

Don't Exclude Pushups and Pullups From Your Workout

Pushups and pullups have long been considered the two best exercises you can do to train your upper body. The reason for that is these two exercises target every major muscle group of your upper body.

You'd be surprised as to how good of shape you can get into when you only perform these two exercises. Ask anyone who has gone through 'boot camp' and see what kind of shape they are in? Ask them what exercises they did?

When you do pushups or any type of pushing movement like a bench press, you target your chest, shoulders and tricep muscles...half your upper body. Pullups, or any type of pulling motion, targets different muscles. The pulling motion targets your back, biceps and forearm muscles...the other major muscle groups of your upper body.

The problem for most people, especially those who train at home is that most women can't do pull-ups and a lot of men who have added a few pounds or years can't do but a few pull-ups either. We'll talk about how to overcome that in a minute.

There are three good reasons why it is important to do both movements and exercises.

1. **Saves time**—These two exercises are compound movements, meaning they target more than one muscle at a time. These two exercises allow you to train all the major muscle groups of your upper body. This is extremely helpful if time is a factor in your busy schedule.
2. **Promotes muscle balance and reduces injury**—My background in sports medicine has shown me that muscle imbalance can be a major contributor to upper back and neck pain.

This is important because a lot of people tend to do more pushups or pushing exercises than pullups. This leads to muscular imbalance and both men and women are equally guilty of training their 'pretty' muscles...their pectorals more than their back. When you train your pushing and pulling muscles equally you reduce the muscular imbalance and lessen the chance of aches and pain.

3. **You don't have to go to a gym**—Almost everyone can do pushup or a modified pushup. You can also find pull-up bars at your local park or purchase pullup bars that you can attach to your doorway. Unfortunately, it is estimated that less than 15 percent of the population (fit males under the age of 40) can do 10 pullups.

The Solution to the Pullup Problem

The fact that roughly 85 percent of the population can't do pullups lead to the creation of a new fitness product called the Work Horse™. It is specifically designed to allow the user to do both pushing and pulling motions. More importantly, the Work Horse allows you to do modified pull-ups with your own body weight. This allows both men and women to finally be able to target their back, bicep and forearm muscles that commonly get neglected if you're not doing pullups.

With the Work Horse you "off-load" a third of your body weight. Your feet are flat on the ground, which takes some of the weight off and instead of pulling up 180 pounds, you 'off-loaded' a third of your bodyweight and only have to pull up 120 pounds. This modified pull-up finally makes this exercise do-able!

This type of exercise or movement is commonly done in a gym, but not everyone trains in a gym or has a squat rack or Smith machine in their house. The Work Horse™ lets you get a complete upper body workout in less than ten minutes. It's lightweight, portable and can easily be stored and has

received the endorsement from fitness professionals, trainers and doctors as one of the best new fitness products for 2010.

Best of all you don't have to worry about bolting screws into your doorway...and who wants to train in their closet!

Elastic bands are another way of targeting those neglected muscles, and I am a fan of them, but for a lot of people the resistance throughout the full range of motion isn't there. As the retired trainer of the Dallas Mavericks said, that is one of the simplest and best ideas I have seen.

Dr. Len Lopez is a nutrition and fitness expert and author of *To Burn or Not to Burn—Fat is the Question*, and *“Five STEPS Closer...”* and the creator of The Work Horse. His approach to health and wellness is to treat the cause—not the symptom. For more information on how to overcome fatigue and weight gain or to get Dr. Lopez special report on *The Stress Connection*, send an e-mail to Dr. Len. You can also use his online health quizzes to identify where your health problems are coming from.