



Flexible Fitness

The Fitness Motivation Monitor



Fighting Back-Arm Waddle

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Fed Up with Diets and Exercise That Don't Work?

You're not alone!
Call 530.873.0377
for help!

Fighting Back-Arm Waddle

Has this ever happened to you? You make the motion of waving goodbye to someone and the back of your arm continues to wave long after you stopped. While this is a frequent complaint from women, men are not immune to the back-arm waddle.

Most of the time, I am asked for exercises to help firm that area up. What is actually being asked for is a triceps (back of the arm) exercise. But first, similar to any other body part, body fat must be addressed. Meaning, if you have excess body fat, no amount of firming will get rid of the fat. Nor, in this situation, will firming stop the back-arm waddle.

If you have excess body fat, it can be reduced through the proper combination of cardio and strength training exercise, and mindful eating. Then, these two exercises will help you to show off strong, toned arms. With both exercises, take five seconds for each repetition so that you do not use momentum.



Triceps Kickback:

- Keep your back flat and your supporting leg slightly bent.
- When performing the "kickback" motion, your elbow should not move from its starting position: keep it glued to your side.



Triceps Overhead Press:

- Sit up straight: chest out, shoulders down and back, and eyes looking straight ahead (your chin should not be down). Feet should be flat on the ground.

A balanced exercise program, mindful eating, and a little patience... soon you'll be waving goodbye to the waddle!

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Message from the President

August often brings with it a feeling of the last hurrah. Summer is winding up and kids will be back to school soon (maybe you will be too). Vacations are taken, and the warm weather and long days continue to be enjoyed.



I've talked to many people who have yet to enjoy their summer. Work has overshadowed thoughts of vacation or, in some cases, the mundane day-to-day tasks have simply taken over. Inertia, boredom, and stress are commonplace.

If summer has passed by with nothing more than a glance from you, stop what you are doing. Take a break. I promise the world will not come to a halt if you do. In fact, the world will likely be a better place because of it.

If taking off several days, or even one whole day, feels truly undo-able, try one afternoon. Find a place to visit (like the beach, a park or museum) and consider taking a friend with you. If you crave solitude, go somewhere alone, or hibernate in your home with a favorite movie.

Please, enjoy your summer before it's gone!

To your health,

Gillian Hood-Gabrielson

Flexible Fitness, President

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A History of Chocolate

In October of last year, we started a new series on everyone's favorite - Chocolate! Why chocolate when this is a newsletter about health and fitness? Some of you have

heard my teleclass called, "Chocolate Doesn't Make You Fat!". In this class I talk about Intuitive Eating, which enables you to eat the foods you love without binging or feeling guilty.

A couple of months ago, I met Carrie Brown, a fabulous woman who has a business providing high quality chocolate! If you are going to eat it, make sure you get the good stuff! Check out Carrie's website at www.carriebrown.com and try some for yourself! Chocolate makes a GREAT gift!



Carrie will be giving us an education on chocolate in the coming months. This month we continue with ...

How to taste chocolate?

If you want to explore the individual characteristics of the various cocoa beans used and their origins and perhaps find your ideal, then the best way to taste chocolate is to use other comparisons to help you differentiate between the various smells, flavors and textures. This is best performed comparatively with similar cocoa contents of unflavored dark or milk chocolate bars from several manufacturers. This way you won't be distracted by the varying levels of sugar and milk contents and your senses will be more focused.

Sight

First you will discover the differences in color as different beans produce finished chocolate with varying colors from rich reds and coppers to dark browns. This is not a sign of quality and a common myth that the darker chocolate is somehow a better chocolate is certainly not the case. Gloss and condition can be quickly assessed just by looking at a piece of chocolate. Color is a little more difficult to define – in general the redder and lighter the cocoa, the finer the flavor.

Smell

Break a piece of chocolate and smell it. You need to understand what you are sensing, is it floral, fruity, earthy? Like wine tasting there are many associated smells and it is by recognizing them that helps you decide whether it is to your liking, or not. Is it an intense aroma or is it subtle? Smells associated to a poor quality chocolate may be plastic or rubber, this can be due to poor fermentation or artificial drying of the cocoa beans. Another unfavorable sign is a heavy smokiness caused by drying the beans over wood fires (The ideal way to dry cocoa beans is simply under the sun, this is time consuming and therefore more expensive). It is the nose which is the most highly tuned instrument for the delectation of any food or wine. Too much sugar interferes with the process of tasting in the same way as too much salt can overwhelm delicate flavors such as peppermint and chili.

Sound

The crystalline structure of cocoa butter gives real chocolate its distinctive crisp snap with a texture of tree bark in the break.

Taste

With a clean palette put a small amount of chocolate in your mouth and let it linger on your tongue for a short while and slowly move it around extracting all the flavors. A small piece of chocolate should be placed on the tongue and allowed to melt of its own accord – no sucking or chewing. The main points to look out for are firstly the hit of taste and how long this lasts; ideally the taste should steadily rise and linger rather than a "hit and run" effect. Next are the basic flavors of acidity, bitterness, sweetness and astringency. Is it too sour or sweet, is the acidity just enough to assist any fruitiness or is it too overpowering. A well balanced sensation of flavors depicts a good chocolate, a monotonous and uninteresting taste and also an overpowering note depicts a poor chocolate. The taste buds can only distinguish sweet, sour, salt and bitter. They can also discern the texture and particle size. Fine

chocolate has a very long "finish" as do great wines.

Texture

Generally speaking, a silky smooth texture with an absence of any grittiness is the mark of a good chocolate. A gritty texture is due to poor conching of the chocolate (this is a process where the particles are repeatedly broken down). As this has nothing to do with the quality of the bean but the process itself it is placed as the final test of a good chocolate. Observe the speed of melting (the quicker the better – this comes from high cocoa butter content). Chocolate should melt if held in the hand for a few seconds as cocoa butter is a unique fat in that it is solid up to 33°C and molten at 34° C.

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Top 5 Exercise Plateau Breakers

"*Plateau*". That dreaded word that you do not want to hear, let alone experience. Especially if you have been diligently exercising in an attempt to get fit or lose weight. We have all experienced a plateau at some time – all of a sudden you stop losing weight or you just can't seem to run any faster. When you hit a plateau, don't panic. It doesn't necessarily mean you need to work harder or spend more days at the gym. Here are five ideas that may help you break through in record time.

- 1) Take an Active Rest.** If you have hit a plateau, it may be time for an "active rest". Take a week off from structured exercise, and instead take leisurely walks, play ball with the kids, or take a yoga class. Active rest rejuvenates the mind and the body, and allows for overworked muscles to rest and rebuild. You will return to exercise stronger and ready for new challenges.
- 2) Time to Eat.** As you increase your fitness level, your body's metabolism may increase and so will your calorie needs. If you hit a plateau, evaluate how much you are eating. You may need to eat more than you have in the past for your body to continue to increase its fitness level. If you find you are often hungry, this is a clear sign you need to eat more to sustain your exercise program.
- 3) Mix it Up.** If you do not vary your workout routine your body will eventually run on "cruise control", and you will experience a plateau. Try new cardiovascular activities, or use free weights if you always use machines for strength training. Changes in your routine will surprise the body and force it to adapt, bringing you to new levels of fitness.
- 4) Different Day, Different Intensity.** Varying your activities, or cross-training, is important to avoid or break through a plateau. While cross-training the type of activity is often recommended, it is also important to cross-train the *intensity* of your workouts. Specify different days of the week as low, moderate or high-intensity days. Try interval training – work at a low intensity for a couple of minutes and increase to a high intensity for a couple of minutes, and repeat. If you use a heart rate monitor, be sure your average heart rate for your exercise sessions varies from day to day.
- 5) Sleep It Off.** Be sure you are getting enough sleep. The right amount of sleep for your body will allow time for your muscles to recover from exercise. This will ensure that you can come to your next exercise session with enough energy, and at full strength, to take on a challenging workout.

If you are still frustrated, find inspiration in the story of Chris Witty, winner of the Gold Medal in 1000 meter speed skating in the 1998 Winter Olympics. A month before she was to compete in the Olympics, she was diagnosed with mononucleosis. Of course she had to cut back on training, and at the time that she should have been preparing to peak for competition. Not only did she win the Gold Medal, which

nobody expected, she broke the world record! Imagine what a little rest might do for your workouts!

If you find you still can't break through that plateau, then make the decision to ride it out. Sometimes a plateau is necessary to allow the body to catch up with a new body weight or fitness level. Rest assured your body knows what is best and will break through the plateau at the right time!

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