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IS WEALTH

ISSUE. °8

WELLNESS. FITNESS. PERFORMANCE

APRIL-MAY 2025



Stroke Awareness

Man v. Machine

OCR Prep

Spring Training


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FIGHT OR FLIGHT?..
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Editor's Note



Built for the Climb: Resilience in Motion

As the season shifts, spring reminds us what transformation looks and feels like: messy, effortful, and deeply human. At Prospr 9, we believe challenge is essential...not just for building stronger bodies, but for cultivating a resilient mind.

That's why this issue dives into how Obstacle Course Racing (OCR) does more than test your grip strength or endurance...it builds mental toughness, reconnects you to community, and gives your brain the same neurochemical rewards as your best training sessions. Movement with meaning becomes medicine.

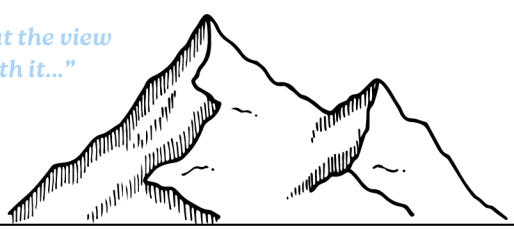
May is also Stroke Awareness Month, and we'd be remiss not to highlight how functional strength, cardiovascular training, and regular physical activity are cornerstones in reducing stroke risk.

Prevention begins with participation. In this issue, we spotlight training strategies that improve circulation, mobility, and brain-body communication...not just for performance, but for longevity.

And for those who love to debate the merits of machines vs. free weights, we unpack it all in our "Man vs. Machine" feature. **Spoiler**: they both have a place in a smart, evolving program. The real win is knowing how and when to use each.

This season, let's train for more than aesthetics. Let's train for clarity, for health, and for the hard stuff life throws our way. After all, resilience isn't built in comfort...it's forged on the course, under the bar, and inside those moments when you choose to keep going.

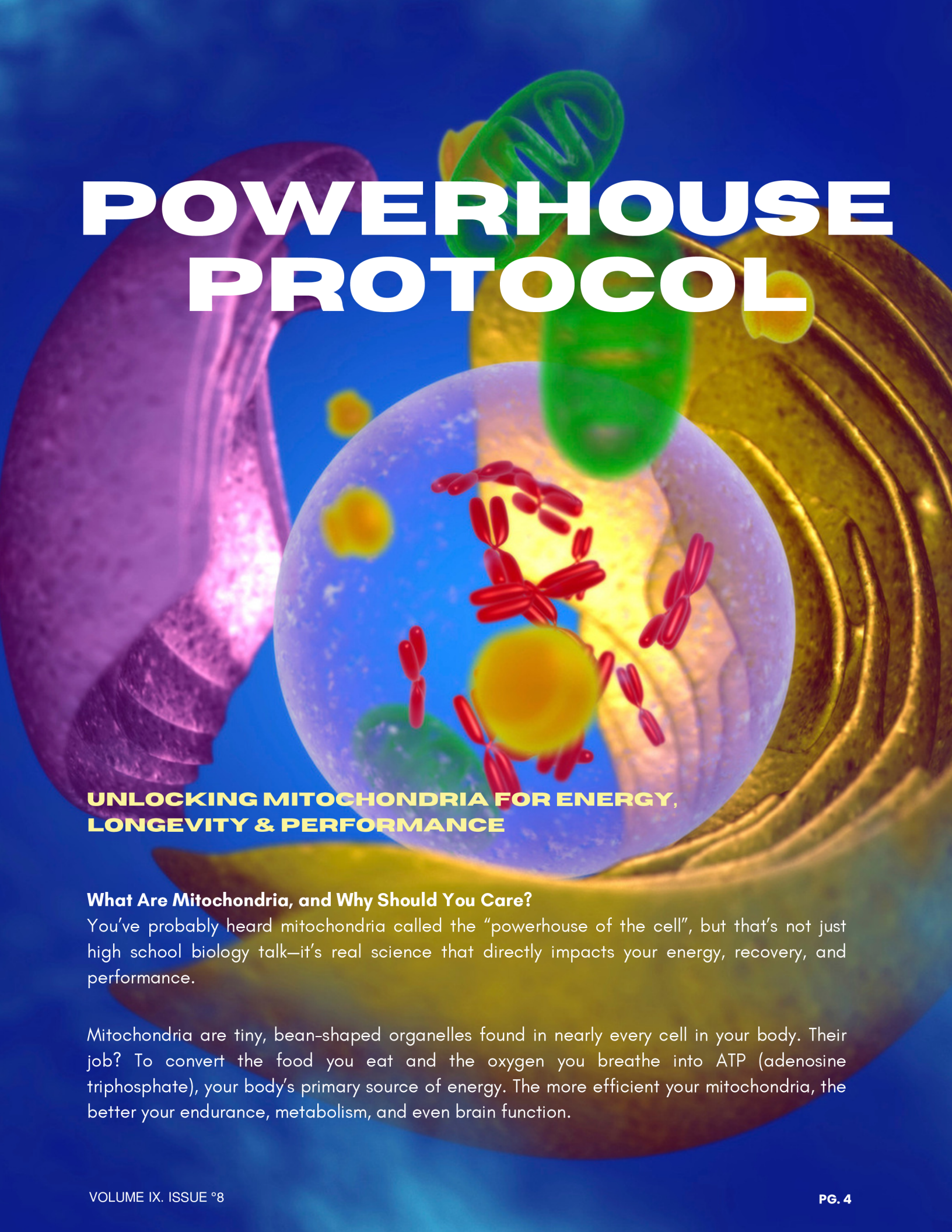
"The climb might be tough, but the view from the top is always worth it..."



Prospr 9

"Keep going"...

POWERHOUSE PROTOCOL



UNLOCKING MITOCHONDRIA FOR ENERGY, LONGEVITY & PERFORMANCE

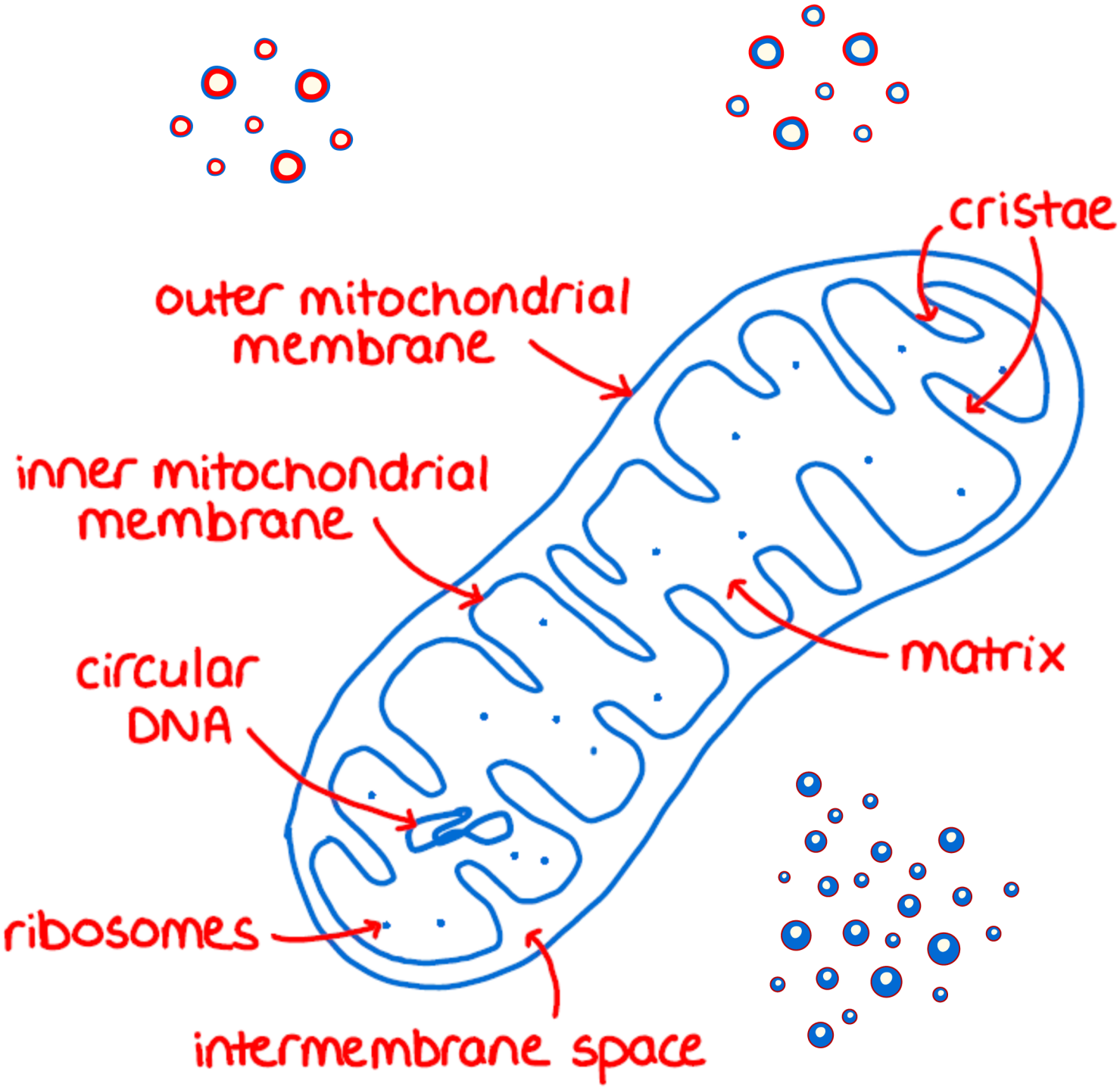
What Are Mitochondria, and Why Should You Care?

You've probably heard mitochondria called the "powerhouse of the cell", but that's not just high school biology talk—it's real science that directly impacts your energy, recovery, and performance.

Mitochondria are tiny, bean-shaped organelles found in nearly every cell in your body. Their job? To convert the food you eat and the oxygen you breathe into ATP (adenosine triphosphate), your body's primary source of energy. The more efficient your mitochondria, the better your endurance, metabolism, and even brain function.

Mitochondria are the microscopic engines inside your cells that convert the food you eat and the oxygen you breathe into usable energy (ATP). They're responsible for fueling everything from your workouts to your brain function.

When mitochondria are strong, you perform better, recover faster, and age more gracefully. When they're sluggish, you feel it: fatigue, brain fog, slower metabolism, and even increased risk for chronic disease.



That's because mitochondria are the energy engines of your cells, powering everything from muscle contractions to mental clarity. Supporting their function through proper nutrition, regular exercise, quality sleep, and stress management doesn't just boost performance, it lays the foundation for long-term vitality and resilience at every level.



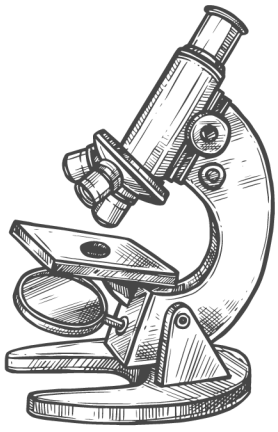
THE MITOCHONDRIA-FITNESS CONNECTION

According to a 2011 review published in The Journal of Physiology, endurance exercise increases mitochondrial content and function, leading to enhanced energy production and fatigue resistance. (Hood, 2011)

Let's break it down: whether you're sprinting, lifting, or doing long steady-state cardio, you're challenging your mitochondria to produce more ATP. Over time, this challenge improves not just the number of mitochondria, but also their efficiency.

Scientific Term: *Mitochondrial biogenesis* – the process of creating new mitochondria... is stimulated by consistent physical activity, especially aerobic training and high-intensity interval training (HIIT).



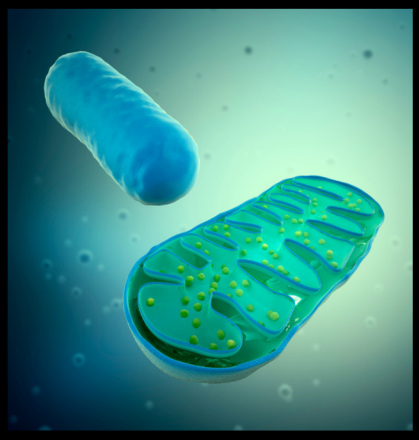


HOW FITNESS BOOSTS MITOCHONDRIAL HEALTH

1. Aerobic Exercise (Cardio)
Steady-state cardio (think cycling, swimming, running) increases oxygen delivery and mitochondrial density. More mitochondria = more ATP = more endurance.

2. High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)
Short bursts of intense effort trigger mitochondrial biogenesis faster than moderate exercise. HIIT also boosts PGC-1α, a protein critical for mitochondrial growth and function.

3. Resistance Training
While strength training isn't primarily aerobic, it still enhances mitochondrial function through improved insulin sensitivity and increased lean muscle mass, which demands more ATP production.

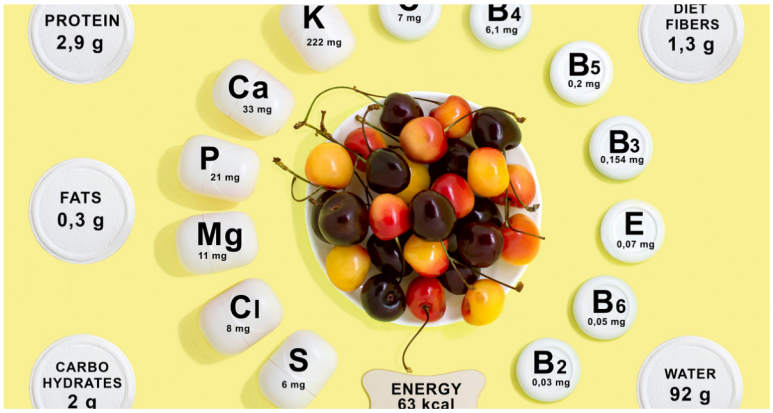


NUTRITION AND RECOVERY: FUEL FOR THE POWERHOUSE

Studies in Nature Reviews Molecular Cell Biology emphasize the role of nutrient signaling and oxidative stress in mitochondrial health. (Nunnari & Suomalainen, 2012)

Your mitochondria can only perform if you give them what they need:

- **Protein** – supports mitochondrial enzymes and muscle repair.
- **Antioxidants** (berries, leafy greens, etc.) – reduce oxidative stress that can damage mitochondria.
- **CoQ10, magnesium, and B-vitamins** – critical for mitochondrial energy production.
- **Sleep** – deep sleep restores cellular function and supports mitochondrial repair and growth.





HOW SEDENTARY LIVING HURTS YOUR MITOCHONDRIA

Too much sitting can literally shrink your mitochondrial capacity. Without physical stressors, your body has no reason to maintain or build new mitochondria, leading to: sluggish metabolism, poor recovery, brain fog, and chronic fatigue.

Fun Fact: Mitochondrial dysfunction is linked to a range of diseases: diabetes, neurodegeneration, and even accelerated aging.

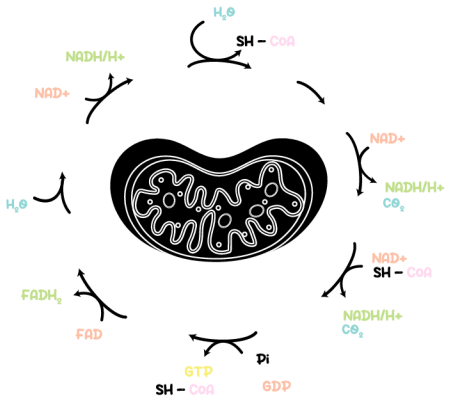
PERFORMANCE TAKEAWAY: TRAIN YOUR POWERHOUSE

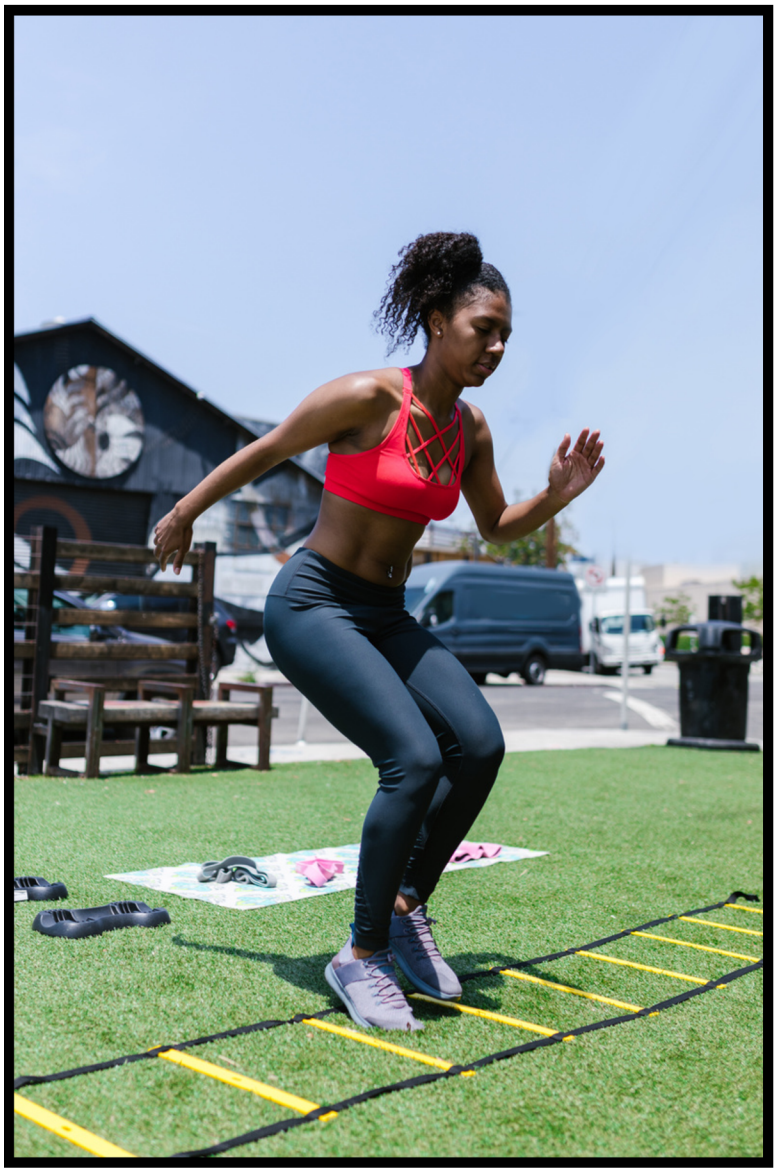
• Mix steady-state cardio and HIIT weekly.

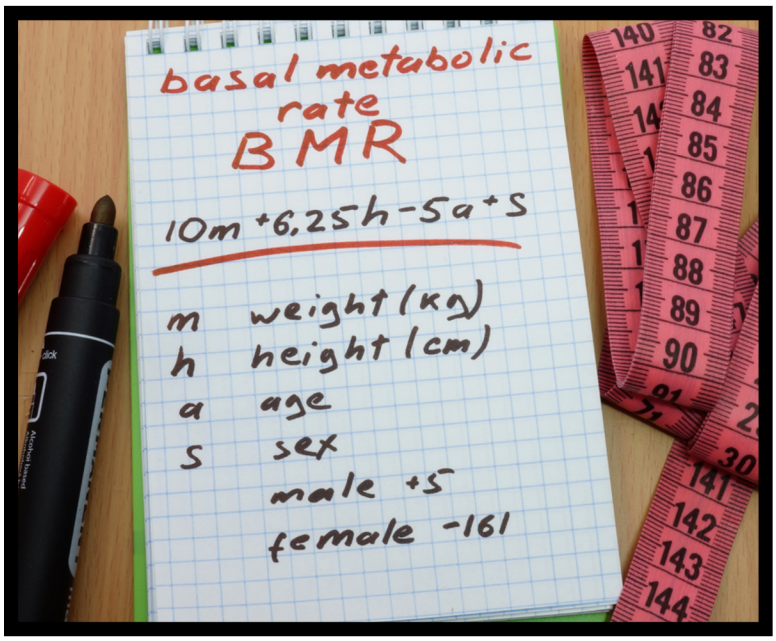
• Strength train 2-4x/week to build muscle and metabolic demand.

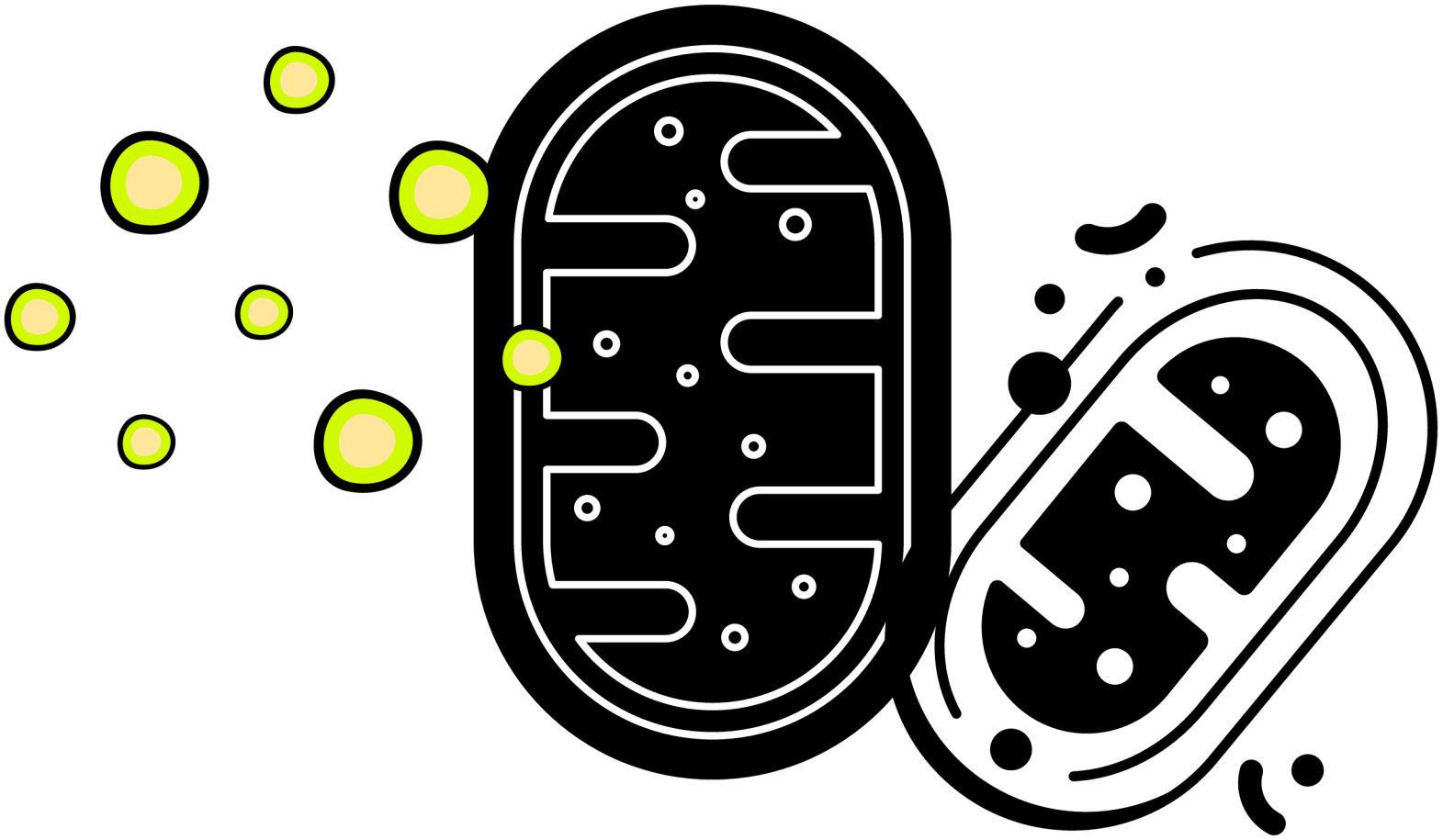
• Focus on nutrient-dense foods and quality sleep.

• Stay active throughout the day, movement snacks count.









FINAL WORDS

Mitochondria aren't just some obscure biology concept, they're your internal performance engine. Training smart, fueling well, and prioritizing recovery don't just make you feel better, they literally rebuild your cells from the inside out.

You don't need to chase perfection, just give your mitochondria a reason to evolve. They'll reward you with energy, clarity, and strength that lasts.

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STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

May is American Stroke Awareness Month, a time to shine a spotlight on one of the leading causes of death and long-term disability in the United States. But here's the good news: up to 80% of strokes are preventable, and lifestyle plays a starring role in that story. So, if you're wondering how your fitness and food choices today could keep your brain sharp tomorrow or help you bounce back stronger after a stroke, you're in the right place. Let's break it down...

"Up to 80% of strokes are preventable, and lifestyle plays a starring role in that story."

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke happens when blood flow to part of the brain is interrupted or reduced, depriving brain tissue of oxygen and nutrients. There are two main types:

***Ischemic strokes (about 87% of all strokes)**: Caused by a clot blocking a vessel.

***Hemorrhagic strokes**: Caused by bleeding in the brain due to a ruptured vessel.

There's also a "mini-stroke" called a **Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA)**, which can be a serious warning sign of a future major stroke.



Understanding the types and warning signs of strokes is the first step toward prevention and effective response. With this foundation, it's also important to explore how lifestyle choices, medical conditions, and timely intervention can influence outcomes and reduce long-term impact.

STROKE PREVENTION

WELLNESS. FITESS. PERFORMANCE

APRIL-MAY 2025

While knowing the types and warning signs of a stroke is crucial, it's equally important to understand the factors that increase a person's risk. Many strokes are linked to underlying health conditions or lifestyle habits that can often be managed or modified. By identifying these risk factors, individuals can take proactive steps to protect their brain health and lower their chances of experiencing a stroke.

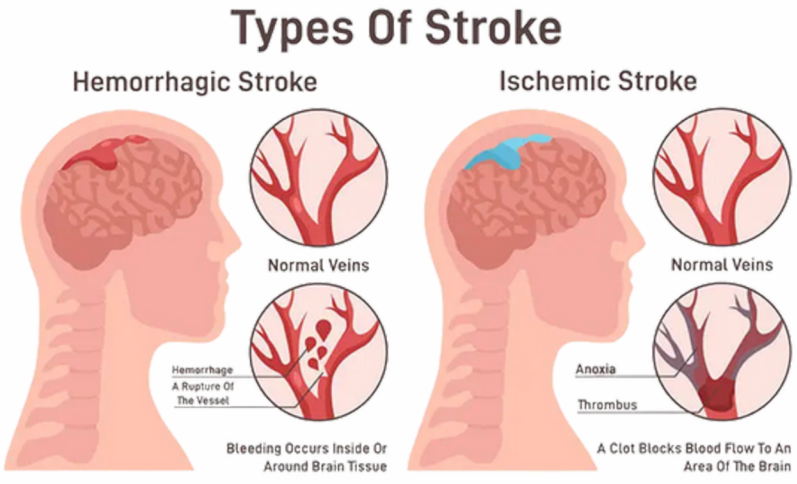


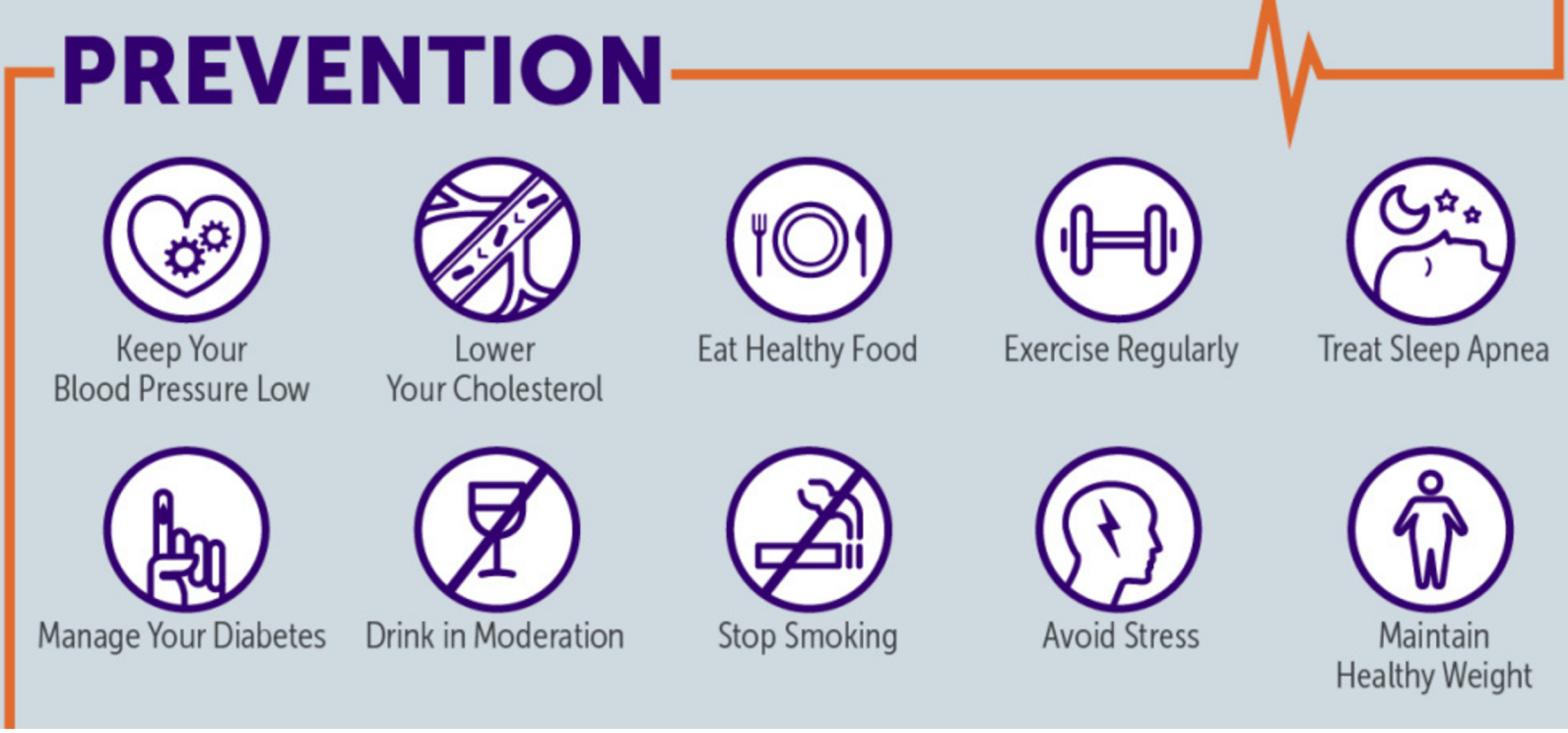
RISK FACTORS YOU CAN CONTROL

You can't change your age or family history but you can take charge of:

*High blood pressure
*Obesity
*Sedentary lifestyle
*Diabetes
*High cholesterol
*Smoking
*Poor diet
*Stress







HOW EXERCISE LOWERS STROKE RISK

Regular physical activity is like insurance for your brain. Here's how fitness stacks the odds in your favor:

1. Lowers Blood Pressure

Exercise strengthens your heart and improves circulation, helping reduce hypertension—a major stroke risk.

2. Improves Blood Sugar and Insulin Sensitivity

Regular movement helps regulate glucose levels, lowering the risk of diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

3. Reduces Stress and Inflammation

Chronic stress and inflammation are hidden culprits behind many strokes. Physical activity acts like a natural anti-inflammatory and mood booster.

4. Supports Healthy Weight

Obesity is a key risk factor for strokes. Exercise supports fat loss while preserving lean muscle, key for long-term metabolic health.

How Much Exercise Do You Need?

*150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity cardio (like brisk walking, cycling)
*2+ days per week of strength training
*Daily mobility or balance drills, especially for older adults
Even 10-minute chunks add up. The goal is consistency, not perfection.



NUTRITION THAT PROTECTS YOUR BRAIN

HERE'S WHAT TO PILE ON YOUR PLATE:

1. Leafy Greens & Colorful Veggies
Packed with antioxidants, potassium, and anti-inflammatory compounds.

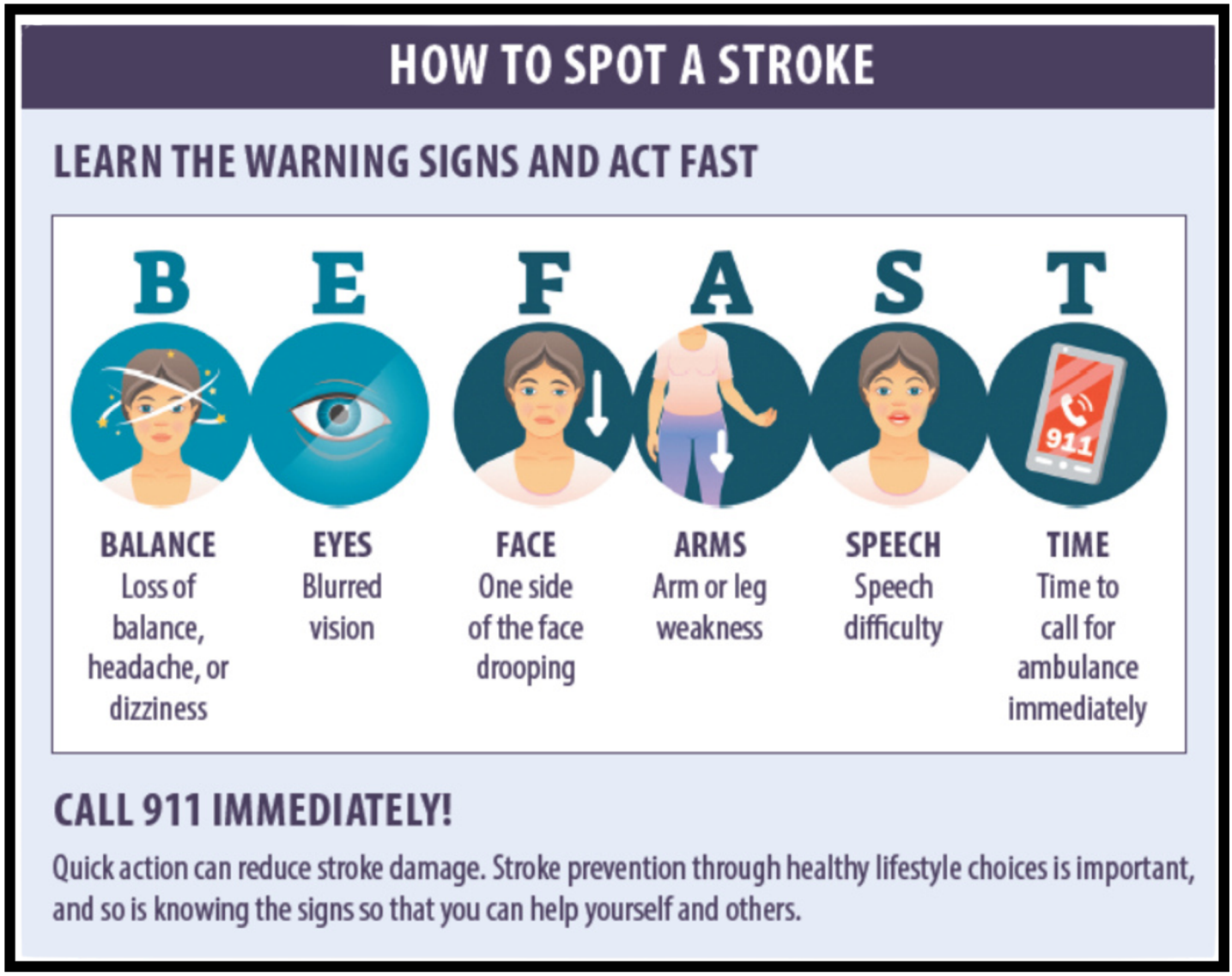
2. Healthy Fats (Omega-3s)
Think fatty fish (salmon, sardines), walnuts, chia seeds, and olive oil. Omega-3s help reduce blood clotting and lower blood pressure.

3. Fiber-Rich Foods
Whole grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables help regulate cholesterol and blood sugar.

4. Reduce Sodium, Up Potassium
Too much salt = high blood pressure. Potassium-rich foods like bananas, sweet potatoes, and spinach counterbalance sodium.

5. Limit Processed Foods and Added Sugars
Ultra-processed snacks, sugary drinks, and fried foods contribute to inflammation and plaque buildup in arteries.





FINAL THOUGHT: YOUR BRAIN DESERVES A FIGHTING CHANCE

Your brain runs the show. It controls your thoughts, your movements, your memories, your very sense of self. It's your most vital organ, complex, powerful, and irreplaceable. So why not give it every chance to thrive, not just survive? Protecting your brain from stroke isn't just about reacting to warning signs, it's about building habits today that support a stronger tomorrow.

This May, during American Stroke Awareness Month, let's go beyond red shirts and trending hashtags. Let's take meaningful steps, literally and figuratively toward prevention. Train smarter by making exercise a regular part of your routine. Eat better by choosing heart-healthy foods that nourish your blood vessels and brain.

Know your numbers: blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar all matter. And most importantly, talk about it. Share what you know with friends, family, and your community, because awareness can save lives.

Every rep, every bite, every walk around the block counts. So let's move with purpose, eat with intention, and live with the understanding that a healthy brain powers a fuller, more vibrant life.



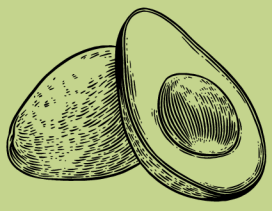
AVOCADO TOAST WITH EGG

Heart-smart fuel in under 10 minutes...

This classic combo is more than trendy — it's packed with fiber, healthy fats, and protein to support brain function and reduce stroke risk. The avocado provides potassium and monounsaturated fats, while the egg adds choline for brain health.

Ingredients:

- 1 slice whole-grain bread (or sprouted bread)
- ½ ripe avocado
- 1 egg (poached, boiled, or scrambled)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Optional: chili flakes, lemon juice, or microgreens

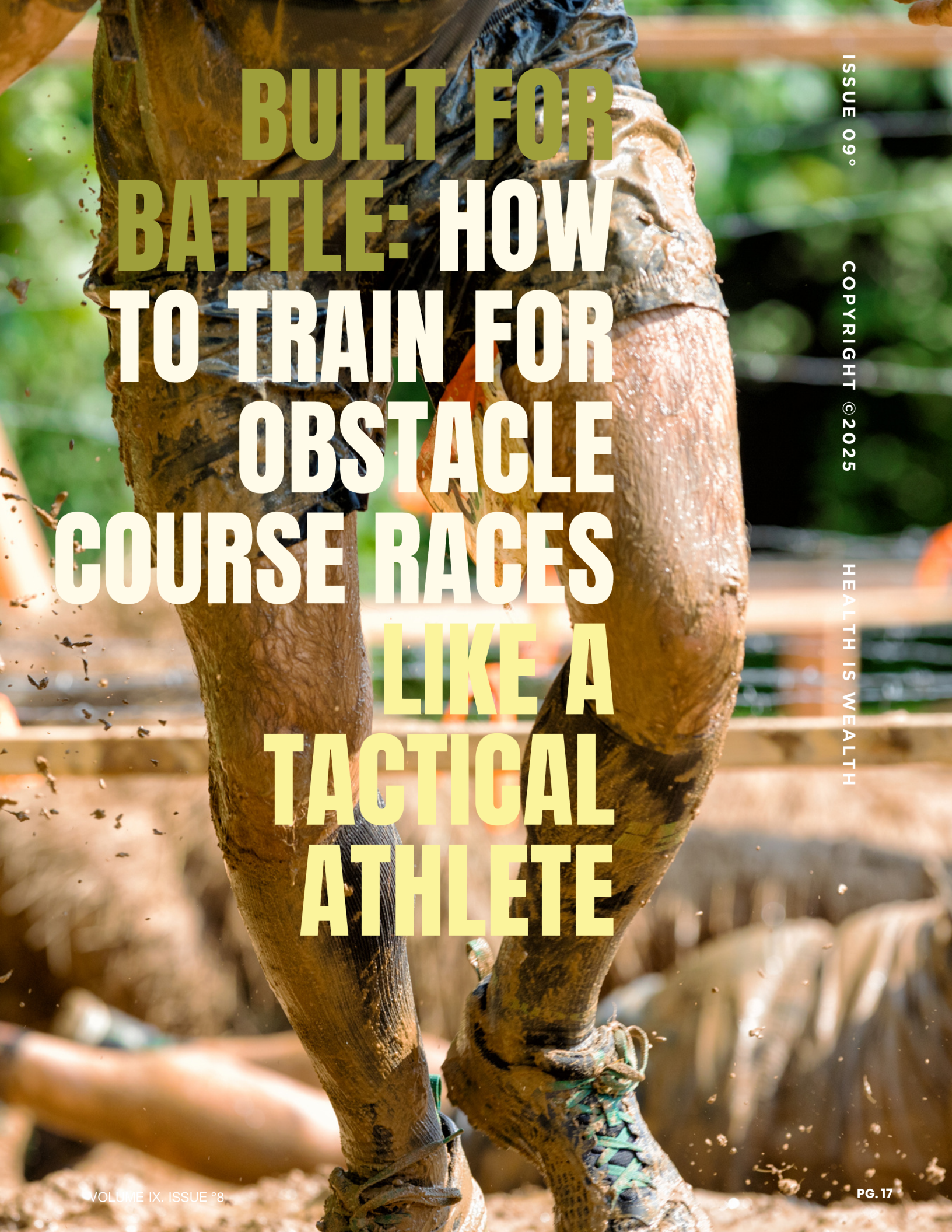




Directions:

1. Toast the bread to your liking.
2. Smash avocado onto the toast and season.
3. Top with the cooked egg and any extras you like.
4. Serve warm and enjoy a brain-boosting bite!

SERVING	TIME	KCAL.
2	10 MINS	260



BUILT FOR BATTLE: HOW TO TRAIN FOR OBSTACLE COURSE RACES LIKE A TACTICAL ATHLETE

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THE OCR MINDSET: RUN, CLIMB, CONQUER

An essay by
ITSUKI TAKAHASHI

Obstacle Course Races (OCRs), like: Spartan, Tough Mudder, or Savage Race, are more than just weekend warrior fun. They're physical gauntlets that test your endurance, strength, grip, speed, agility, and most of all, mental toughness. Whether you're a first-timer or aiming for the podium, smart preparation separates finishers from fall-outs.

Train Smart, Not Random: What OCR Demands

OCRs blend trail running, functional strength, grip endurance, and body control. You'll be climbing ropes, crawling through mud, scaling walls, carrying heavy objects, and running between

obstacles. That means you need to train like a hybrid athlete: strong, conditioned, and movement-savvy.

To meet these diverse demands, your training should be as multifaceted as the race itself. It's not enough to be just a good runner or just strong in the gym—you need a well-rounded approach that targets endurance, agility, strength, and mental grit. This is where strategic programming comes in, helping you build the kind of resilience and adaptability OCR events truly require.

More Than Mud: The Full-Body, Full-Mind Benefits of OCR

Obstacle course races (OCRs) challenge far more than just your physical fitness—they build mental toughness, emotional resilience, and a strong sense of accomplishment. The combination of demanding obstacles and unpredictable terrain pushes you out of your comfort zone, helping you grow stronger not just in body, but in focus, confidence, and perseverance. It's a full-body, full-mind experience that leaves you feeling empowered long after the finish line.

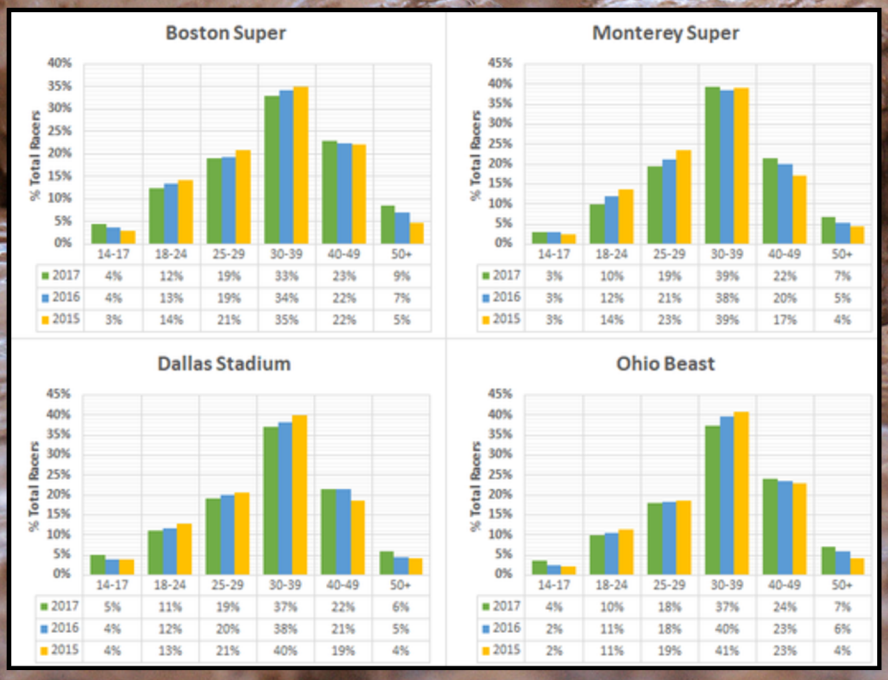
RACE-READY BLUEPRINT

1. BUILD AN ENGINE: AEROBIC AND ANAEROBIC CONDITIONING

OCRs can range from 3 miles to over 10. Your cardiovascular engine determines how well you sustain pace between obstacles.

- **Base Phase**: Focus on building aerobic capacity with zone 2 running, rucking, or incline walking (30-60 minutes, 2-3x/week).
- **VO2 Max Workouts**: Include intervals like 4x4 minutes at 90-95% HRmax with equal rest.
- **Anaerobic Threshold**: Use tempo runs and hill sprints to improve lactate tolerance.

🧬*Research shows that VO2 max and lactate threshold are key predictors of OCR success (Bellar et al., J of Strength & Conditioning Research, 2015).*



2. STRENGTH IS A WEAPON

You'll face carries, climbs, and crawls—your body must be able to produce and sustain force under fatigue.

OCR Strength Training Staples:

- **Deadlifts and Sandbag Carries** - Posterior chain and core.
- **Pull-ups and Rows** - Upper body pulling strength for rope climbs and rigs.
- **Front-loaded Squats, Lunges, Step-ups** - Leg power and carry strength.
- **Push-ups, Bear Crawls, and Dips** - Triceps and shoulder stability under load.

🧠Train total-body 2-3x/week with a focus on grip, unilateral strength, and trunk stability.

3. DON'T FORGET THE GRIP

Grip is your "first line of failure" in OCR. If it goes, you go.
Grip Training Protocols:

- **Dead Hangs and Towel Hangs** - 3x/week, 30-60 sec sets
- **Farmer's Carries with Fat Grips**
- Rope Climbs, Pull-up Bar Traverses, and Ring Rows



“OCR is the ultimate test of wit and grit....”

4. PRACTICE SKILL + FLOW

Mimic the demands of the course:

- **Obstacle Simulation Circuits**: Mix running, crawling, carrying, and climbing in rapid sequence.
- **Functional Conditioning**: Combine sled pushes, wall balls, box jumps, and bear crawls into AMRAP or EMOM formats.
- **Trail Running**: Get off concrete. Technical terrain improves ankle stability, proprioception, and mental alertness.

5. RECOVERY IS A WEAPON

OCR training is intense. Without recovery, you’re just breaking down.

- **Sleep:** 7-9 hours per night for hormonal and mitochondrial repair.
- **Active Recovery:** Easy mobility work, walking, and parasympathetic breathing.
- **Nutrition:** Prioritize protein (1.6-2.2g/kg), anti-inflammatory foods, electrolytes, and hydration.

Recovery isn’t laziness—it’s where adaptation happens.

RACE-DAY FUELING TIPS

- **Pre-Race**: Carbohydrate-focused meal 2-3 hours out.
- **During**: Electrolyte mix and simple carbs (gels or chews) if race exceeds 90 minutes.
- **Post-Race**: 20-40g protein and 60-80g carbs within 30-60 mins.

PERFORMANCE TAKEAWAY: TRAIN LIKE A TACTICAL ATHLETE

OCR isn’t just about grit—it’s about systematic preparation. Blend endurance, strength, grip, skill work, and recovery with surgical precision. Treat your training like a mission—with intent, feedback, and progression.

When race day comes, you won’t just survive the mud—you’ll dominate the battlefield.

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ARMSTRONG PULL-UP PROGRAM CHART

Cycle weekly for at least 4-6 weeks. Rest on the weekends or add light mobility work and scapular retraction drills.

Day	Workout	Details
Day 1	Max Effort Sets (3-5)	Do 5 max-effort sets with 90 sec rest. Maintain strict form.
Day 2	Pyramid Sets	Start at 1 pull-up, increase by 1 each set. Go as far as possible. Rest 10-15 sec between sets.
Day 3	Multiple Sets (3 max sets x 3)	Do 3 max-effort sets, rest 90 sec. Repeat this 3 times, with a 3-min rest between rounds.
Day 4	Weighted or Negative Pull-ups	3-5 sets of weighted or slow, controlled negatives. Focus on eccentric strength.
Day 5	Training Weak Grip or Tempo Holds	Hang from bar for time (3-5 sets) or do isometric holds at 90° elbow angle. Improves grip & endurance.

What is the Armstrong Pull-up Program?

The Armstrong Pull-up Program is a high-frequency, high-volume training protocol originally designed for U.S. Marines preparing for their Physical Fitness Test (PFT). It develops maximum strength, endurance, grip, and pull-up volume capacity by attacking the movement from multiple angles throughout the week.

Benefits for OCR Athletes:

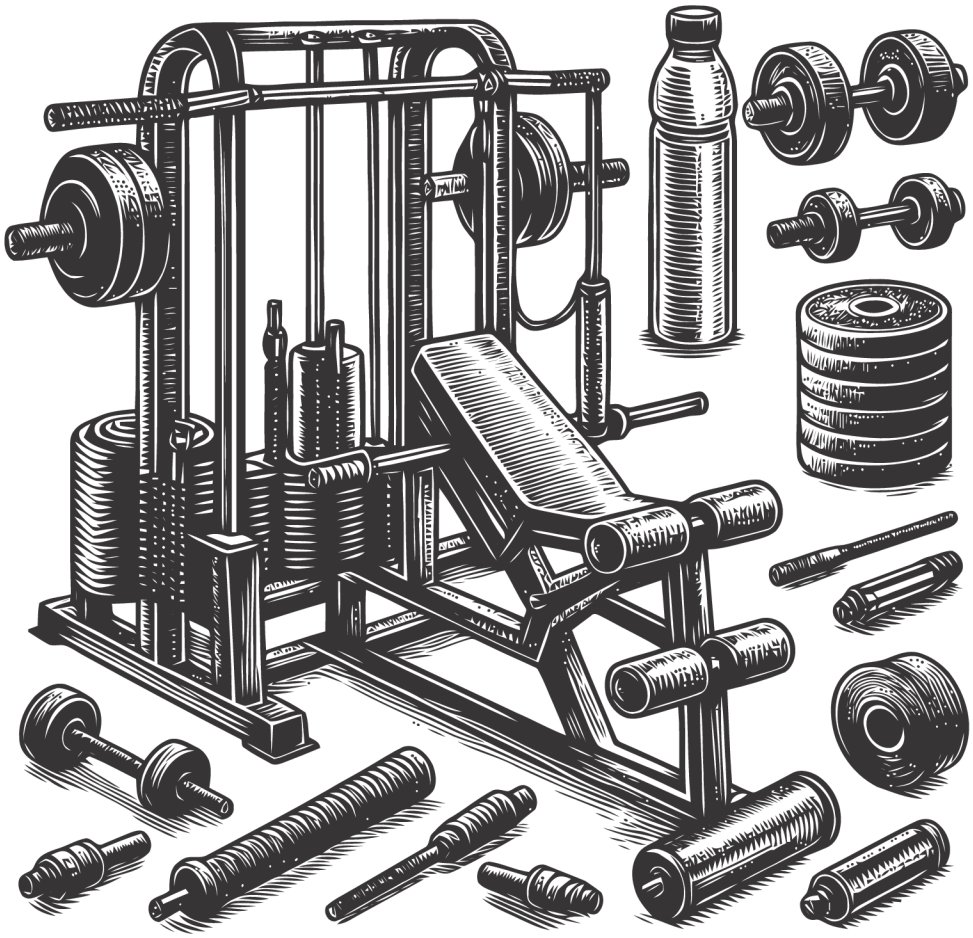
Grip Endurance for rope climbs, monkey bars, and rig

Back and Biceps Strength for wall scaling and pull-ups

Mental Toughness through daily volume

Improved Recovery and muscular adaptation over time

Customizable to any level by adjusting reps or adding bands/weights



Man vs. Machine: The Ultimate Showdown for Muscle Mastery

If you've ever strolled through a gym wondering whether to saddle up at the cable machine or throw some cold iron on a barbell, you're not alone. In the ever-evolving world of fitness, one debate continues to grind metal and ego alike: resistance machines vs. free weights and bodyweight training. This battle isn't just about preference, it's about biomechanics, results, safety, and longevity.

So let's break down the science, sweat, and strategy behind each contender. Understanding the "why" behind your training choices can help you train smarter, avoid injury, and unlock better long-term performance. Whether you're chasing personal records or building foundational strength, the right approach makes all the difference.



ROUND ONE: THE BASICS

Resistance Machines are engineered marvels designed to isolate muscles, control range of motion, and reduce the guesswork. They're great for structured progression and come with diagrams that even the most sleep-deprived gym-goer can follow.

Free Weights (barbells, dumbbells, kettlebells) demand stabilization, coordination, and raw strength. They're the primitive tools of modern warriors—challenging your core and firing up support muscles in ways machines simply can't.

Calisthenics? That's your body versus gravity. It's primal. It's poetic. Think push-ups, pull-ups, dips, planks—movements born on playgrounds and battlefields.

ROUND TWO: FORM, FUNCTION, AND FREEDOM

Machines shine for beginners, rehab clients, and those focused on isolation and hypertrophy. If you're recovering from an injury or new to lifting, machines reduce the risk of injury from poor form. They essentially put you on "training wheels."

But training wheels don't win races. Free weights and calisthenics allow for natural movement patterns. They teach balance, coordination, and proprioception (your body's awareness in space). Want real-world strength that transfers to sports or hauling groceries up three flights of stairs? Go free or go home.



One study published in the Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research (2010) found that free weight squats activated 43% more overall muscle compared to Smith machine squats. (Schwanbeck, Chilibeck, & Binsted, 2009)

ROUND THREE: THE INJURY REPORT

Injury-prone or post-op? Machines are your friend. They can target a muscle group while sparing joints and limiting movement planes that might aggravate an injury.

But beware: machines aren't foolproof. Poor setup, improper seat height, or locked-in posture can turn a chest press into a rotator cuff saboteur. Free weights and calisthenics, when done with good form, promote joint stability and functional resilience. But form is king. Ego lifting a loaded barbell with sloppy technique? That's a recipe for orthopedic regret.

ROUND FOUR: THE AGE GAME

Older adults often benefit from machines. They're safer, more intuitive, and ideal for controlled strength work without the balance challenges free weights demand. But that doesn't mean free weights and calisthenics are off the table. Modified, age-appropriate progressions (think goblet squats, TRX rows, or resistance band pushdowns) can build functional strength and fight age-related muscle loss.

FINAL ROUND: WHICH BUILDS MORE MUSCLE?

Machines can absolutely build muscle, especially for hypertrophy. Think bodybuilders isolating the biceps or quads with laser focus.

But if your goal is overall strength, athleticism, or metabolic fire, nothing beats the versatility of free weights and calisthenics. Compound lifts like squats, deadlifts, and pull-ups engage more muscles and burn more calories.

VERDICT: USE THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB THIS ISN'T A WAR. IT'S A WELL-STOCKED TOOLBOX.

• **New to lifting?** Start with machines to learn the movement patterns.

• **Looking to rehab?** Machines offer a controlled and safe environment.

• **Want real-world strength and agility**? Dive into free weights and calisthenics.

• **Chasing aesthetics?** Combine both for peak hypertrophy and symmetry.

In the end, the best program is the one you'll stick to, progress with, and enjoy.
Whether you're grinding on a leg press or mastering a pistol squat in your living room—resistance, in all its forms, is your greatest ally.

Iron doesn't care how it's lifted...just that you lift it consistently. Machines may guide you, but it's man who makes the muscle.



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PROSPR 9
MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER
APR-MAY 2025

TRANSFORMATION IS A JOURNEY NOT A DESTINATION...

Persisting with fitness goals is crucial because consistency leads to long-term health benefits, including improved physical and mental well-being. Regular exercise enhances cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles, and boosts mood and energy levels. Staying committed helps build discipline and resilience, making it easier to overcome future challenges and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Thank You

AS LONG AS YOU'RE BREATHING... THERE WILL BE UPS AND DOWNS



HEALTH IS WEALTH, CONSCIOUSNESS IS KEY... NEVER SETTLE, BET ON YOURSELF, KEEP GOING...

Keep Going!...



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PLACE YOUR HEALTH FIRST!

OUR HISTORY

EST in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, we began to offer virtual training and science-based fitness programming both online and in-person

OUR VISION

promoting the synchronization of mindfulness and fitness, scientific personalized approach. Implementation of unconventional methods to challenge the mind and body.

OUR MISSION

is to educate clients on the proper training principles and nutritional fundamentals needed to ensure: accuracy, timeliness, and safety while in the pursuit of goal accomplishment.

HEALTH IS WEALTH, CONSCIOUSNESS IS KEY...

ABOUT US

At Prospr 9, our training philosophy is centered around the principles of:
Performance, ***R***ecovery, ***O***bservation, ***S***tudies ***P***reparation, **& *R*eadiness. And the 9?**
It symbolizes the nine Pillars of Elite Wellness, a comprehensive framework to dominate every domain of performance.

WHY CHOOSE US?

Experience and applied knowledge. Results that will lead to gains inside and outside the gym. Classroom, boardroom, and anywhere in between. Learn as you grow. The gym can be intimidating when you have no idea where to start. We are here to help you place your health first!

Wellness
Mental health, Nutrition, Goal planning

Fitness
Assessments, science-based personalized approach

Performance
Mindfulness, development of mental fortitude, goal-setting, self-development

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