

Legs Like Superman's

Q:Is there a single muscle group that can be considered "king"?

A:This one's up for grabs, but in my estimation there's no question—it's your wheels, better known as your legs. You can take care of your health by supplementing with proper nutrients, be eating food compatible to your blood type and exercising to meet your body genetic requirements. But if you are not hitting those legs, you'll never experience maximum performance, high energy levels or capacity for burning fat.

If you want to experience the ultimate from your training experience then you must incorporate in your program at least an equal amount of effort that your legs require. When you train your legs, they will enhance your cardiovascular conditioning and improve your V02 max (your maximum capacity for oxygen uptake). Being the largest muscle groups, they demand more oxygen and blood to be pumped into them. That's why the demand is so great on the heart and lungs and makes the workout so intense. And, that's the reason most guys back down from their legwork.

Anyone who has ever performed squatting can attest to the burning feeling in the lungs and the overall demand those babies place on the total body. If you don't believe me just place a 100-pound barbell across your shoulders and perform one set of 50 deep knee bends or squats. Then call me after the paramedics have resuscitated you. The legs are king.

Since the thighs are the largest muscle groups in your body, they require more work than other muscle groups. That seems like a logical statement, doesn't it? But the problem is that most guys spend more training time on their arms and chest,

which are small muscles, and very little on the legs. Consequently, their physiques are out of balance, and their strength is lagging.

What is experienced from training the legs is sort of paradoxical. The training will whip your stamina and endurance both from the cardiovascular and localized conditioning aspects while at the same time make your legs feel like strings of pasta. But as your conditioning improves, so does your lung capacity. Then comes a constant level of energy. As your leg muscles become more conditioned and you begin experiencing more strength, subsequently your total-body conditioning is then taken to another level. It influences your sports performance, your job performance and just about everything else you do. Remember, when those wheels are flat, so is your performance. But on the other hand, when those wheels are full and strong, that's when you make your greatest overall progress.

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