portion of the nutritional content gets lost.

That's where nutritional supplements come into the picture. In addition to eating healthy, taking supplements can help ensure that our muscles have ready access to everything they need for the recovery process. Remember that the purpose of supplements is to "supplement" our diet, not to be the sole source. Here are some of the supplements most effective in helping the body recover:

79 Protein: This is the granddaddy of supplements because protein is the primary building block of muscle. You absolutely must have an ample supply of protein in order to add lean mass and increase strength.

Proteins are organic compounds made up of carbon,

hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. It is the presence of the nitrogen which sets protein apart from other nutrients. Since we have no other source of nitrogen (being unable to absorb it from the air, like plants can), one of the most important roles of protein is to bring nitrogen into the body.

Protein powder is generally consumed immediately before and after exercising, or in place of a meal. Having sufficient protein intake allows for efficient growth and repair of muscle tissue. The different types of protein powder are whey, casein, white eggs, soy, etc.

80 Chondroitin: Chondroitin sulfate is produced naturally by the body. It is



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usually found attached to proteins as part of a proteoglycan. Its role is to provide elasticity to bone cartilage and in doing so, helping to ease training-induced trauma to the joints.

81 | Glucosamine: Another naturally occurring compound. It is found in cartilage, synovial fluid, and other components of joints. Like chondroitin, it aids in flexibility and elasticity. Glucosamine and chondroitin are often combined into a single capsule or powder.

82 | Glutamine: This is the popular name for L-Glutamine. Glutamine can be found in protein powders, beans, meats, fish, poultry, dairy products. It is the most abundant amino acid (building block of protein) in the body. Stored in the muscles, it strengthens the immune system and aids in recovery after training.

83 | MSM: Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) is a naturally-occurring nutrient found in small amounts of many foods. Studies have shown that it is effective in increasing joint comfort and supporting a normal range of motion,

which is important after a strenuous workout.

84 | Shark Cartilage: This is what it sounds like—processed cartilage taken from sharks. It has been touted as being effective against a host of conditions but it is most often taken to improve joint function and help speed post-training recovery

85 | Boswellia serrata extract: Boswellia is an herb that is believed to be effective as an anti-inflammatory and promote joint health. It is believed to increase absorption and bioavailability (thereby making any other supplement ingredient dosages more effective).

86 | Boron: This is an important trace mineral that is believed to be effective in the relief of joint pain. In particular, it aids calcium integration into the cartilage and bone, and this can reduce pain because bones are stronger and there is additional cartilage to cushion the joints.

87 | Piperine: This is the active phenolic component in black pepper

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extract, and it is believed to reduce inflammation in those who suffer from rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. Similar to Boron, it is also believed to promote bio-availability of other nutrients which means more of the ingredients taken in combination with Piperine will be absorbed.

88 | Vitamin C: Vitamin C is frequently used as a natural remedy for many conditions, but its role in joint health tends to be underappreciated. Vitamin C not only helps produce collagen, a major component of joints, but sweeps the body of destructive molecular byproducts known as free radicals, which are destructive to joints. Without vitamin C and other antioxidant nutrients, free-radical damage to joints would be much worse. One of the best-known studies looking into vitamin C and arthritis, the Framingham osteoarthritis study, found that people whose diets routinely included high amounts of vitamin C had significantly less risk of their arthritis progressing.

89 | 89. Manganese: This is a trace mineral that is found in small



quantities in the bones, kidneys, liver and pancreas that is known to be an anti-oxidant that fights free radicals that attack body cells. In particular, the antioxidant superoxide dismutase (SOD) is low in people who suffer from arthritis. SOD prevents inflammation of joints, and according to clinical studies of those with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis,

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a combination of Glucosamine, Chondroitin and Manganese can alleviate pain.

90 Zinc. This is an important mineral that is believed to have a myriad of health benefits, but those specifically related to joint pain are its abilities as an inflammation and pain reducer. Zinc is not produced by the body so it needs to be added via diet and/or supplementation. In one study from the University of Washington in Seattle, people with rheumatoid arthritis supplemented with Zinc

three times a day. After three months, significant improvements in morning stiffness, inflammation and swelling were reported

- 91 Copper:** Similar to Zinc, Copper needs to be sourced from external sources and it is an effective inflammation reducer. In addition, it is also aids in growth of connective tissues and wound healing.
- 92 Chromium:** This is an essential trace element and over 90% of U.S. adults have a deficiency of the mineral chromium because it is not readily absorbed from foods. Chromium is believed to help control glucose and insulin levels, which means it not only helps alleviate pain but it can help control weight and blood sugar levels.
- 93 Ginger and turmeric:** These spices, common in Asian and Indian cooking, have been shown in various studies to have anti-inflammatory properties. "While the evidence in terms of RA inflammation is not very strong, they are vegetables—and part of a healthy, vegetable-rich diet," says Dr. Costenbader. Turmeric, the

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ingredient that gives curry its yellow color, works in the body by helping to turn off a NF-kappa B, a protein that regulates the immune system and triggers the process of inflammation, researchers say. Its relative ginger, meanwhile, has been shown to reduce inflammation in the intestines when taken in supplement form.

94 | Peppermint: Peppermint has been shown to be effective in helping tight, sore muscles to recover. As a muscle treatment, three times each week, soak in a warm tub scented with 10 drops of peppermint oil. The warm water will relax your muscles, while the peppermint oil will naturally soothe your nerves -- a combination that can ease muscle cramping 25 percent more effectively than over-the-counter painkillers, and cut the frequency of future flare-ups in half, according to some experts.

95 | Tomato juice: Got cramps in your legs? At least one in five people regularly struggle with leg cramps. In many cases, leg cramps are caused by potassium deficiencies, which occur when this mineral is flushed out by

diuretics, caffeinated beverages or heavy perspiration during exercise. But sip 10 ounces of potassium-rich tomato juice daily and you'll not only speed your recovery, you'll reduce your risk of painful cramp flare-ups in as little as 10 days, say UCLA researchers.

96 | Acupuncture: This technique has been used for thousands of years. Many people find that acupuncture helps relieve pain and disability due to arthritis; several studies have found benefit from the procedure. Because the procedure involves the use of needles, you'll need to visit a trained professional to perform this natural, highly effective technique for relieving pain and improving muscle, body and mind function.

97 | Acupressure: Similar to acupuncture, acupressure does not involve the use of needles. Acupressure is based on the concept of life energy that flows through "meridians" in the body. In treatment treatments using acupressure, physical pressure is applied to trigger points throughout the body with the aim of clearing

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blockages in these meridians.

Pressure may be applied by hand, by elbow, or with devices. Acupressure can be performed by a professional or you can even perform acupressure on yourself.

98 | Reflexology: This is another pressure-focused treatment. It is very similar to acupressure except that reflexology uses thumb, finger and hand techniques to apply pressure to the feet or hands at specific points that are supposed to relieve pain and promote healing in other areas of the body. You can hire a reflexology professional or you can self-perform the technique with a little practice.

99 | Reiki: This is another form of energy healing. Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes pain relief for many people. Reiki is administered by "laying on hands" and is based on the ancient concept that an unseen "life force energy" flows through all living beings and is in fact, what causes us to be alive. If one's "life force energy" is low, then we are more likely to get sick, feel

stress or be susceptible to injury, and if it is high, we are more capable of being happy and healthy.

100 | Chiropractor: Chiropractic therapy is an effective means of treating the muscle spasms that often accompany injured muscles. For example, if you have acute lower back pain, chiropractic manipulation can break up the muscle spasm and scar tissue, easing the pain.

101 | Towel therapy: Two to three days after an injury or at the onset of pain, soak a towel in hot water and then wring it out. Fold the towel into about an 8-inch square. While holding the towel on your shoulder, relax your shoulder, lean forward so your arm hangs freely, and gently swing your arm back and forth like a pendulum. You can also try this remedy with care in the shower.



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Conclusion

Except in instances where there is no natural alternative and under the care of a qualified doctor, in general, prescription medications for pain are a bad idea. First and foremost, prescription medications generally do nothing more than mask the pain, failing to treat the underlying cause of the pain or injury. And if you are just treating the symptom rather than the cause, you remain open to repeat injuries.

Secondly, prescription medicines can be toxic to the body and cause a host of unwanted side effects—some of which can be dangerous or even deadly. Some of the side effects associated with various prescription pain medications include:

- » Anorexia
- » Asthenia
- » Constipation
- » Dizziness
- » Dry mouth
- » Ejaculatory difficulties
- » Headache
- » Insomnia
- » Nausea
- » Nervousness
- » Sweating

In addition, our bodies can quickly develop a tolerance to prescription medications meaning that after a while, they just don't work. Lastly, some prescription medicines—particularly narcotics—can also be addictive.

In contrast, most natural pain relief treatments and therapies have been in use for generations. They have withstood the test of time because they have been repeatedly proven effective. Moreover, most natural pain relief treatments and therapies do not just address the symptom, but the cause of the problem as well. And when you address the root cause of the injury or pain, you're less likely to have recurring problems in the future.

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In addition, natural treatments and therapies:

- » Have fewer side effects
- » Are non addictive
- » Are more easily accessible because you don't require a prescription
- » Are less likely to cause the body to become immune to the treatment or therapy
- » Work in harmony with the body's natural systems

However, remember that even with natural therapies and treatments, there are health risks. You should always consult a medical professional before embarking on a self-treatment regimen.

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About the Author Rick Kaselj



Rick Kaselj, M.S. (Exercise Science), B.Sc. (Kinesiology), PK, CPT, CEP, CES

Rick Kaselj specializes in exercise rehabilitation and fitness. He works in one-on-one and group rehabilitation settings, educating and training people who have been injured at work, in car accidents, and during sport activities.

Rick has combined his rehabilitation experience and passion for research to develop a variety of courses and presentations for fitness professionals, Kinesiologists, and healthcare providers. Rick has given over 302 presentations to 5897 fitness professionals across Canada and USA. These courses include:

- » Core stability of the shoulder
- » Exercise rehabilitation for the shoulder, lower back, hip, or knee
- » Foam roller essentials
- » Intro and advanced core stability
- » Intro and advanced stability ball exercises
- » Postural assessment and exercise prescription
- » Injury-free running
- » Save your shoulders
- » Training for better golf

Rick strives to balance his work life with his personal fitness endeavors and travel. He

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has trained for and competed in the Manitoba Marathon, the 225 km Ironman Canada Triathlon, and the 160 km Sea2Summit Adventure Race in Whistler, BC.

He has hiked 4,300 km along the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada and mountain biked the 5,000 km Great Divide Mountain Bike Route over the Rocky Mountains from Mexico to Canada. An avid traveler, Rick has toured three continents and visited 17 countries.

In 1997 he graduated with his Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology from Simon Fraser University. Rick recently completed his Masters of Science degree focusing on corrective exercise and therapeutic exercise for the rotator cuff. Rick currently works as a lecturer, Kinesiologist, personal trainer, writer of exercise rehabilitation and exercise rehabilitation specialist in and around Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.



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About the Author Mike Westerdal, HCT, RKC



Mike Westerdal is a certified hybrid trainer and founder of CriticalBench.com a fitness publishing company that helps half a million people per month achieve their strength & health goals.

With a background in sports training, powerlifting and muscle building, Mike has also been recognized as a Russian Kettlebell Certified instructor.

To overcome his own personal injuries and nagging pains, Mike and Team Critical Bench have teamed up with the industry's leading Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS to share the Fix My Pain series with others that are interested in fixing their own injuries without appointments, medications or going under the knife.

Connect With Mike:

Mike's Gifts For You: <http://www.freemusclegifts.com/72hours.htm>

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Other Products By Rick Kaselj & Mike Westerdal

[Fix My Shoulder Pain](#)



Fix My Shoulder Pain was created by Injury Specialist Rick Kaselj, MS. Utilizing his trademarked SR3 Method which is short for “Shoulder Reshaping 3-Part Method”, Rick is literally making headlines world wide. Rather than just stretching and strengthening which only provides temporary relief Rick’s Method actually reconstructs the shoulder joint from the outside and inside.

Fix My shoulder Pain and the SR3 Method is the first shoulder injury system ever created to help you get back to pain free workouts by focusing on alignment, tissue quality and activation & endurance. The best part; this program has been specifically designed to help serious fitness enthusiasts who want to avoid expensive and time consuming appointments and would prefer an alternative to medication or surgery.

[Get Back To Pain Free Workouts By Fixing Your Shoulders Without Appointments, Medications or Surgery](#)

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