

# COMBAT ABS



50 **Calorie-Burning**  
Exercises That  
Build Lean,  
Powerful and  
Punch-Proof Abs

By Matt Furey

## About the Author

Matt Furey, is a native of Carroll, Iowa. He began competing in swimming and wrestling when he was eight years old - and through dedicated practice, became a champion in each sport.

In 1981, Furey was the state runner-up in the Class 3A Iowa High School State Wrestling Championships at 167-pounds. He attended The University of Iowa from 1981-1984, where he wrestled for Olympic Gold medalist, Dan Gable.

In the fall of 1984, in order to help rebuild a doormat wrestling program, Furey transferred to Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and in 1985 he won the NCAA II national title at 167-pounds, defeating two-time California state champion, Howard Lawson, in the finals. While at Edinboro he was coached by Mike DeAnna and two-time Olympic Gold Medalist Bruce Baumgartner. In 1998 Furey was inducted into the Edinboro University Athletic Hall of Fame for his accomplishments on the mat.

In February of 1987, Furey opened a training business for wrestlers and fitness enthusiasts. Most of the high school wrestlers he trained went on to wrestle in college.

Furey began studying various martial arts in 1990 and immediately saw the physical, mental and philosophical links these arts had with wrestling. This lead to the publication of his first book, *The Martial Art of Wrestling*.

In 1996, Furey began competing in the original style of Chinese kung fu, Shuai-chiao. Furey's teacher, Dr. Daniel Weng, a national champion from Taiwan, and a ninth-degree black belt, guided Furey to four national titles in the art.

Most impressively, during Christmas of 1997, Furey won the gold medal at 90kg (198-pounds) when he competed in the World Kung Fu Shuai-Chiao tournament held in Beijing, China. Furey's was the only non-Chinese to win a title. In addition, Furey's world title was historic because it marked the first time that an American had won a gold medal in any martial arts competition held in China.

Furey's passion now lies in the teaching of catch-as-catch-can wrestling and Combat Conditioning which he learned from the great Karl Gotch.

In addition to he Martial Art of Wrestling, Furey's other books include the best-selling *Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness & Combat Sports* as well as *How to Achieve What You Want Without Positive Thinking*.

Furey is deputy editor of Grappling and has been featured in *GQ*, *Black Belt*, *Inside Kung Fu*, *Martial Arts & Combat Sports*, *Combat Fitness* and many other publications.

He lives in Tampa, Florida, with his wife, Zhannie and son Frank.



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**50 Fat-Burning Exercises That Build**

**Lean, Powerful and Punch-Proof Abs**

Published by Matt Furey Enterprises

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### **Disclaimer**

The advice contained in this book is medically and scientifically sound for individuals in good health when performed correctly. Before starting any new exercise or dietary regimen you should consult your physician. If you experience any pain while following this program, do not continue. Consult your physician before beginning again. The creators, producers, participants, advertisers and distributors of this program disclaim any liabilities or loss in connection with the exercises or advice herein.

## Acknowledgements

Books become reality through the combined knowledge, support and efforts of many people. If it weren't for Karl Gotch's inspiration and dedication to preserving the value of bodyweight calisthenics, and his desire to pass his legacy on to you, the knowledge in my previous book, *Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness & Combat Sports*, would be lost forever. So an eternal thanks goes out to Karl.

Cincinnati Bengals strength coach, Kim Wood, has supported and encouraged my work since we first met in 1996. As both friend and mentor, Kim's advice and counsel are something that is always with me and I thank him for this.

Brooks D. Kubik, author of *Dinosaur Training: Lost Secrets of Strength & Development*, is another person whom I can always rely on for practical and realistic advice, and I thank him for this.

Without a doubt no one will miss the sensational photo of Maxick in this book. For this I extend a big thanks to William F. Hinbern.

For the cover design and layout, I commend and thank James Hudgens. James is not only a creative genius, but a great friend.

The overall layout and design of this book was in great hands as well. Heather Jeffries did a fabulous job and I can't thank her enough.

The photography in this book was done by a special lady; my wife Zhannie. I thank her for her support through thick, thin and thinner. Thanks for continually encouraging me to give my all - and for never letting me be satisfied with previous accomplishments.

## The Two C's ... Have You Ever Heard of Them?

Have you ever heard about the two different kinds of muscles people have? They're what the great conditioning and wrestling legend, Karl Gotch, calls the two 'C's'?

The first 'C' stands for "conditioned." Conditioned muscles are highly functional. They help you accomplish your tasks with ease. They help you go through the day with energy and pep. They give you strength and endurance, not just looks.

If you're involved in sports (combat or otherwise) ... or if you're in the military or work on the police force, functional athleticism is what you really need. Conditioned muscles are the key. Conditioned muscles must listen to and obey the commands of those whose life and livelihood, whose very success depends upon them. Conditioned muscles are those that can generate strength, endurance, speed, agility and quick reflexes.

A person with conditioned muscles isn't perpetually fearful of getting injured by twisting the wrong way. He is able to move his body in all directions and from all angles. He doesn't just look the part; he is the part.

A champion prize fighter knows that the look of a person's muscles can be highly deceptive. A person with a six-pack set of abdominals may have no ability to take a single one of his punches to the midsection. Then again, another opponent may easily withstand his best punches, and do so in spite of the fact that he doesn't have award-winning muscle definition.

The second 'C' stands for counterfeit. Counterfeit muscles are not very functional. As Karl Gotch once told me, "Counterfeit muscles look like a million bucks, but ain't worth a damn." All that muscle looks great, but what can you do with it?

This does not mean that "counterfeit muscles" are bad. No. If that is what a person wants, then more power to him.

If you, however, are the type of person who is interested in WHAT he can do with his muscles, then this book is for you.

This book does not guarantee six-pack abs or a washboard stomach. I know many other books and gadgets tell you that they can give it to you, but the truth is ... they can't guarantee looks anymore than I can guarantee you'll get rich investing in stocks.

What I can guarantee though, is a lean, powerful, functional and rock-hard midsection that is fit for combat.

Rock hard doesn't necessarily mean ripped. You can have both. But cuts and rips, more

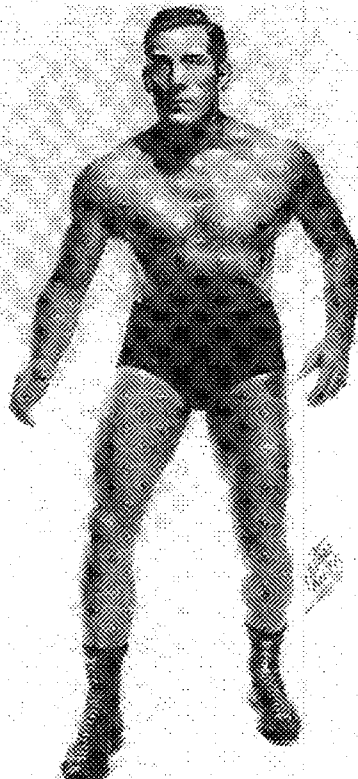
often than not, are a product of genetics and super strict dieting. I have had super ripped abs before, especially when I wrestled in high school and college and was sucking weight like a prisoner who was denied meals. But my midsection didn't have the functional strength and mobility then, that I have now.

To me, one of the goals of training is ridding yourself of excess fat around your midsection. But this is

not the only goal and need not be taken to an extreme. You don't need to be 5% body fat to look fantastic or be fit. More importantly, having ripped abs doesn't necessarily mean you have functional strength in your midsection. I have seen drug addicts with tremendously ripped abs. Are they functionally fit? I don't think so.

Then there are the professional (and amateur) bodybuilders, who owe most of their inflated physiques to pharmaceuticals. As a national and world champion athlete, and as a teacher, I can tell you that the bodybuilder is the first person to get injured or break down under athletic stress. His body may look nice, but it's counterfeit.

So make conditioned muscle your aim. Shoot for an athletic, functional, rock-hard, punch-proof midsection. Its a worthy goal.



**Karl Gotch**  
*Functional Strength Personified*

## Introduction

More than ten years ago a 65-year old man named George came to me for personal training. Although he had a powerfully built chest and upper back, his stomach was way too big. In addition, it was one of those hard guts, the type that didn't jiggle when you punched it.

I put George on a program consisting of stationary bicycling, walking, weight training and abdominal exercises. I also put him on a diet that eliminated unnatural foods. Within six months George was a new man. He dropped 35 pounds and lost 10 inches from his waist. He did this at 65 years of age; 45 years after most people give up.

Can you do the same? Of course you can.

But let me give you some even better news: *Combat Abs*, the method I teach today, will do you far more good than what I used to teach George. Now, this doesn't mean that the method I taught ole George was wrong. It worked, right? And any method that works isn't necessarily wrong.

But it can be improved.

A few years after training George, I quit reading modern-day information on ab training. For some reason, I was intrigued by what the old-timers did to build their midsections. These men had powerfully built abs that were highly functional - yet, they didn't use most of the gadgets we have today. What was their secret?

Did they avoid situps and leg lifts because they were worried about hurting their backs? Did they do crunches instead? Did they use a device to support their necks while working their abs? Did they rely on diet pills, dynamic fat burners or steroids? Were they worried about over-working their hip flexors?

And why did they train their abs in the first place? Was it just for looks? Was it for sports? Was it for health? Or was it a combination of all three?

What I found out will amaze you.

For starters, the old-timers, were no different than people of today in one regard. Some of the greatest strongmen, wrestlers and boxers had the proverbial "six-pack" look - but some did not.

Old-time Europeans like Maxick and Otto Arco, had abs that no bodybuilder of today has ever attained. But these men didn't just have abs. They had physically powerful and functional bodies. Their entire midsection was strong. These men didn't just train their abs.



They trained their diaphragms, their lower backs, their obliques and yes, they trained their hip flexors. Nothing in the chain was ignored. Exercises were not designed to isolate - they were designed to give your body greater ability, greater functionality and better health.

If you think this method of training only applied to strongmen and combat athletes, think again. Robert Kiphuth, the renowned physical education and swimming coach from Yale (who coached Johnny Weismueller, also known as Tarzan, to several Olympic gold medals), wrote a best-selling book in 1942. The book, *How To Be Fit*, depicted the type of training regimens he gave to all students who enrolled at the university. Not just those who attended his class, mind you. EVERYONE attended his class. Physical exercise was mandatory.

In Kiphuth's book, he outlines his method of training young students with bodyweight calisthenics. Strict attention is not only paid to the development of functional abdominals, but to the development of the lower back and hip flexors. In addition, the student's overall posture was graded and exercises were given to correct those who slumped, slouched or stood like a sinking bag of manure.

Before Kiphuth, there were fitness pioneers like Paul Bragg, who taught deep breathing exercises and all around waist movements as part of a health regimen. Bragg railed against those who had excess baggage around the middle, and coined the phrase, "Your waistline is your lifeline," saying you should never let your waistline grow larger than it was in your prime.

Martin "Farmer" Burns was of the same school. Burns was a world champion professional wrestler, back in the days when there were some real contests. He was known the country over for his combat skills and for his legendary athletic feats.

In 1914 Burns put together a mailorder course entitled, *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture*. In this classic course, Burns, a lean, powerful 165-pounder with a 20-inch neck, talked about how to train in a way that is just as applicable today as it was then. Burns' waist was free of excess fat, yet, he didn't have the cosmetic six-pack look so greatly desired today. I don't think this mattered to Burns though, as he had these enviable things say in his writings:

"My own abdominal muscles are soft enough when relaxed, but when I "set" them the muscles are as hard and rigid as the muscles of my arms or legs. In fact you might strike me with all your force on the stomach with your clinched fist and not cause the least pain. Many have done this and suffered more pain from the blow than I, for my "stomach" muscles have been trained and developed just as carefully as all other parts of my body ... take daily exercises for the development of the abdominal muscles. There is nothing better for this than my methods of DEEP BREATHING and HOLDING THE BREATH ..."

Well, well. Deep breathing and holding the breath. Now how in the world could that help you develop *Combat Abs*? You'll find the answer when you perform Farmer Burns' Stomach Flattener as well as any combination of the many super effective exercises to choose from in this book.

The standing exercises are to be done every morning upon arising. They will reduce your waistline while making your entire midsection stronger and more flexible. They will energize you for the whole day, and they will improve the functioning of your internal organs. Stronger organs means better respiration, circulation, digestion and elimination. And that means the burning of unwanted fat from your midsection.

Are you ready to have a midsection that is strong, healthy and functional? Then be sure to do more than simply read this book. Use it.

We've all heard the saying, "Knowledge is Power." Many people think that information is power, too. It's not. Information is nothing but information. Information can become power, but only when it is applied.

Remember the Irish proverb: "Just nodding your head won't row the boat." Emblazon that message in your heart and follow the program in this book. It will change your life for the better.

M.F.

## Opening Comments and Instructions

Before you jump right in and begin training your midsection, let's look at how the fitness pioneers of the early 1900's once taught the subject. From my research into Martin "Farmer" Burns' training methods (as well as others), I discovered that these men didn't just teach abdominal exercises. No, to them it was much more than that. Exercises for the abdominals were also designed to strengthen the vital organs. If you wonder whether this is important or not, think about how much you are affected if you sustain a sharp blow to the kidneys, liver or solar plexus.

Today, however, when the "experts" talk about getting a ripped "six-pack" or cut-up washboard abs, they are only talking about exercising the abdominals. You never hear any talk about the internal organs. This was not the case during "Farmer" Burns' era. Books written by Paul Bragg and a number of other health and fitness pioneers, frequently mentioned the positive and important role exercise had on the internal organs. In the modern era, it appears that most fitness experts only care about how they can make you look. The only organ most people ever talk about today is the heart. In days gone by, the pioneers cared about your entire body, from the inside out.

This way of viewing the body from the inside out is also the way that traditional martial arts are taught. If you have a good kung fu, karate, tai chi or chi kung teacher, you will hear him mention the importance of deep breathing and the vital energy of the internal organs. A good instructor will tell you that your internal organs are more important than the appearance of your external muscles. The reason is simple: No matter how "pretty" your external appearance may be, if your internal organs are not functioning properly, you're in a state of dis-ease and your muscles are next to worthless.

Another important lesson I learned from "Farmer" Burns' literature was the importance of mixing deep breathing WITH the exercise while maintaining a clearly focused mind. When you perform his exercise or any other exercise in this book, your focus should be internally directed. Focus your mind on the muscles of your midsection, from the inside out. Squeeze and tighten these muscles. Focus on how you want them to look. Focus on what you want them to be able to do. Focus on your breathing. And focus on the health benefits you are bringing to your internal organs.

Focusing your mind on what you are doing is as important as the exercise itself. Being focused is something that the old-timers knew. Make sure it is part of your training as well.

Most importantly, when training their midsection, the old-timers did not isolate their abdominals the way so many people are attempting to do today. There were no abdominal gadgets that supported your neck while you did crunches. If your neck hurt when you trained your midsection, it didn't mean get a pad and avoid that area. NO. The weak neck was a sign

that you needed to get that part stronger as well. Your body works as a whole, so treat it as a whole.

Isolation exercises are designed to target a single muscle group. But isolating muscles does more harm than good, even though it is claimed that, when training your abs, it will give them time to catch up to your supposedly stronger hip flexors.

Those who sold the ab-crunch machines made it sound like no one ever had great abs until their machine came along. But if you take a look at men who lived 80-100 or more years ago, you'll see they did just fine with situps, leg lifts and other exercises that are supposedly now bad for you.

The fact of the matter is that there is no "ONE WAY" to train the abs and midsection. There are many ways. Anyone who claims that there is only one right way to train the abs is doing so for marketing purposes, not because he's trying to get into heaven for being honest. In this book I'm going to teach you many many exercises that, for all intents and purposes, will be like NEW to you. But they aren't new. They're as old as the hills and all of them work, if you will.

In most cases you'll be training your entire midsection in these exercises. Don't make excuses about your weak back, neck, or incredibly overpowering hip flexors. If your abs are weak, most everything else is as well. After all, you're only as strong as your weakest link.

One of the unique things I found in researching the old-timers was that many of the exercises they did for the midsection were done from standing, hence, the first workout in this book is entitled *The Magnificent Seven*.

The first exercise in *The Magnificent Seven* is "Farmer" Burns' stomach flattener. After you do that one, you'll move into several other standing exercises. These are movements you can do first thing in the morning to get some blood moving and help yourself get energized for the day. Later on in the day, you can do some more vigorous exercises, choosing from the basic, intermediate and advanced training sections. But remember: The standing exercises are not just warm ups. They will play a major role in making your midsection punch-proof.

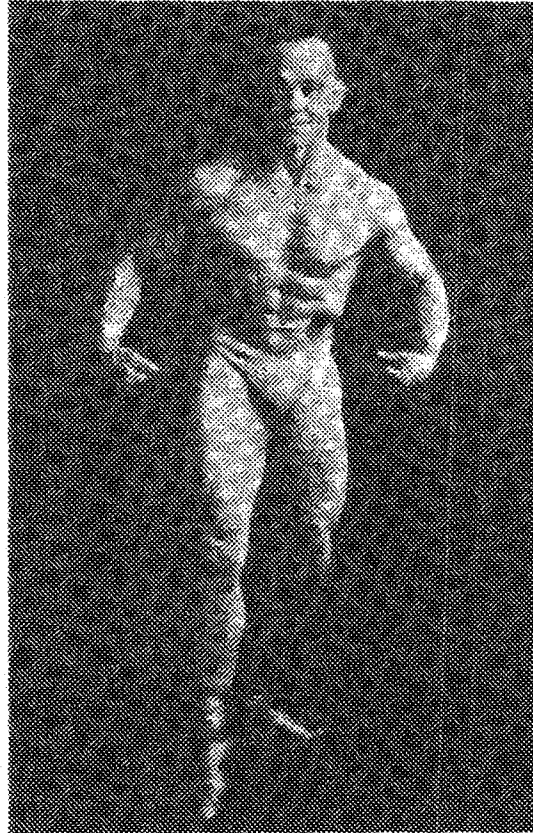
Now, some of you might be wondering WHY "Farmer" Burns' stomach flattening method works so well. It may come as a big surprise, but when you practice his stomach flattener you are using two typically ignored groups of muscles in your midsection. These muscles are the transversus abdominus and the internal obliques. When these muscles are trained with "Farmer" Burns' method, excess fat on your midsection goes away and your waistline begins to "tighten." I make no exaggeration to say that, within a day or two, most people will notice a difference.

Again, why? Because the transversus and internal obliques have a job to do. They naturally and effortlessly "suck" in your guts and give you a tighter midsection.

Doesn't knowing this fire you up? You'll be walking around, totally relaxed and someone will think you're holding your stomach in. And you are, but you're not trying to do it. It's happening involuntarily because of the stronger transversus and internal obliques.

During your first couple training sessions, when you do this exercise, I recommend that you do so from a standing or seated position. Later on, when you have a feel for the exercise, you can do it while lying on the couch or while lying in bed; while taking a bath or shower; while sitting at a traffic light; while talking on the telephone at work or while waiting for your food in a restaurant. This exercise truly can be done almost anytime and anywhere, which is one of the main reasons for its effectiveness. You don't need special equipment, a lot of time or fancy gym clothes. All you need is a solid commitment to practice it a couple times every day. This shouldn't be difficult because it is easy to combine with other activities you are doing. If you combine the "Farmer Burns Stomach Flattener" with the other incredibly effective midsection exercises in this book, you will be stripping excess flab off your waistline in record time. Most importantly, you'll be strengthening other important areas of your body as well.

With that said, the ground work has been laid and you're ready to begin.



**Otto Arco**

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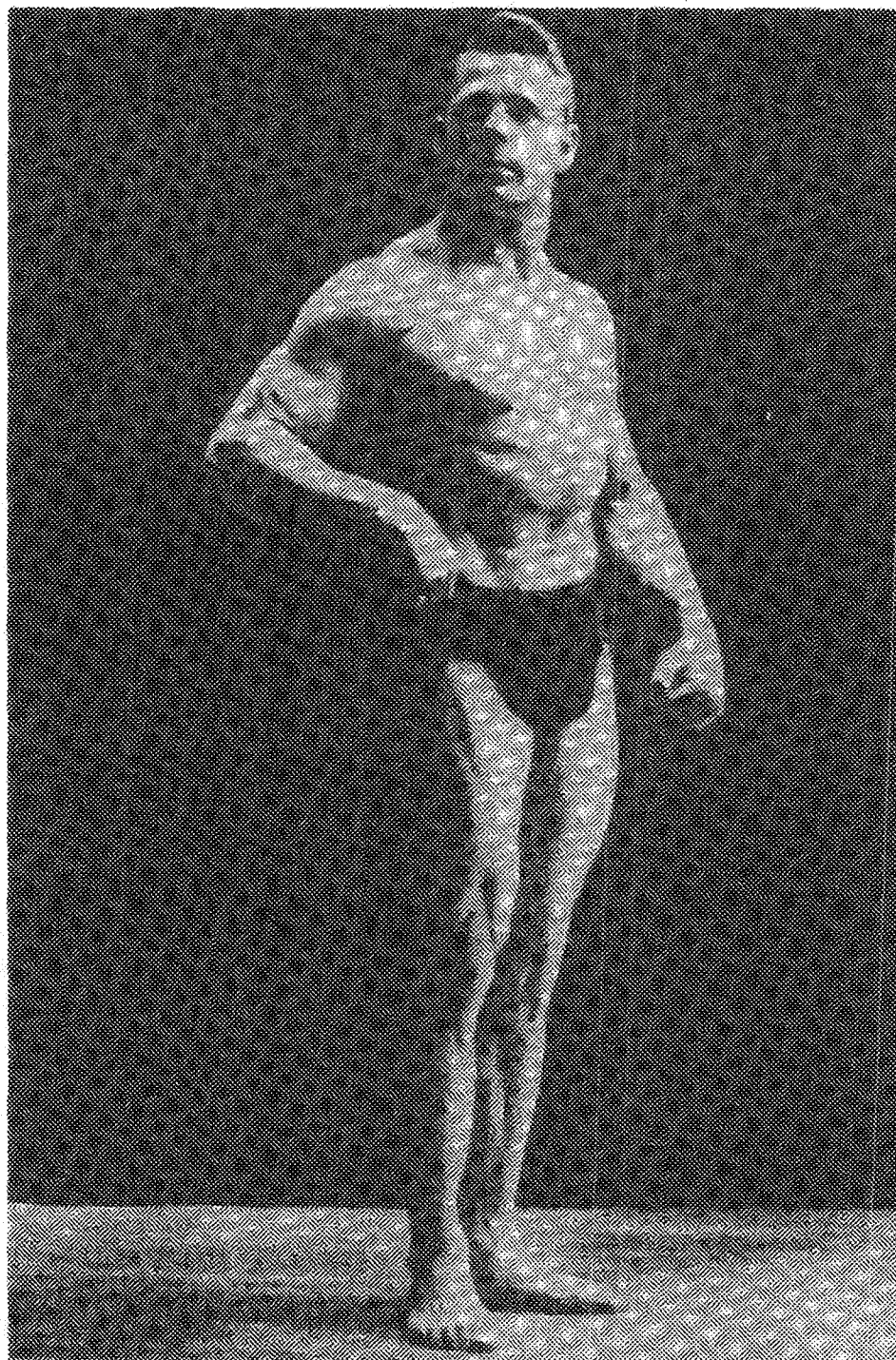
*Early 20th Century Champion  
Wrestler and Strongman*



# **The Magnificent Seven**

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**The Magnificent Seven are done each day immediately upon arising. Do not eat first. You want your stomach to be empty. Doing these exercises first thing will increase energy levels for the entire day and will greatly assist with your digestion and circulation. These exercises strengthen your abdominals, lower back, obliques and internal organs. They simultaneously improve strength, endurance and flexibility.**



Maxick

*Picture having abs like the great Maxick*

## Farmer Burns' Stomach Flattener

It is now time to learn the Farmer Burns' method. In all cases where the text in this section appears in quotation marks, understand that these are Burns' immortalized words from his 1914 mailorder course.

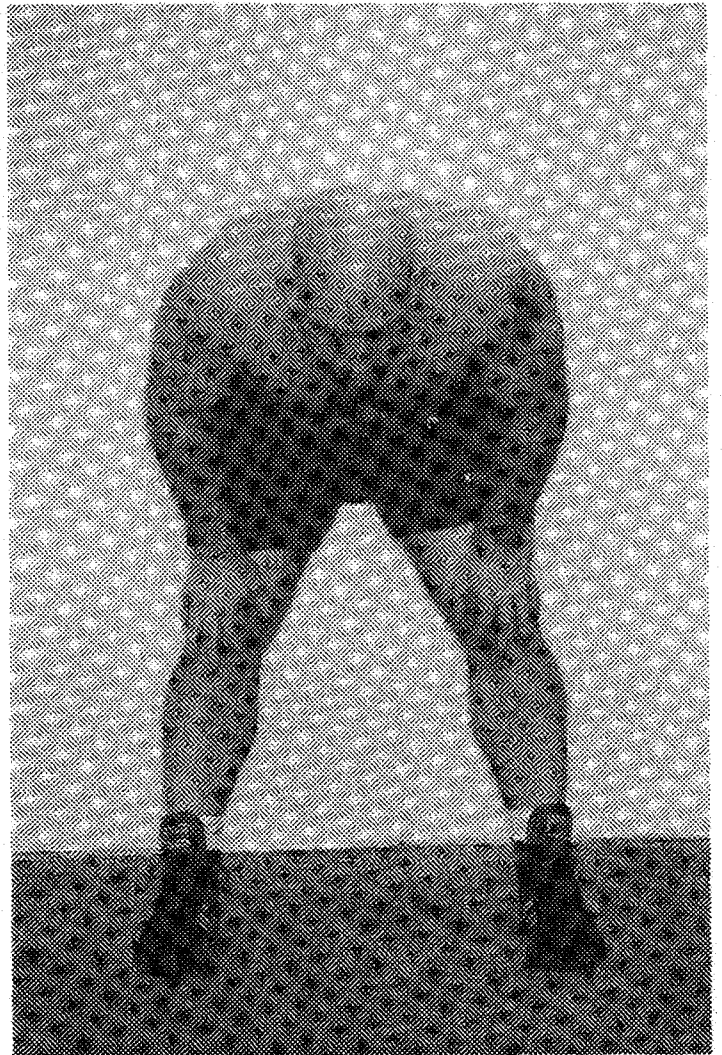
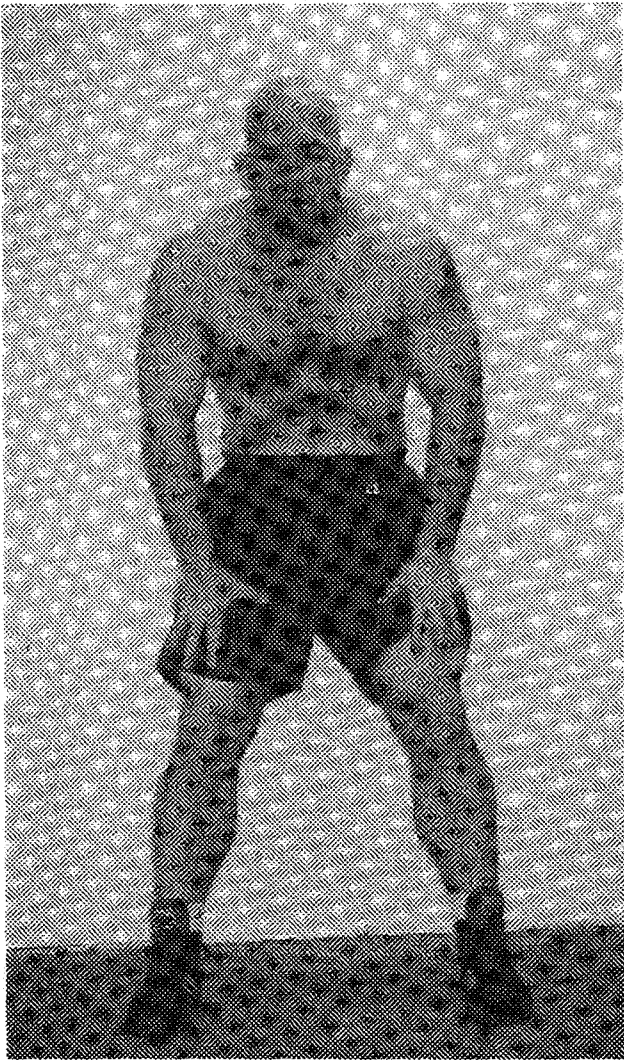
1. Stand erect with your feet shoulder-width apart and your toes pointed forward.
2. Relax your shoulders, letting your arms hang at your sides. Inhale through your nose with your tongue on the roof of your mouth.
3. Inhale as deeply as you can, filling your lungs.
4. As you inhale, gently hold your abdomen in. Don't let it expand.
5. Once your lungs are completely full, "CLOSE THE MOUTH AND THROAT TIGHTLY, and try to force the breath out, but RESIST SO THAT NONE ESCAPES. Force hard, and the muscles of the abdomen will be contracted until they are tight and rigid. FORCE THE AIR DOWNWARD WITH ALL THE POWER YOU POSSESS. Clinch the fists - and exert much strength ... The process consists of trying to exhale the breath, but you voluntarily hold it in, and by this resistance most thoroughly exercise the muscles of the abdomen, stomach and other internal organs."
6. When you do this exercise, "Hold the breath in this way for two to five seconds, and then gently allow the breath to escape. Exhale as much as possible so that you will take in a new full quantity of fresh air."
7. It is not uncommon to get a light-headed or dizzy feeling when first doing this exercise. As you get better at the exercise, this will pass.

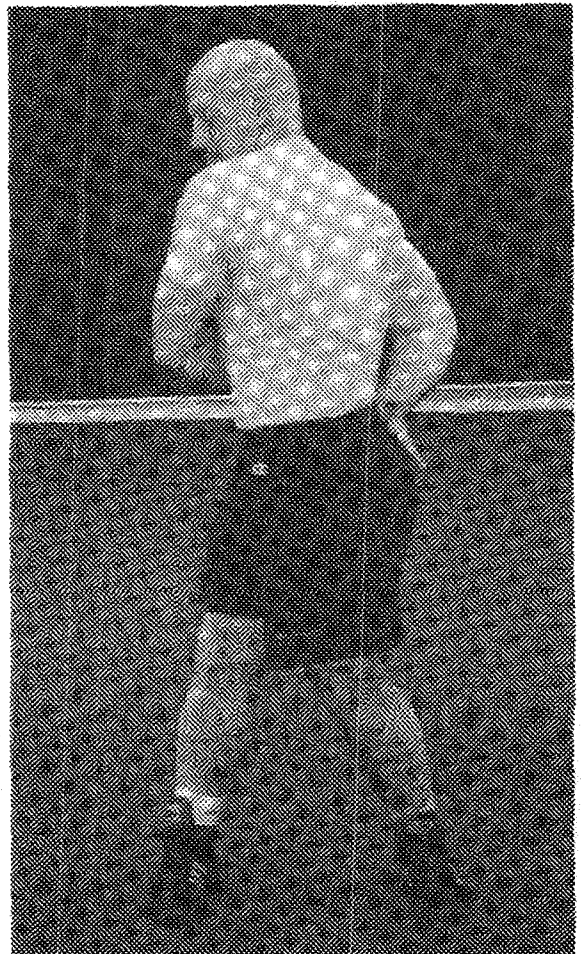
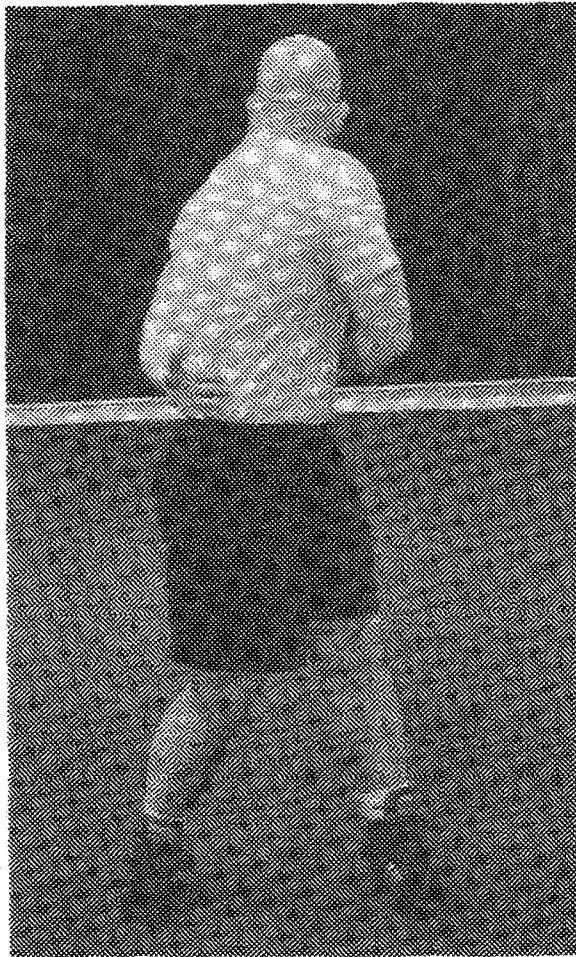
Note: Whenever you do this movement you are also exercising the chest, throat and arms. If practiced with great energy and for several minutes it is not uncommon to work up a healthy sweat. At any rate, after completing your first repetition of this exercise, continue on until you have done at least five minutes of training. If you gradually increase the time you spend on this exercise each day, you can expect faster results. Farmer Burns, even in 1914, was wise to those so-called fitness experts who would not approve of his method. "Some instructors will advise against holding the breath," he wrote, "as they claim the blood will not be properly purified while passing through the lungs ... this objection is not worth considering, while on the other hand, the exercises outlined above are of great value and importance to everyone - men, women and children. "If you are constipated," he continued, "TRY THIS EXERCISE REGULARLY and let me know if it does not help you more than medicine and physica. It is common sense to believe that if the sluggishness of the stomach, liver and bowels is removed, and active circulation and muscular action is brought about, that these organs will perform their functions better, and the likelihood of disease will be greatly decreased." **Remember:** Practice this exercise every day. If you practice it in the morning and evening you'll get more results. Then again, there is no reason why you can't do it in the afternoon as well. As you wish. But start slowly in the beginning.

## The Vacuum

Do at least 10 repetitions immediately after completing a round of "Farmer" Burns' Stomach Flattener. The vacuum, along with the Burns' exercise, will reduce your waistline and improve the functioning of your digestive system. The deep breathing that accompanies this exercise will also energize you.

1. Begin from a bent-over position with your hands resting on your knees.
2. Slowly exhale all air from your lungs.
3. Once all has been exhaled, do not inhale right away. Rise slightly instead and lift diaphragm, pulling your stomach in.
4. Hold for six seconds or longer.
5. Exhale through your mouth.
6. Catch your breath and repeat.



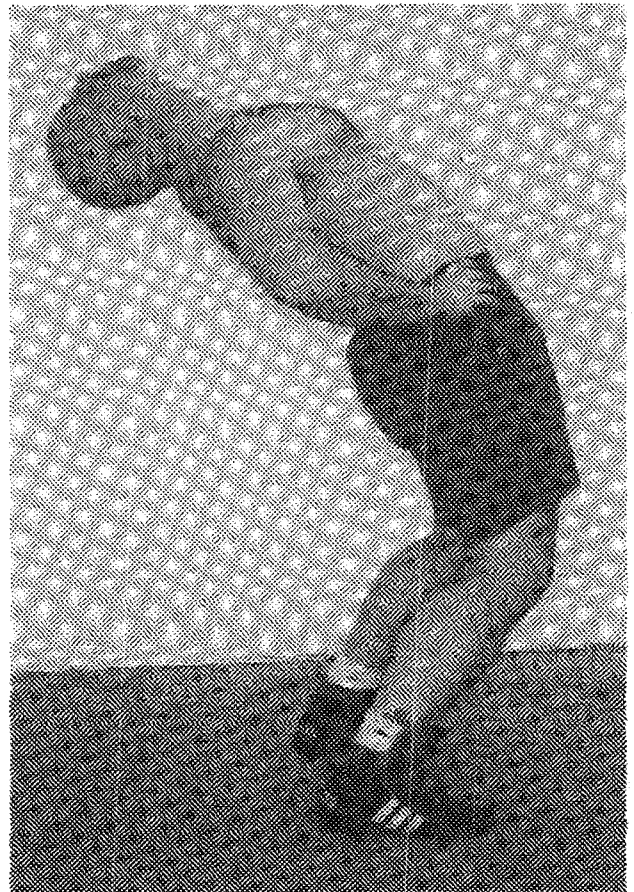
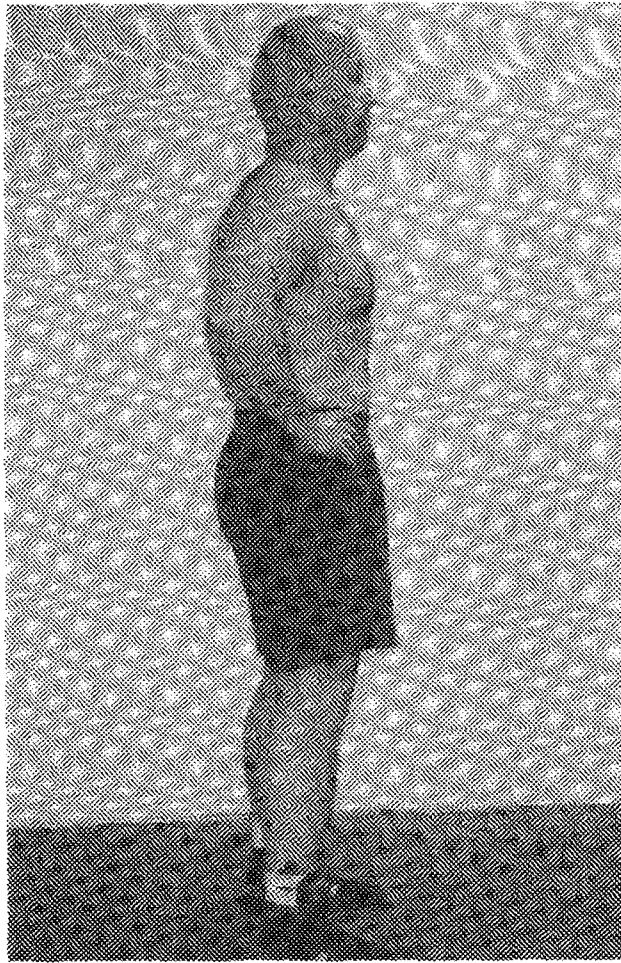




## Tai Chi Waist Turner

Many kung fu practitioners do this exercise each day because it increases flexibility in the waist and generates greater circulation to your internal organs. It also helps to realign your vertebrae, heal back pain and reduce your waistline.

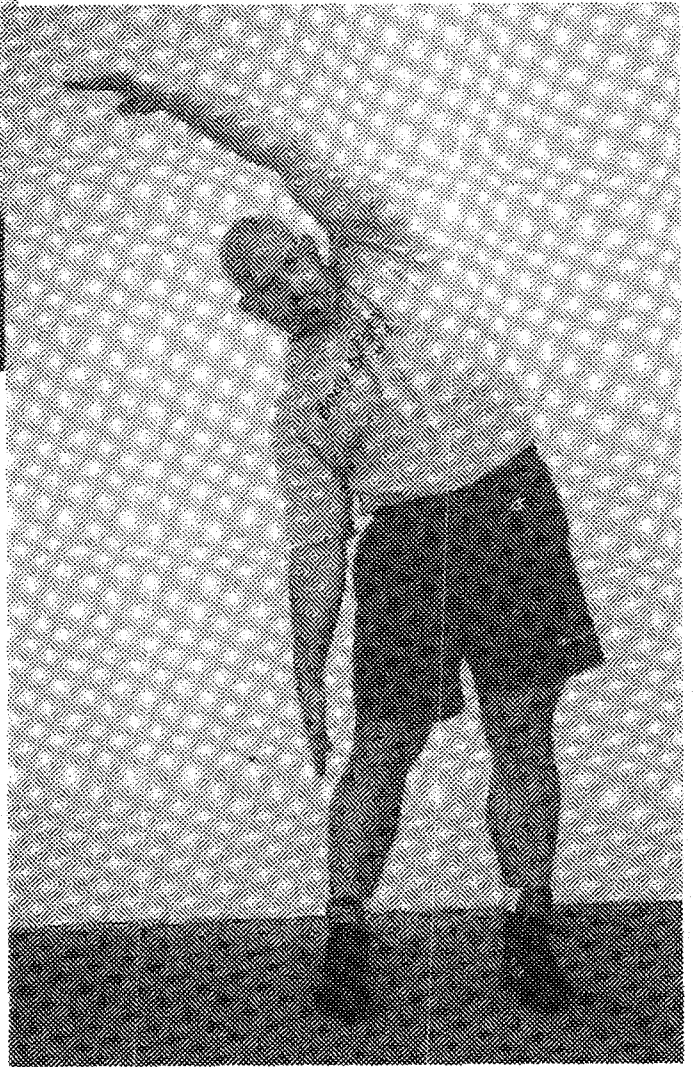
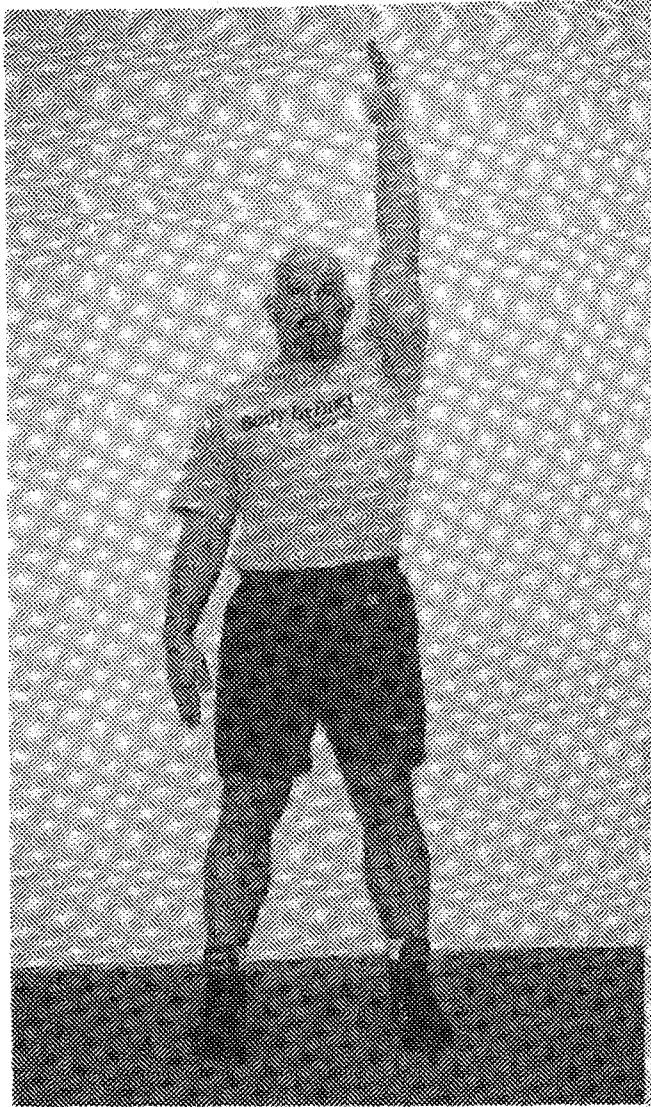
1. Stand in a relaxed position with feet about shoulder-width apart. Allow your hands to hang freely at your sides.
2. Without trying to move your arms, begin turning your body from side to side. As you turn, let the centrifugal force swing your arms from side to side.
3. Each time you have turned as far as you can go, your hand gently slaps your back in the kidney area, giving it a gentle massage.
4. Breathe naturally as you turn from side to side.
5. Do 50-100 repetitions each day.



## Back Arch with Forward Bend and Squeeze

This exercise stretches and strengthens the lower back and abs. When training the midsection, it is important that you think of everything involved, not just the abs. To have the best abs possible, instead of only doing isolation exercises, you train the lower back, hip flexors, psoas and such. This is the natural approach to exercise. Those of you who participate in combat sports know this better than anyone. Your body works as a system, not as a bunch of independent muscle groups.

1. Place hands on hips. Feet are spaced about shoulder-width apart.
2. Inhale deeply and lean back as far as possible.
3. Pause for a moment and then bow forward.
4. As you bend forward, exhale vigorously and squeeze your abdominal muscles.
5. Repeat for 10-20 repetitions.

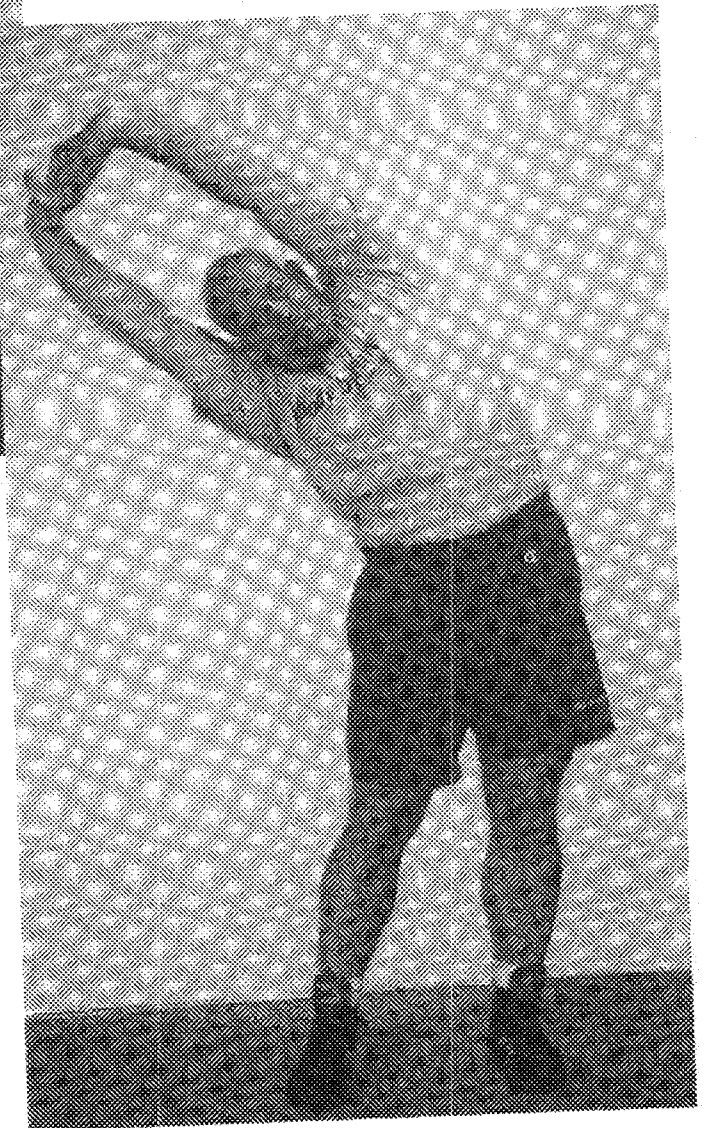
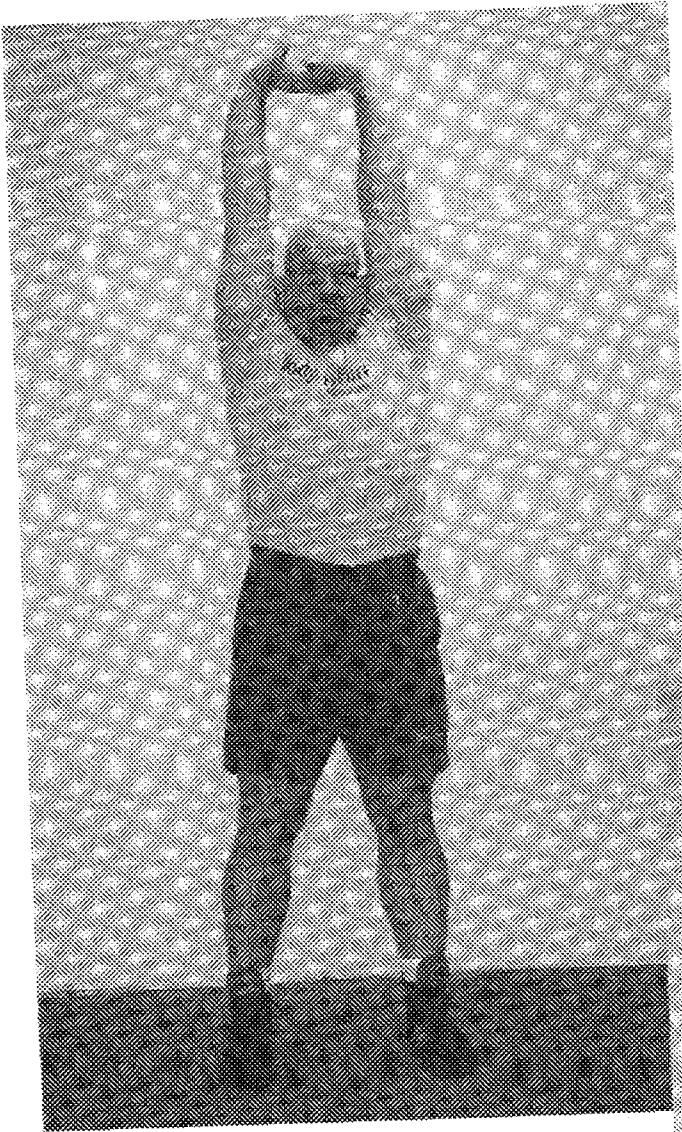


## Dynamic Side Bend Stretch (and Isometric Squeeze)

Side bends work the sides of the waist (obliques). Some people refer to this area as "love handles." The truth is that these should actually be called "hate handles" as no one really loves them.

1. Start with feet shoulder-width or wider apart.
2. Extend your left hand so that your biceps is nearly touching your ear.
3. Inhale deeply, then bend to the right as far as possible and slowly move back and forth.
4. Stretch as far as you can but only move back and forth about a half inch. This is a dynamic stretch.
5. After 50 repetitions, you can also hold and do an isometric contraction for 6-8 seconds.
6. Repeat on the other side.



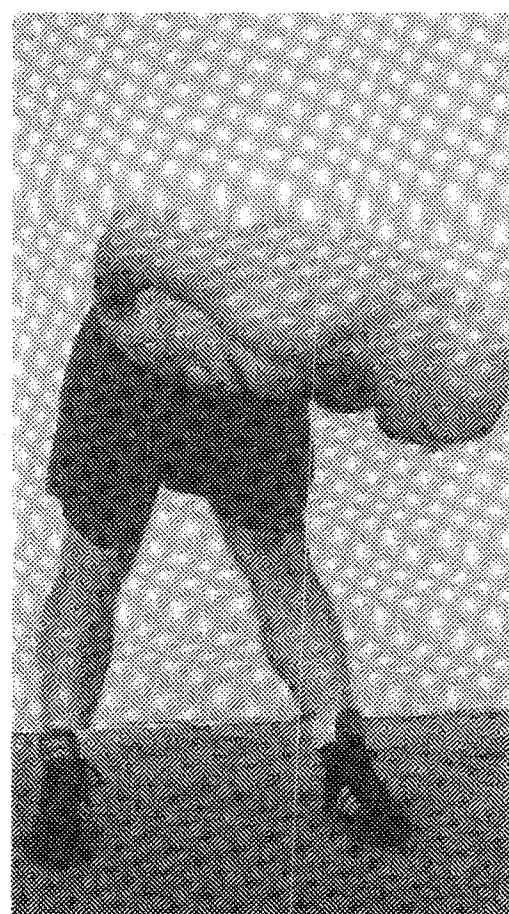
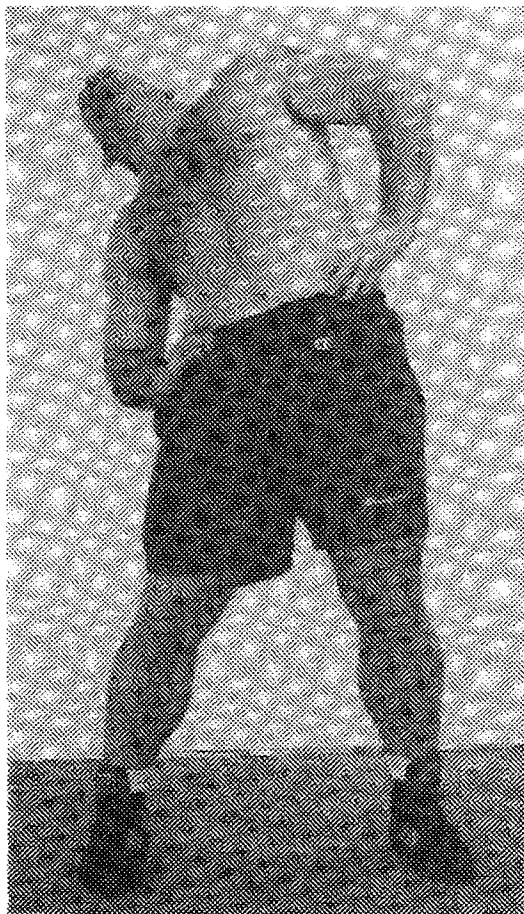
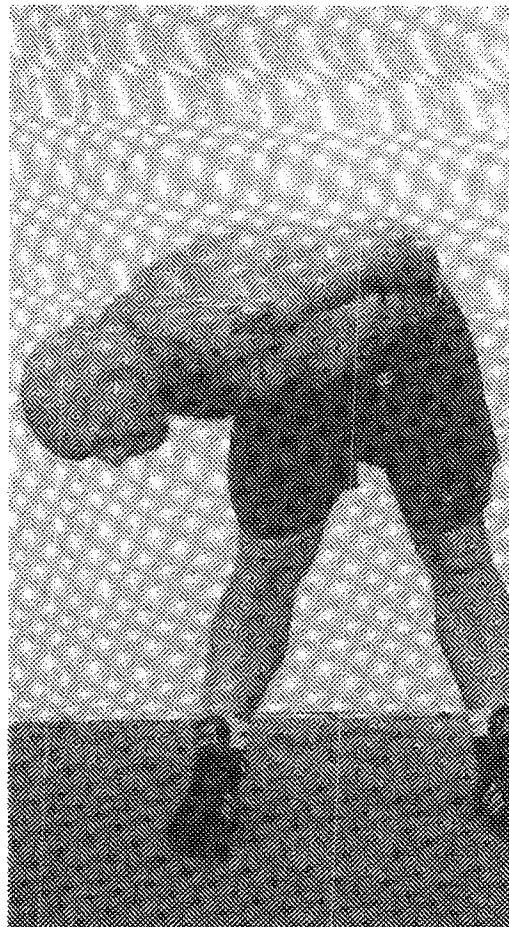
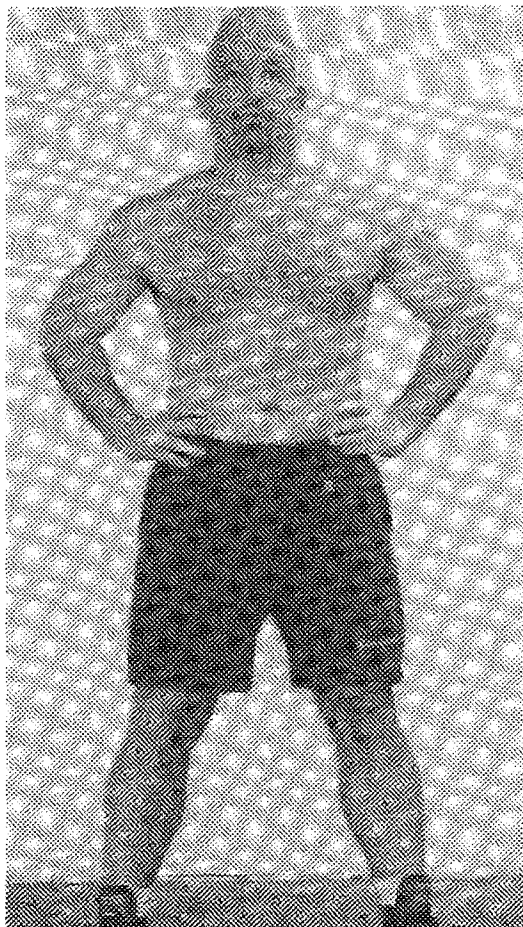




## Hands Overhead Side Bends

This exercise takes off where the regular side bends finish. Now you're going to expand the rib cage, strengthen the upper back (scapulae) while working the muscles along the sides, including the shoulders, lats and obliques.

1. Stand with feet comfortably spaced.
2. Interlock the fingers of your hands and reach to the ceiling with your palms facing upward.
3. Inhale deeply and stretch to the right as far as you can.
4. Squeeze all the muscles of the upper back as well as those along the sides.
5. Hold for six to eight seconds, then exhale.
6. Repeat for six repetitions then switch sides.



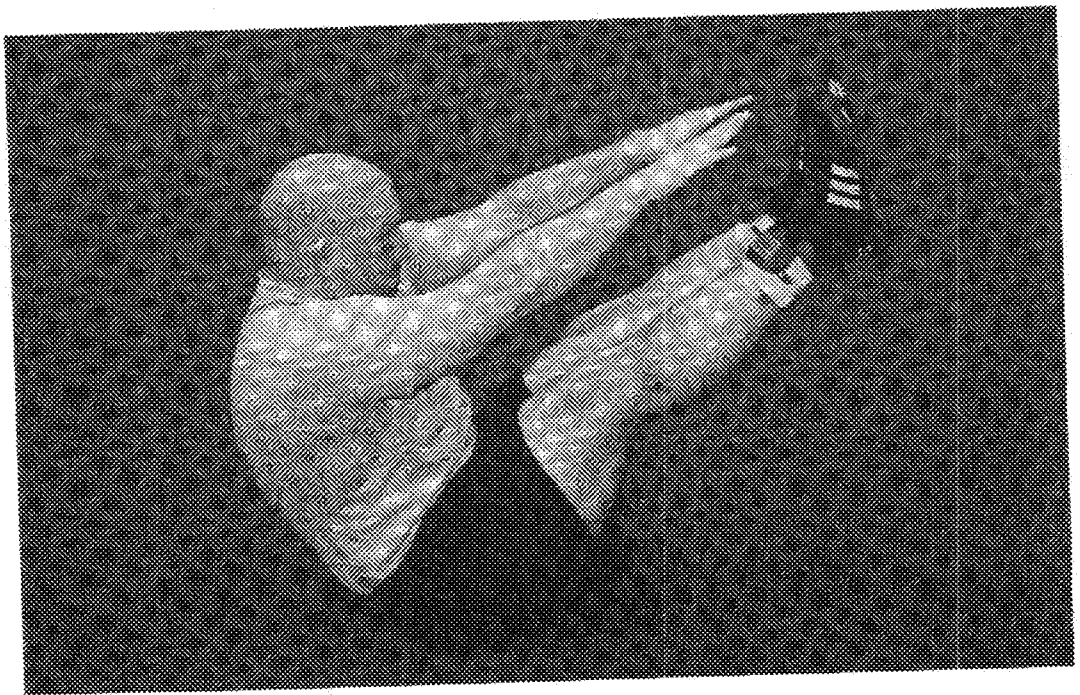
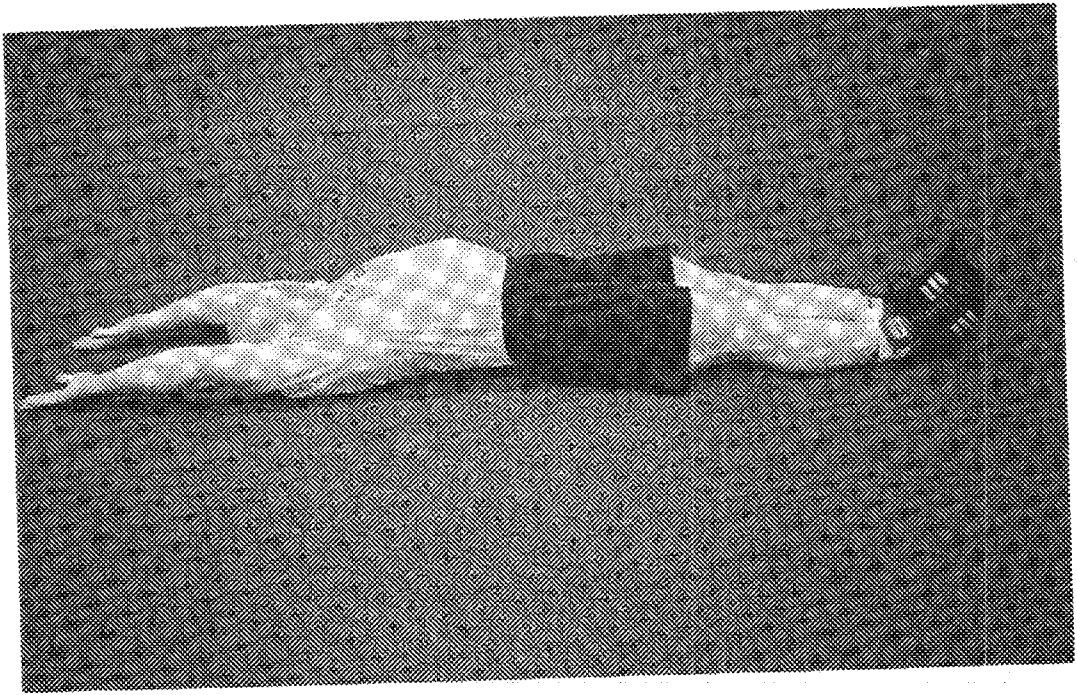
## Trunk Rotators

Trunk rotators create necessary motion throughout the entire midsection, giving you a stronger and more flexible back while burning excess fat from the waist. Remember the maxim: Fat can only accumulate on a part of the body where there is little or no activity.

1. Begin with your feet comfortably spaced.
2. Place your hands on your hips and inhale deeply.
3. Bend sideward and then begin tracing a clockwise circle with your head and shoulders leading the way.
4. Concentrate on your obliques and abdominals as you rotate.
5. Exhale when you reach the starting position. Inhale and repeat nine more times in the same direction. Then switch directions and do 10 more repetitions.

# Basic Exercises

The basic exercises depicted here are great for anyone, beginner through advanced. These exercises will challenge almost anyone because they hit the midsection from angles and directions not commonly trained. If you stay on a consistent life-long program, and do these exercises each day, along with the Magnificent Seven, you'll never need to go beyond them. But take the challenge and try to do so anyway. Why? Simply because it is fun to accomplish those things in life you never thought you could do. And this includes the proper execution of a complicated exercise.



## V-ups

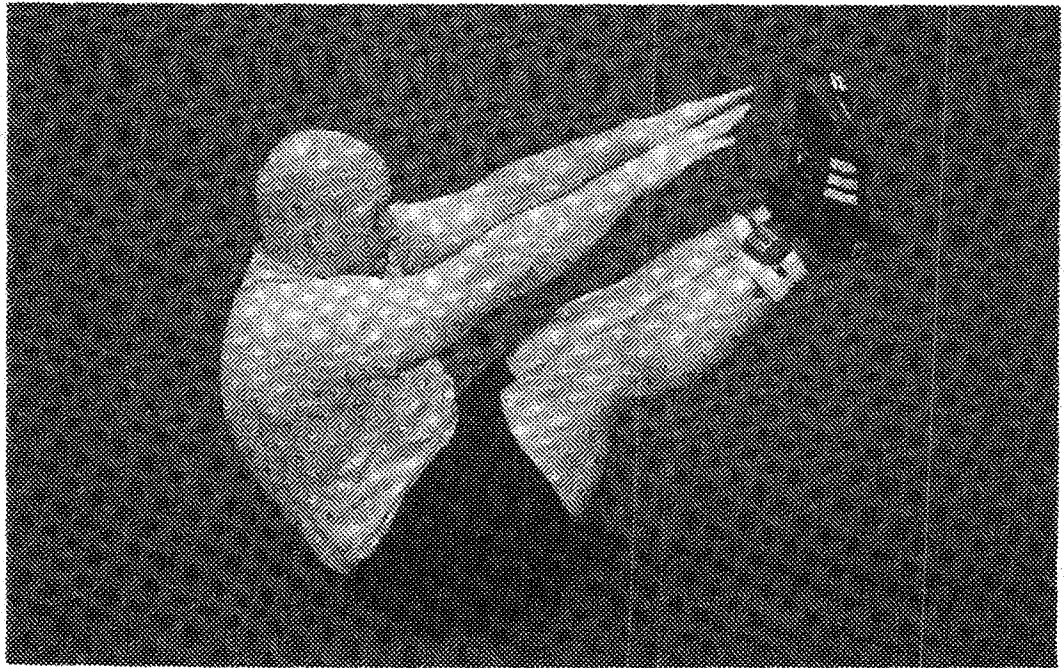
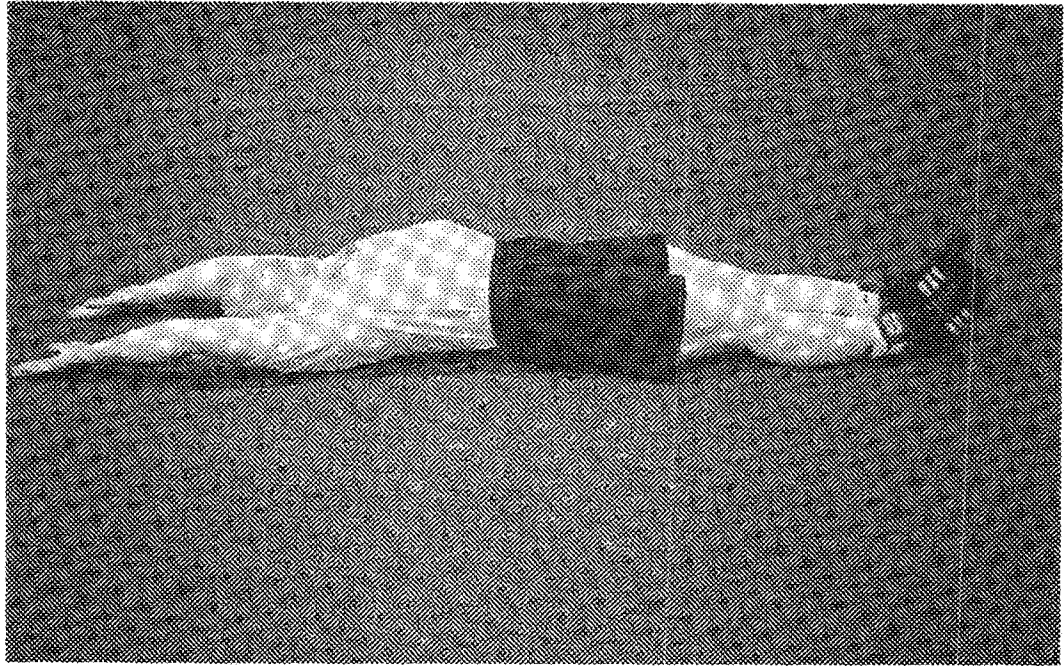
V-ups are great for exercising the upper and lower abdominals at the same time. They also train you in agility. As in most abdominal exercises, the internal organs are massaged by this exercise, aiding in the digestion and elimination process.

1. Lie down on your back with your legs straight and arms extended above your head.
2. Simultaneously raise your upper body and legs in the air above your mid-section.
3. Touch your hands to your feet.
4. Lower your arms and legs back to the floor. Do not let your feet touch the ground.
5. Repeat until you cannot do anymore repetitions.
6. Exhale up, inhale down.

NOTE: If you feel pain in your neck or lower back when doing this exercise, it means you are weak in those areas. Do not run out to the local fitness equipment store and invest in an abdominal gadget that allows you to rest the back of your head on a cushion. If a muscle is weak, you don't ignore it or give it a rest - you train it.

For those of you with severe neck or back pain, see a physician who isn't out on the golf course, or a chiropractor who will give you more than two minutes of his time.



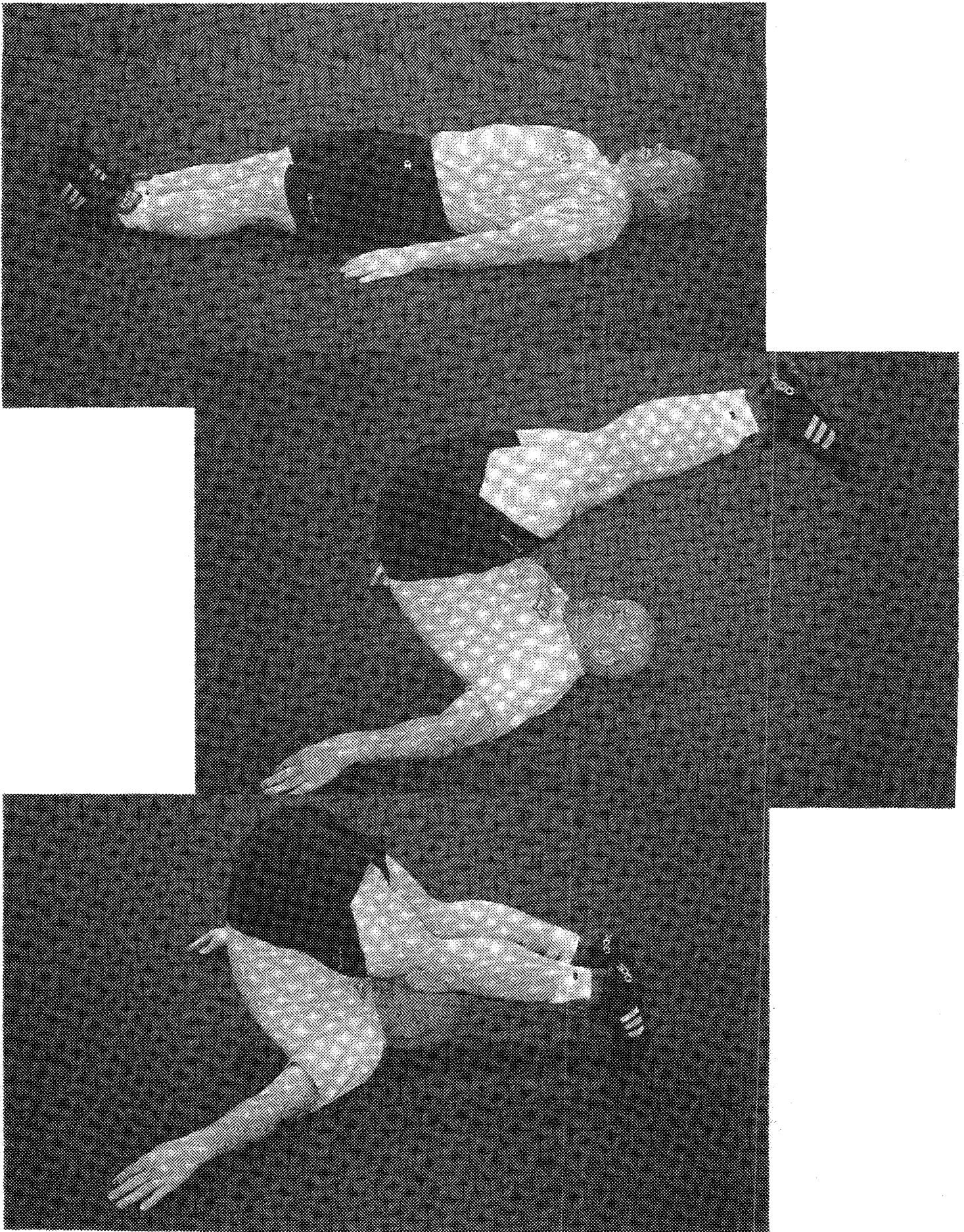


## V-up and Hold

A v-up in which you come up and hold the position hits the upper and lower abdominals at the same time. This exercise also makes you mentally tough, as holding this posture for more than 30 seconds makes your abs burn like wild fire.

1. Lie down on your back with your legs straight and arms extended above your head.
2. Simultaneously raise your arms and legs in the air above your mid-section.
3. Once you have found a stable position, as high up as you can go, hold the position and breathe deeply.
4. Hold the position for time, shooting for 30-60 seconds or more.
5. You only need to do one repetition of this exercise.

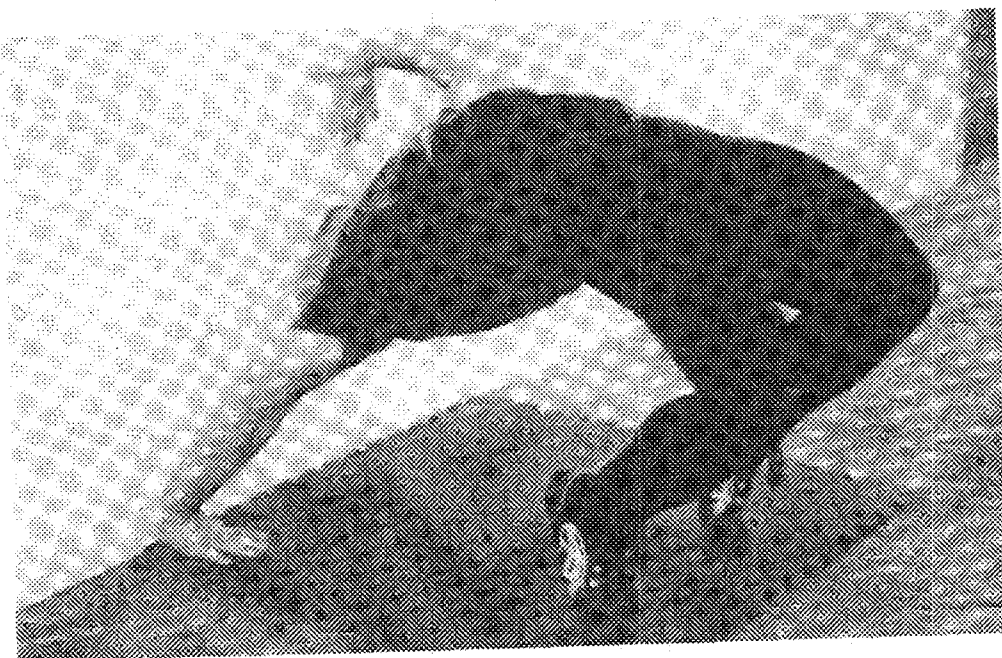
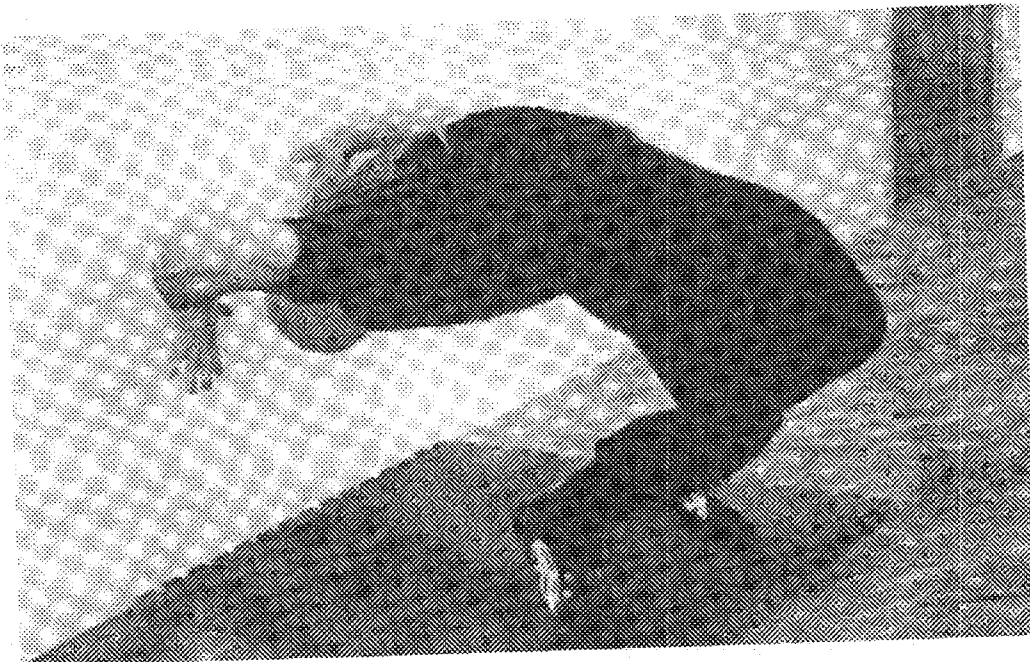




## Leg Lifts Behind Head

Leg lifts done in this manner are great for strengthening the abdominals, lower back and hip flexors. Each time you bring your feet behind your head, you are also stretching the spine, shoulders and upper back. This movement is also great for its effect upon the internal organs. All abdominal exercises help aid the body in the digestion and elimination process.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides.
2. Lift your head until your chin is almost touching your chest.
3. Hold your head up while you lift your legs in the air.
4. Focus your attention on your abdominals.
5. Continue raising your legs until your toes touch behind your head.
6. Lower your legs back to the ground, letting them softly touch the floor.
7. Inhale up, exhale down.
8. Do as many repetitions as you can.

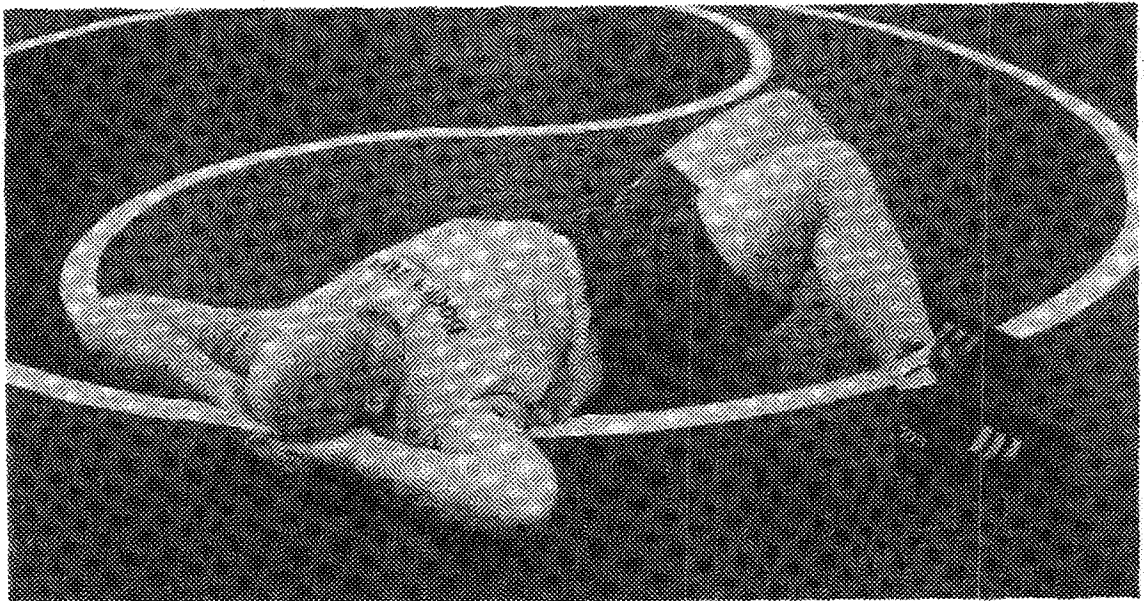
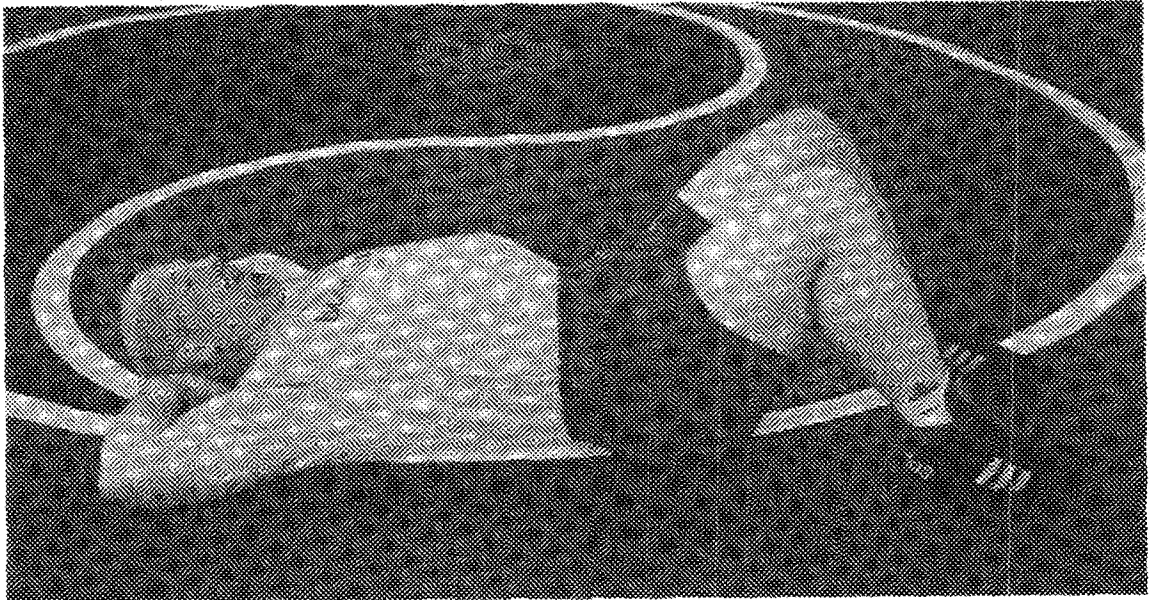


## Wall Walking

This exercise is great for stretching and strengthening all the muscles along the spine. It also works the abdominals as they involuntarily contract when you bend backwards. Increased flexibility and strength in the spine goes a long way toward increasing energy levels and improving overall health.

1. Stand with your back and heels flat against the wall.
2. Take two steps, heel to toe, until you are three steps from the wall.
3. From there, lean backward with your hands stretched above your head.
4. Slowly move your hands down the wall. Continue walking until the top of your head touches the floor.
5. Now walk back up the wall.
6. Breathe naturally as you do this exercise.
7. Do five to ten repetitions.

Note: As witnessed by the plethora of testimonial letters people have sent me after reading and implementing the wall walking and bridging exercises taught in *Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness and Combat Sports*, I must point out that this exercise is superb for ridding yourself of back pain.



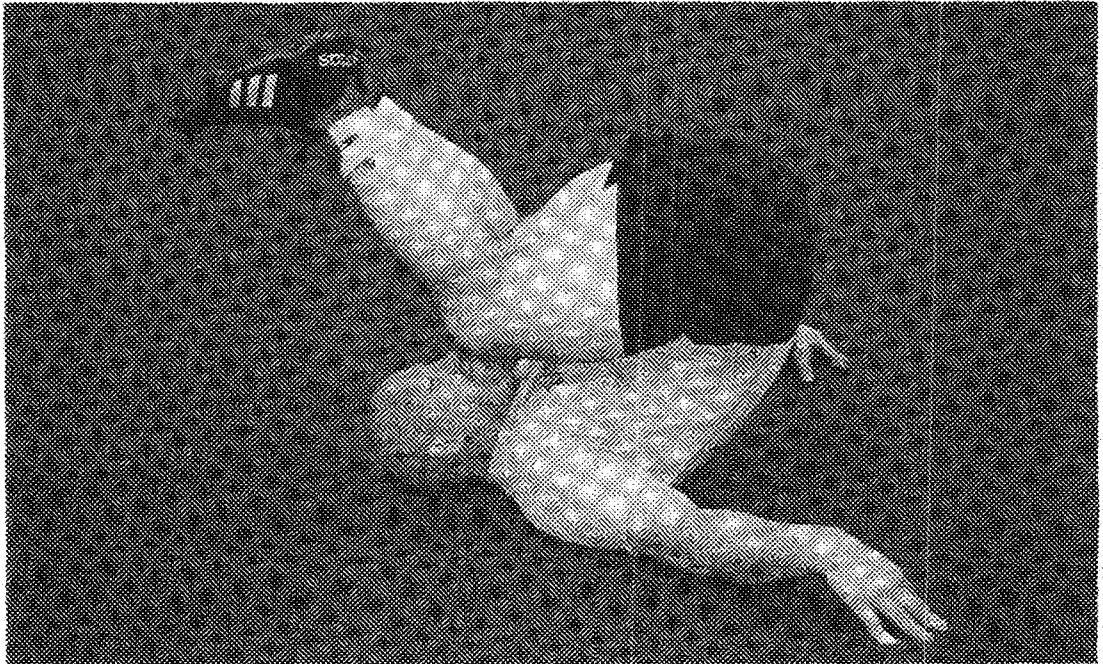
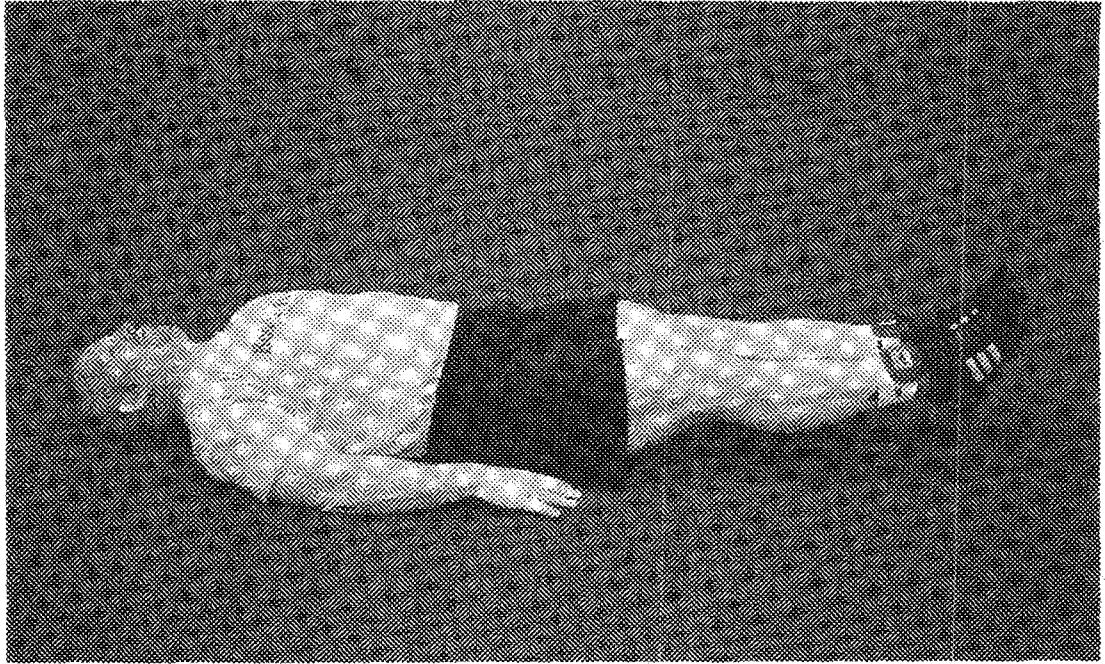


## Lying Side Bends

I came up with this exercise on my own one day. Not saying I invented this exercise. For now let it suffice to say that doing sidebends while lying on the floor is a bit tougher than doing them from standing. Afterall, you have the resistance of the carpet or mat to contend with. This exercise is great for the obliques.

1. Lie on the floor with your hands behind your head.
2. Lean your right shoulder and elbow as far to the right as you can.
3. Come back to the starting position and repeat to the left.
4. Do 50-100 repetitions, making sure that you keep your back in contact with the floor at all times.
5. Breathe naturally.

Note: If doing this exercise on the carpet, don't do it with a shirt off or you'll get a nasty rug burn.

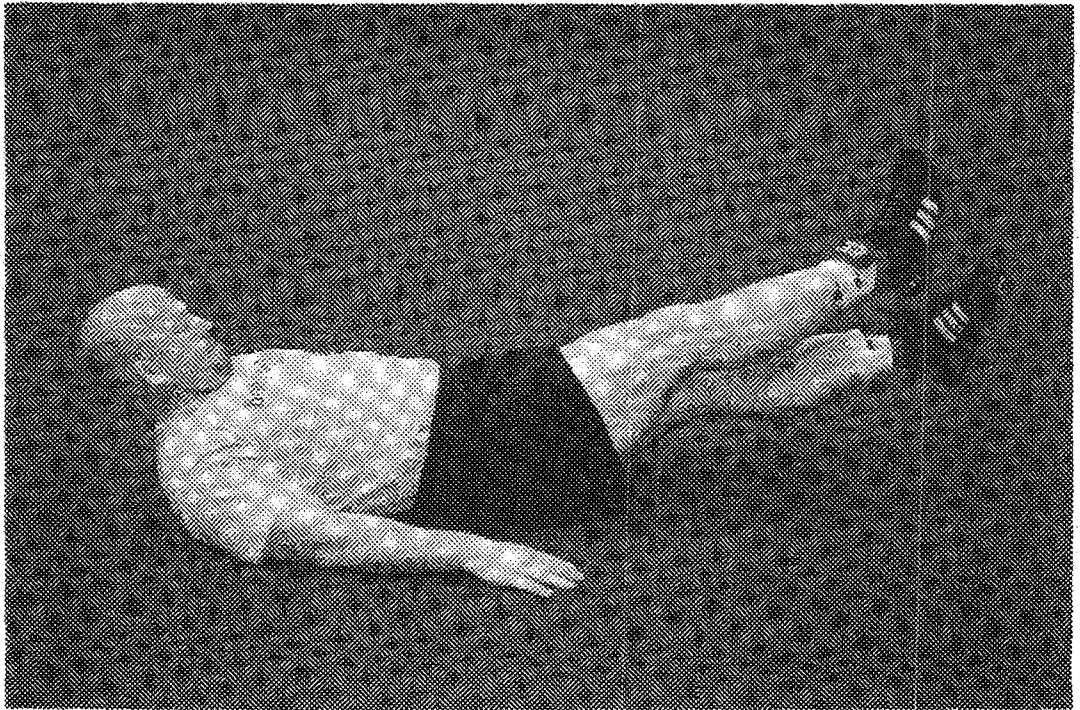
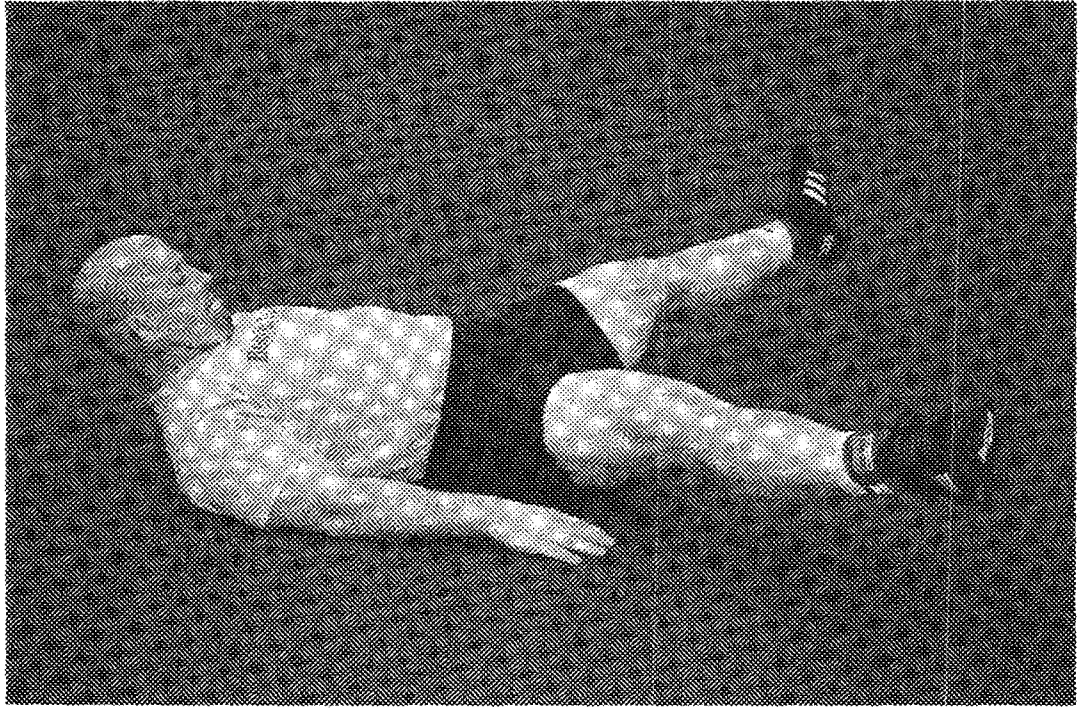


## Rollback Reverse Situps

This exercise is similar to a situp, but in reverse. Instead of bringing your upper body off the floor, you keep it flat and bring your knees to your chin. This really hits the lower abs.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides.
2. Roll backward, squeezing your abs as you pull your knees toward your chin.
3. Lower to starting position and repeat.
4. Do 25 or more repetitions.
5. Exhale when you bring your knees in, inhale when you lower your feet to the floor.

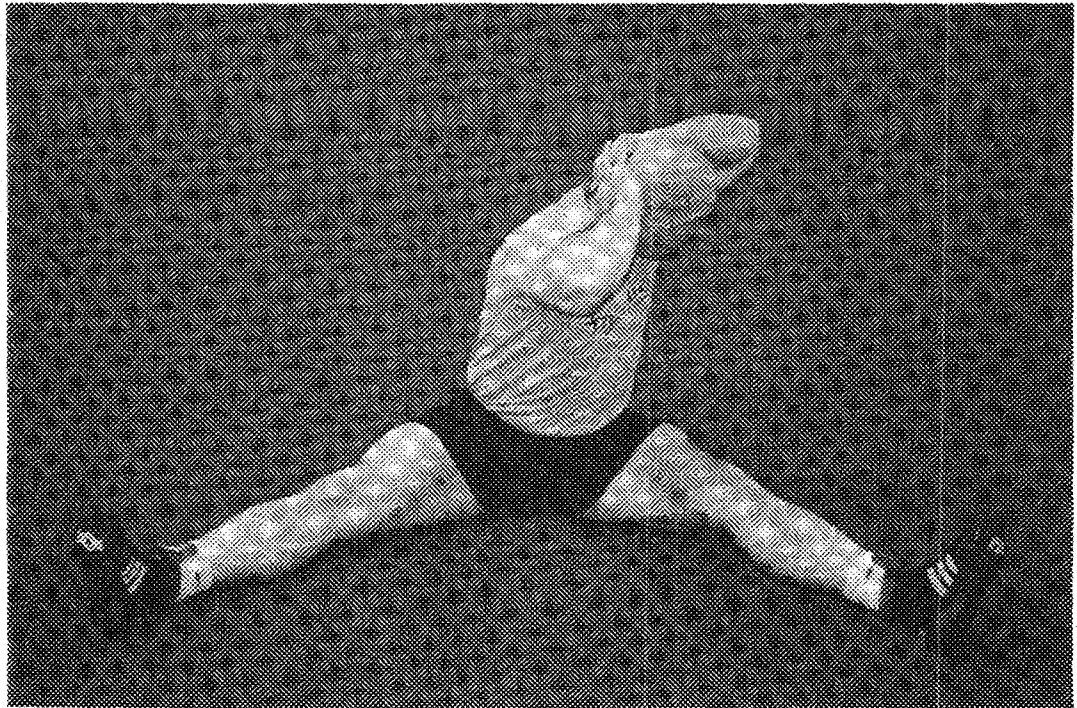
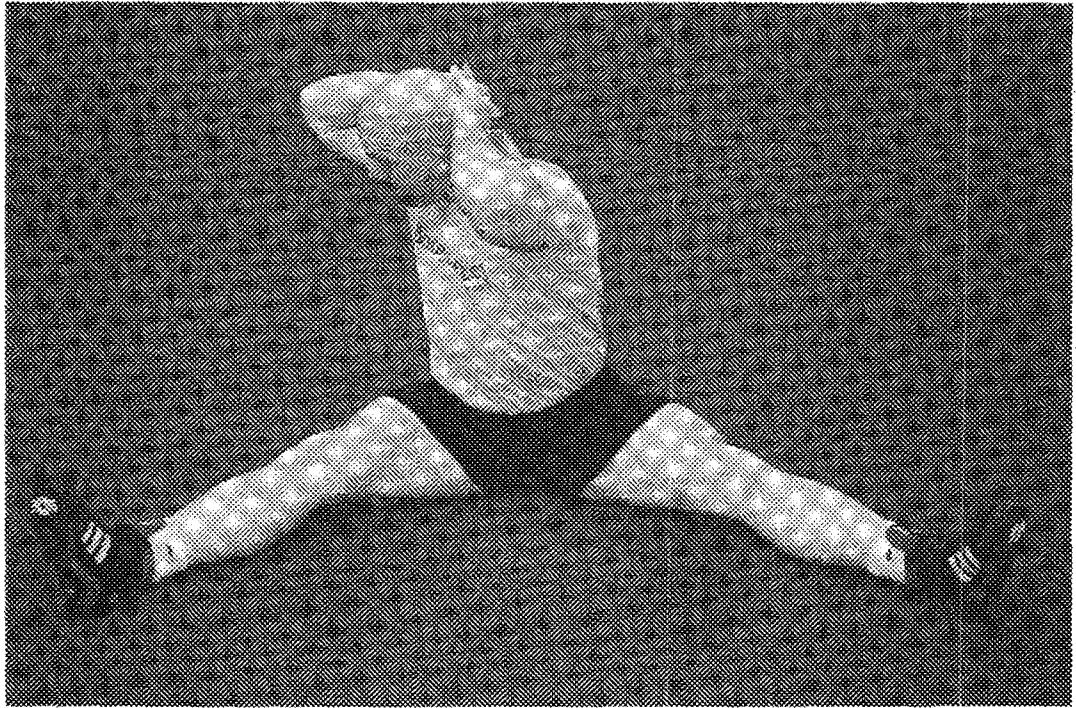




## Lying Leg Scissors

The lying leg scissors trains your upper and lower abs, your lower back, hip flexors and inner and outer thighs.

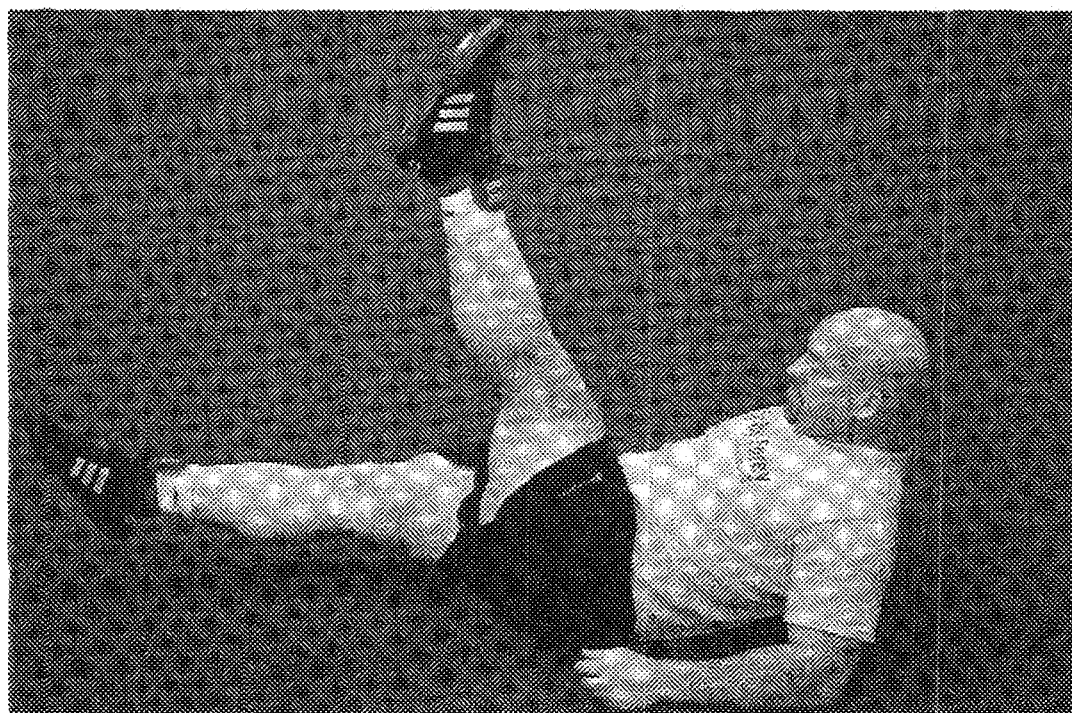
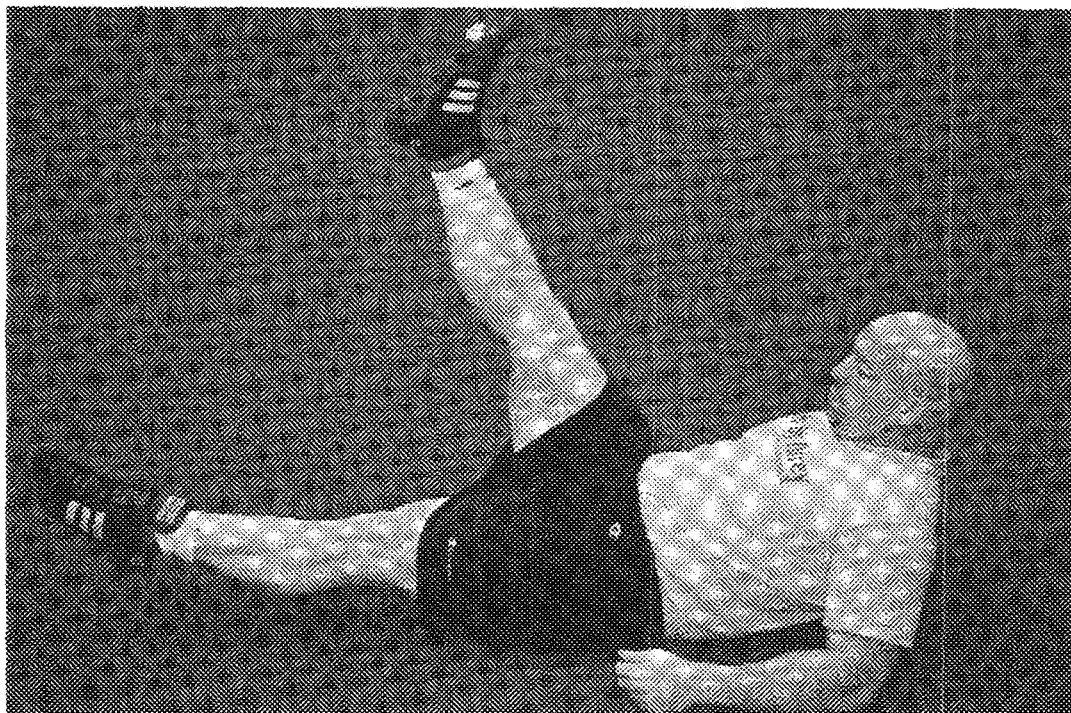
1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides and your legs straight.
2. Lift both legs off the floor about six inches. Your legs are either straight or slightly bent.
3. With your legs elevated, open them wide then cross them at the ankles.
4. Repeat for 25-100 repetitions.
5. Exhale when you cross your ankles, inhale when your legs open.



## Seated Spread Eagle Twists with Hands Behind Head

Seated Spread Eagle Twists with your hands behind your head help to improve your posture and upper back strength they also strengthen your obliques and trim excess fat from your waistline.

1. Sit on the floor with your legs spread wide. Place both hands behind your head and pull your elbows back as far as you can, straightening your spine.
2. Inhale and turn your trunk to the right as far as you can.
3. Return to center and exhale.
4. Repeat in the opposite direction.
5. Do 25-100 repetitions.

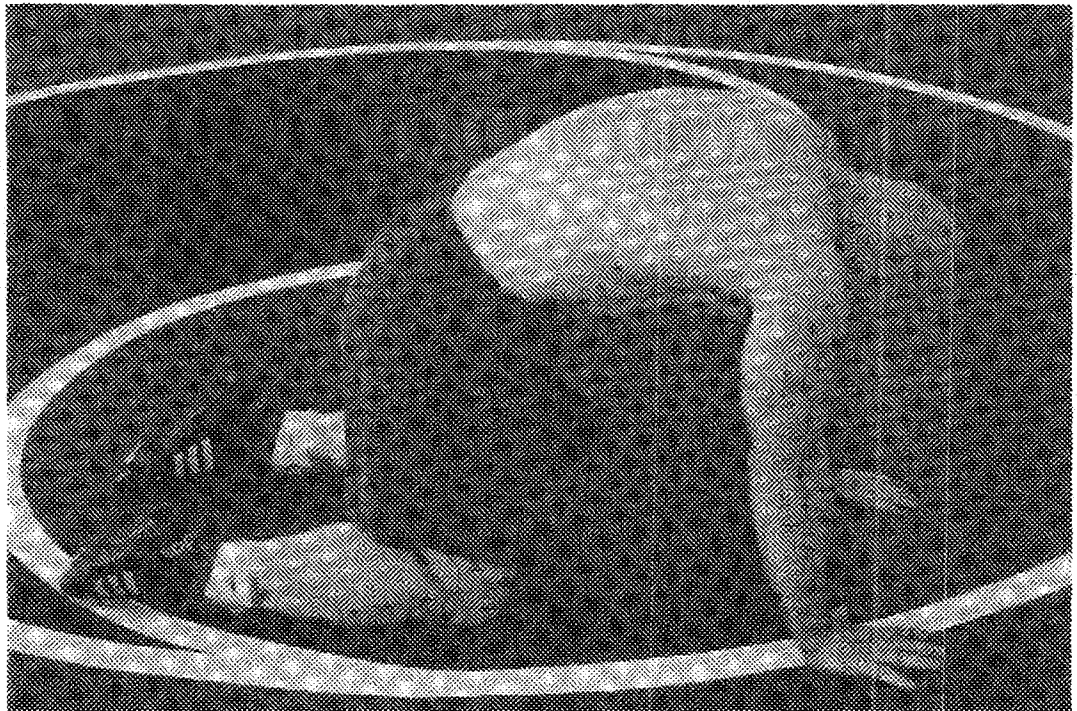
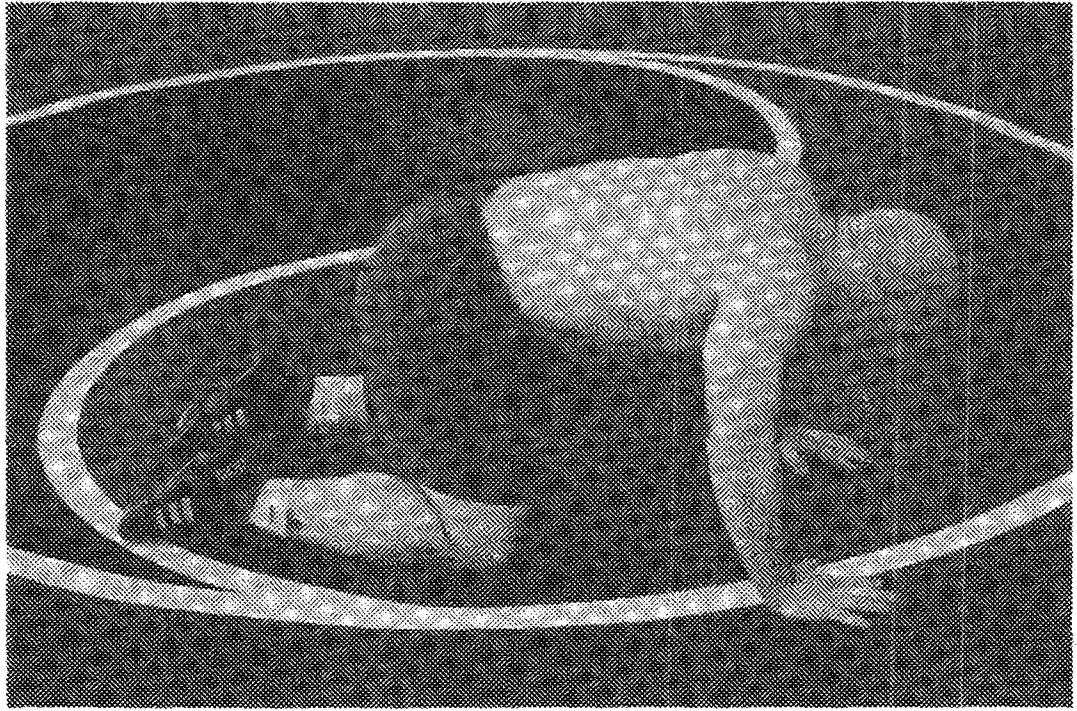




## Alternating Leg Lifts - From Forearms

When you do the alternating leg lifts with your upper body supported on your forearms, you'll feel it in your upper abs even more. Other areas to benefit are your lower abs, hip flexors and lower back.

1. Lie on back with upper body tilted forward, weight resting on your forearms.
2. Lift both legs about six inches off the floor.
3. Begin to alternate lifting of the legs.
4. Breathe naturally as you perform this exercise.
5. Do not let either leg touch the floor until you have completed the exercise.
6. Do 25-100 repetitions.

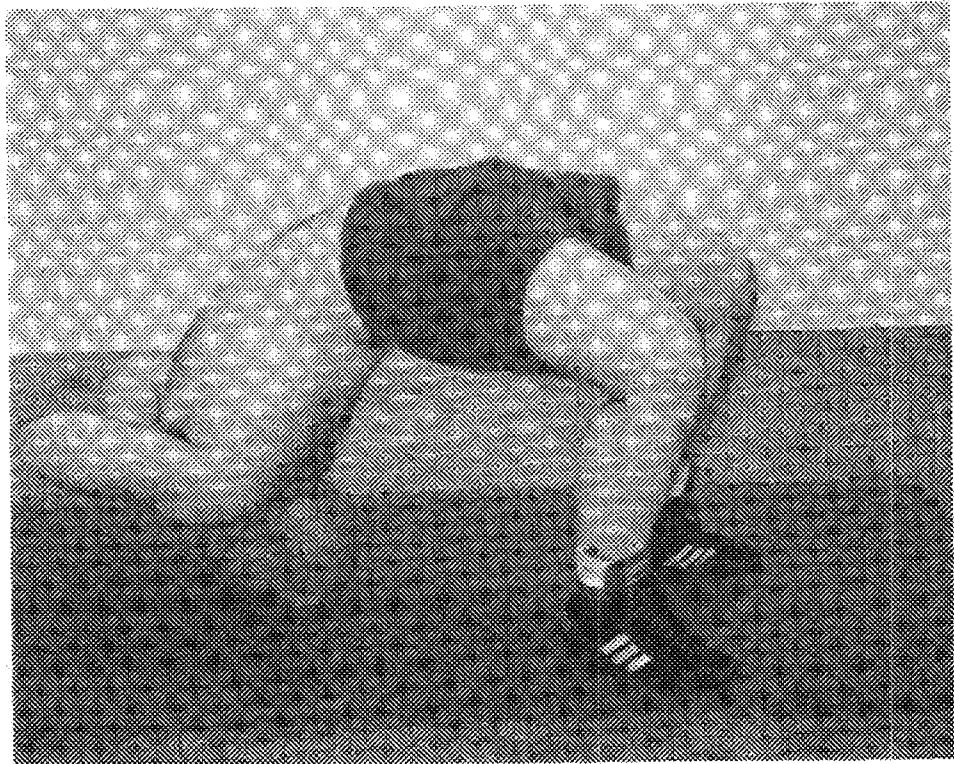
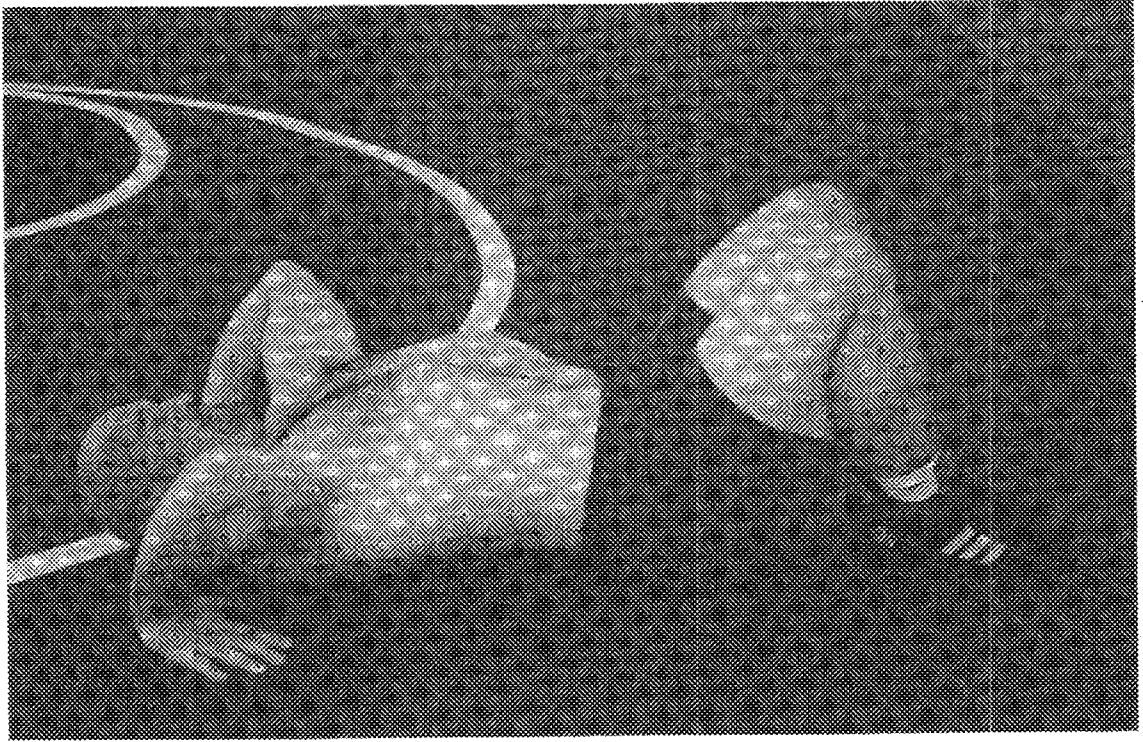


## Cat Stretch With Abdominal Lift

This variation of the vacuum helps reduce the waistline and promotes a healthy spine.

1. Begin on all fours with your spine flat.
2. Blow all air out of your lungs.
3. Do not inhale right away. Instead, lift your diaphragm and stretch your spine upward like a cat.
4. Hold for six seconds or longer.
5. Exhale.
6. Do 10 repetitions.





## Back Bridge With Hand Support

This exercise goes a step beyond wall walking. It not only strengthens and stretches the abdominals, but does the same for the back and neck. As an overall body developer, you can't beat bridging. In the beginning, this exercise can be very difficult, simply because you've never done it. Bridging with hands and wall walking are included as basic exercises though, and you'll see why when you see the bridges in the Intermediate and Advanced sections.

The benefits of bridging are often miraculous. Stubborn back and neck pain dissipates. Abdominal muscles tighten and excess flab fades.

There are some who believe that bridging "compresses" the cervical vertebrae of the spine. This comment is often made to scare people away from bridging. Bridging is in reality, a stretch. You do not simultaneously stretch and compress. When someone does the splits, is he compressing his sacrum? No.

What many people with back and neck pain are in dire need of is stronger muscles along the spine and a healthy amount of space between the vertebrae. Bridging gives you this.

I have witnessed the miracle of bridging time and again and regularly receive an ever-increasing number of letters and e-mails from people who are no longer in pain because of it. That is why I am of the opinion that those who condemn it, either don't know the truth, or have a vested interest in keeping you weak.

There are some cases in which I don't recommend bridging. For example, those who have bone spurs along the cervical vertebrae. But in almost all cases, I find it a healthy and effective practice that has even benefited those who have had broken necks and fused vertebrae.

1. Lie on a soft mat with your back facing down.
2. Bend your legs and place the palms of your hands by your shoulders.
3. Drive off your legs and push off your hands until you are placing weight on the top of your head.
4. Once you are on the top of your head, arch your lower back and slowly push your chest forward. Strive to touch your nose to the mat behind you.
5. Rock back and forth, trying to go further each time. Take your time though. If you don't have the flexibility just yet, be patient. Eventually it will come. Don't force it.
6. Go back and forth 10-20 times.

7. Inhale when you push forward. Exhale when you come back.

8. After doing 10-20 repetitions, rest a bit, then return to the bridging position.

9. Now push as far forward as you can and hold for time while practicing deep and even breathing. Fold your arms and hold if you can (as seen in the second photo).

10. Inhale deeply and hold for a count. Exhale and hold for a count.

Note: Eventually you'll be able to hold this bridge for three minutes or longer. The deep breathing helps you to relax and bridge in comfort. When you mix bridging with deep breathing, it literally becomes so meditative that you'll "bliss out" while training. After practicing this for several weeks, you'll be able to hold the three-minute bridge with fewer and fewer breaths. As of this writing, my record is 11 breaths in 3:12. Most importantly, the deep breathing from this stretched bridge position burns a tremendous amount of fat. After practicing for awhile, you'll find this out as well.

7. Inhale when you push forward. Exhale when you come back.
8. After doing 10-20 repetitions, rest a bit, then return to the bridging position.
9. Now push as far forward as you can and hold for time while practicing deep and even breathing. Fold your arms and hold if you can (as seen in the second photo).
10. Inhale deeply and hold for a count. Exhale and hold for a count.

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# **Intermediate Exercises**

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The intermediate exercises are generally more difficult than the basics, but you don't have to wait until you've mastered all the basic exercises before you do them. In fact, some people will be able to do a few of the intermediate and advanced exercises right away. This is usually because of previous experience in other activities.

The most important thing for you to do is find the exercises in this book, regardless of what section they are in, and weave a program around them. Follow that program for a short while, then switch exercises again. Continually play with the sequence so that your body has to continually adapt, and so that you are always engaged in something new, fun and interesting.

Once again, do the Magnificent Seven each morning upon arising. Those seven exercises keep everything moving, conditioning your body for more vigorous training later in the day.

# Intermediate Exercises

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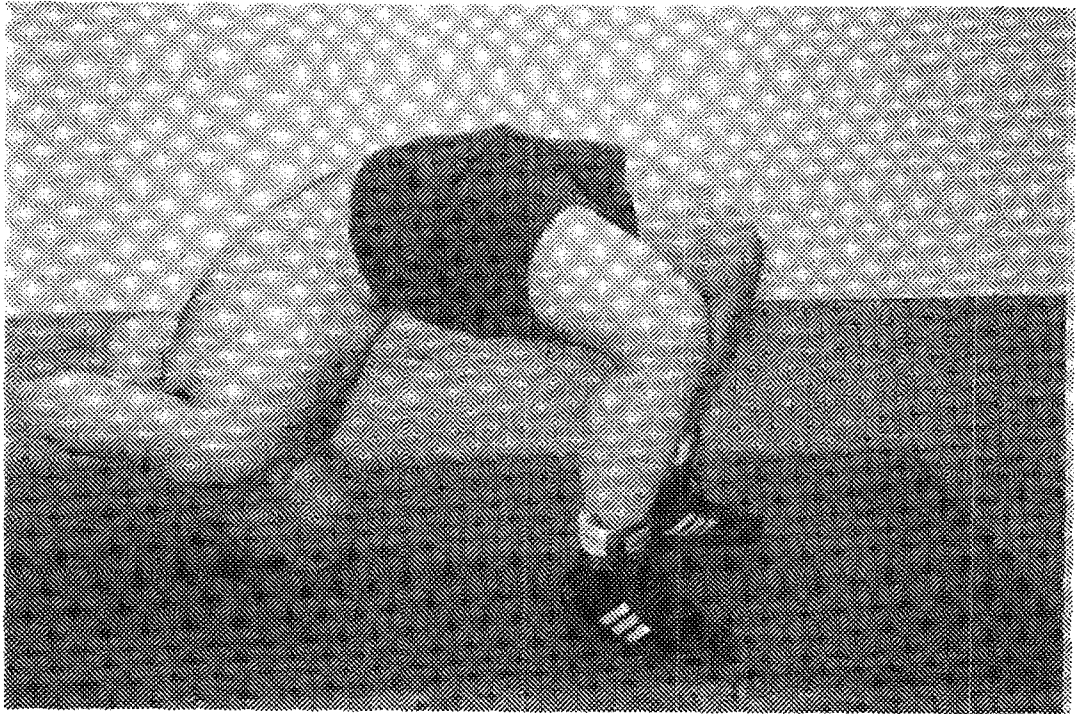
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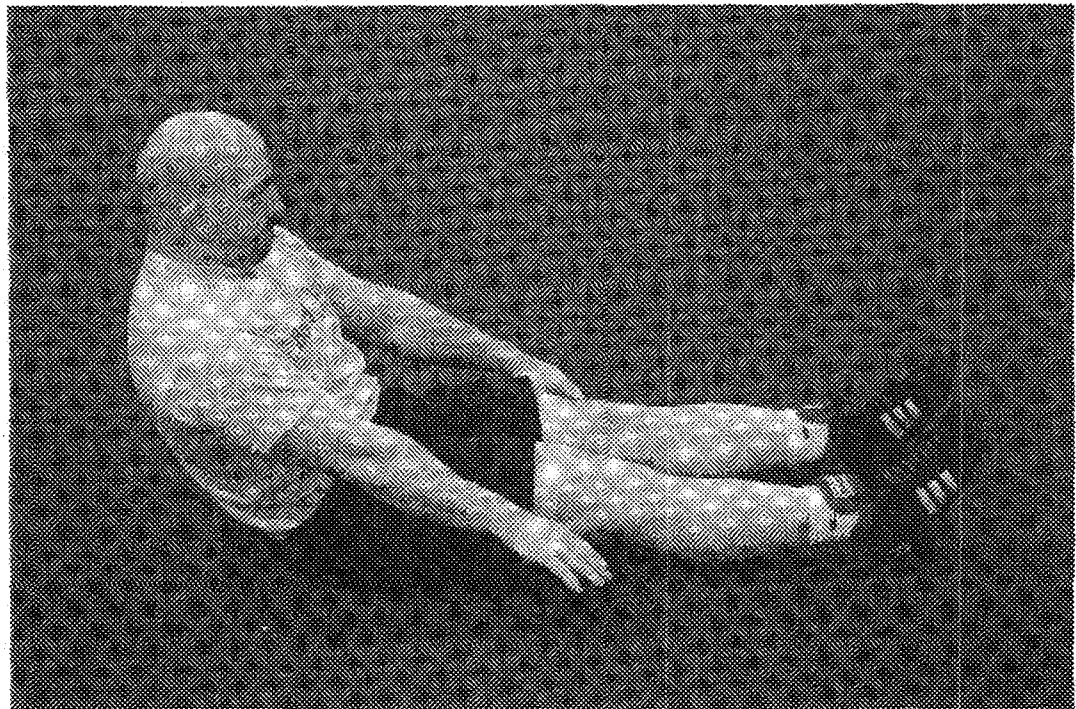
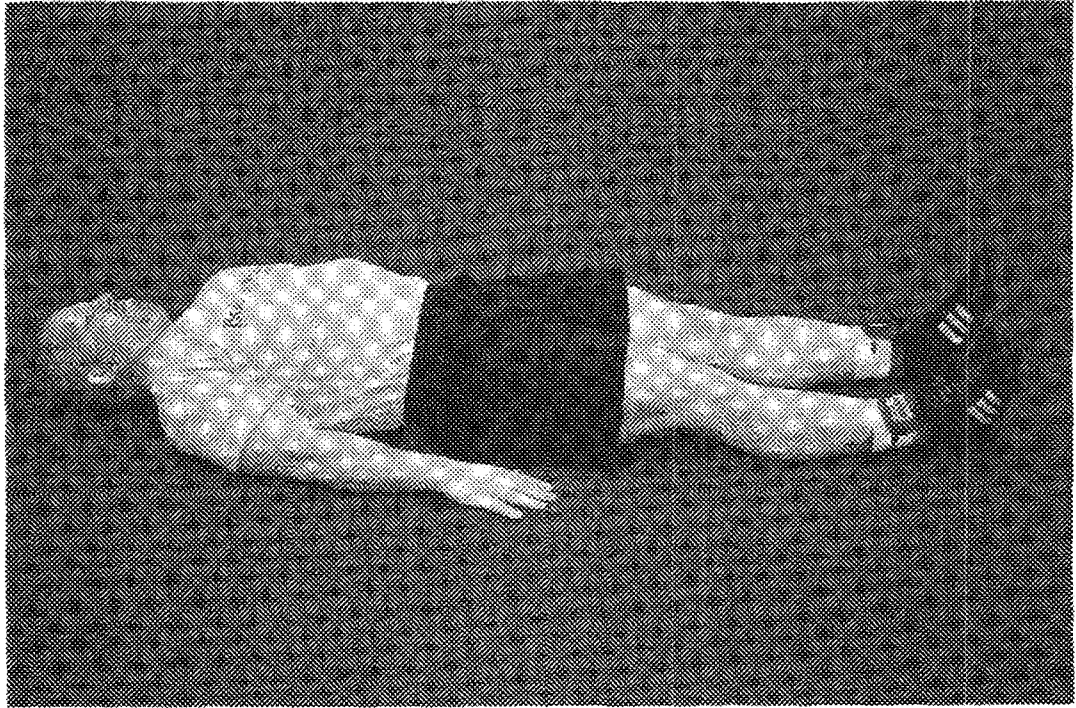




## Bridge With Hands Folded Across Chest

This bridge takes off where the basic bridge ends. Remember to practice deep breathing as you bridge. It'll make this otherwise grueling exercise a piece of cake.

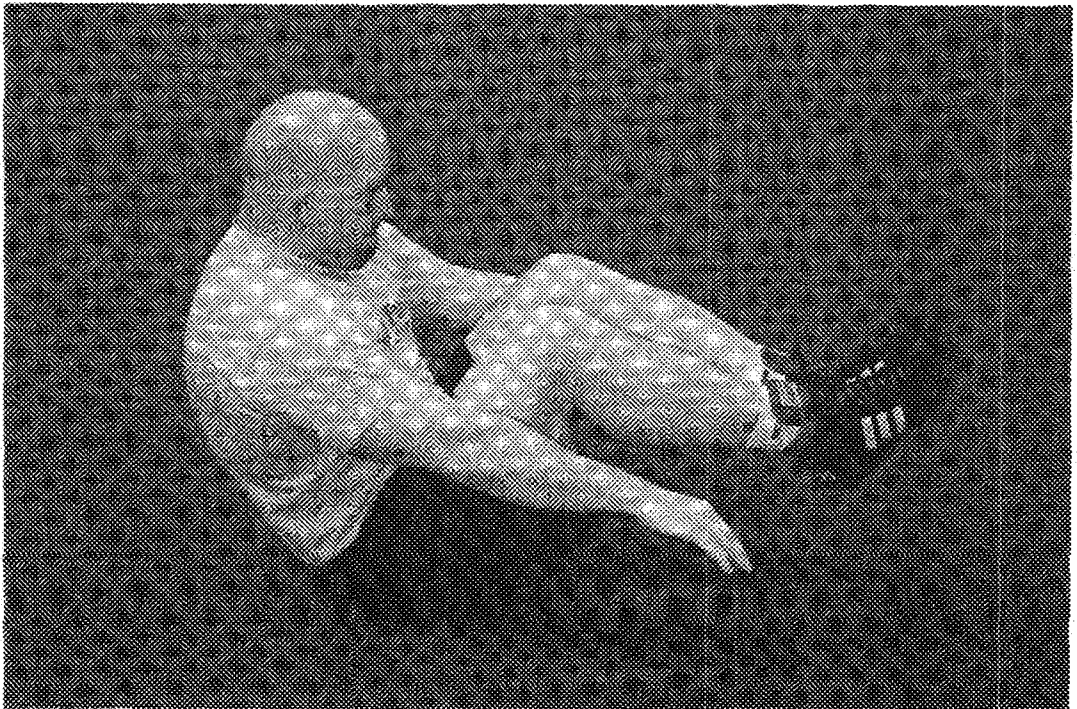
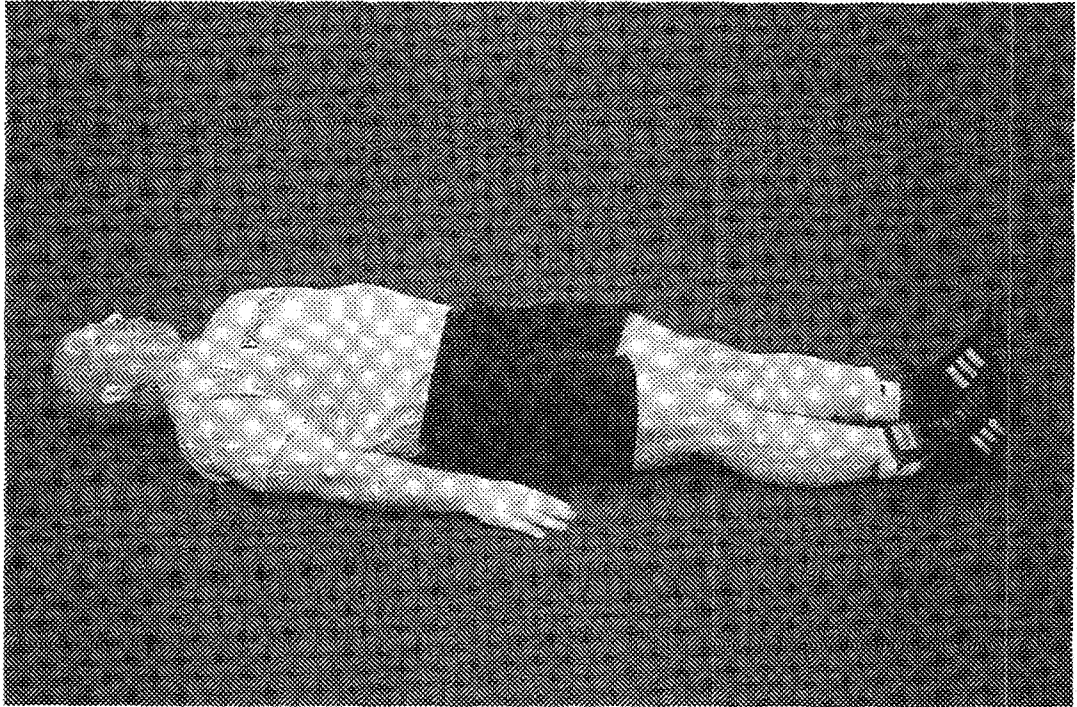
1. Lie on a soft mat with your back facing downward.
2. Bend your legs and place the palms of your hands by your shoulders.
3. Drive off your legs and push off your hands until you are placing weight on the top of your head.
4. Once you are on the top of your head, arch your lower back and push your chest forward. Strive to touch your nose to the mat behind you.
5. Once you have touched your nose to the mat, stay there and fold your arms across your chest.
6. Now lower your heels to the mat and keep your back arched so that your nose is still touching the mat.
7. Breathe deeply and hold this position for a good three minutes. Count your breaths as you bridge. When you focus on your breathing, you'll be amazed at how quickly three minutes will pass.



## Coffin Situps

This exercise hits the upper abs while also strengthening the lower back and hip flexors. It is done without momentum. No jerking and bouncing. If you cannot go all the way up, just do the best you can.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides and your legs straight.
2. Slowly lift your torso off the ground without using momentum.
3. Go as high as you can, stopping once your torso is perpendicular to the floor.
4. Slowly return to start and repeat as many times as possible.
5. Exhale up, inhale down.

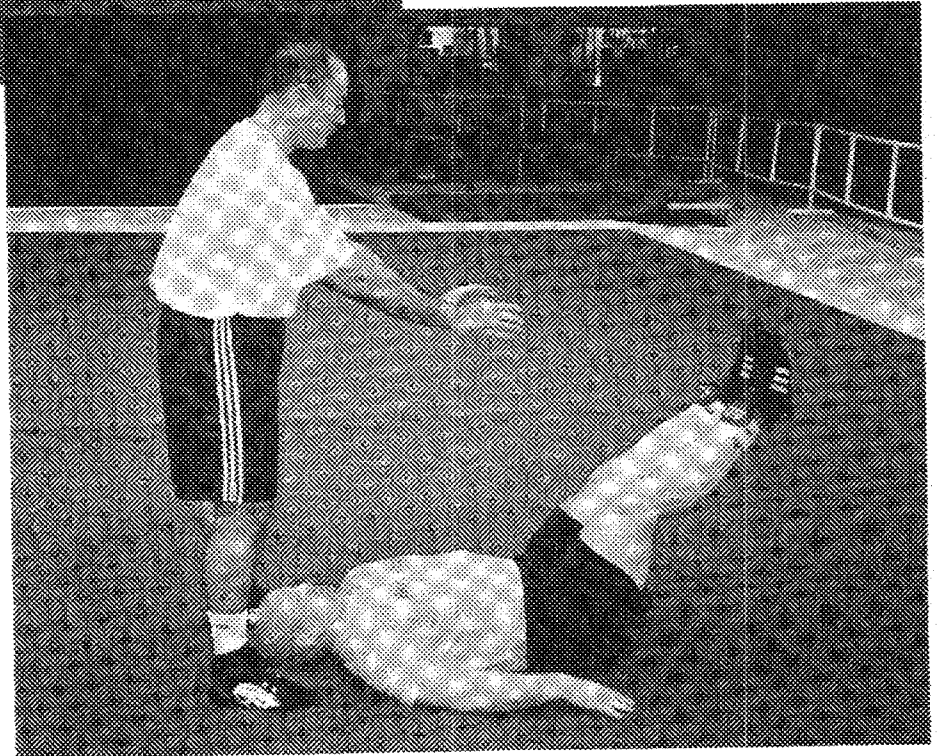
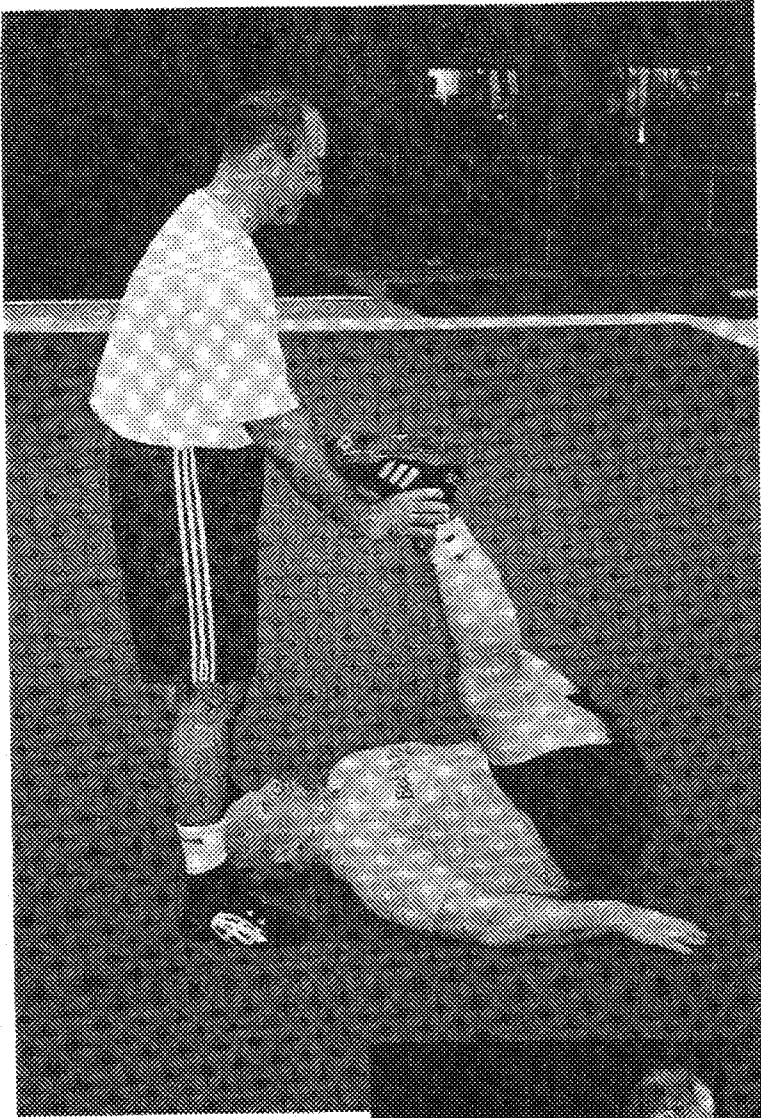


## Coffin Situps With Knee Pull-In

This variation of coffin situps hits the upper and lower abs, lower back and hip flexors. It takes a bit of coordination as well. Once again, no momentum, jerking or bouncing.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides and your legs straight.
2. Pull your knees in toward your stomach as you sit up.
3. Touch your chest to your thighs.
4. Return to start and repeat as many times as possible.
5. Exhale up, inhale down.



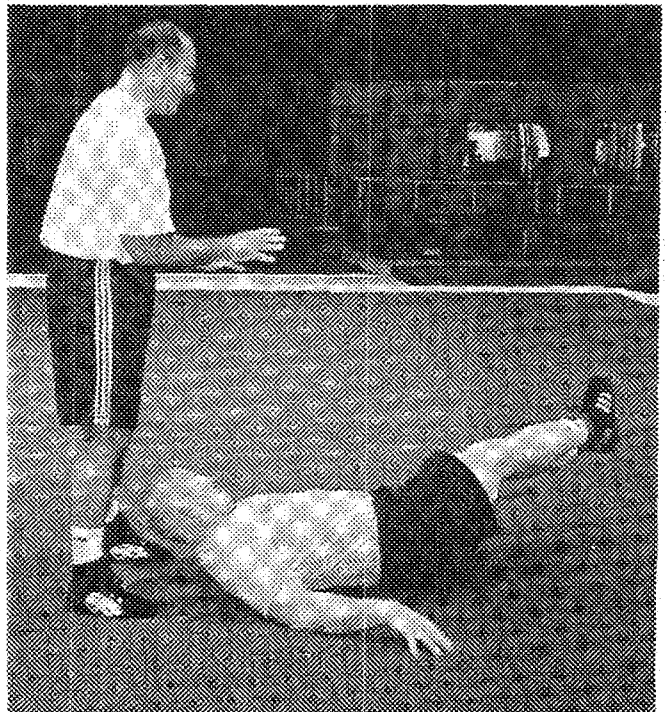
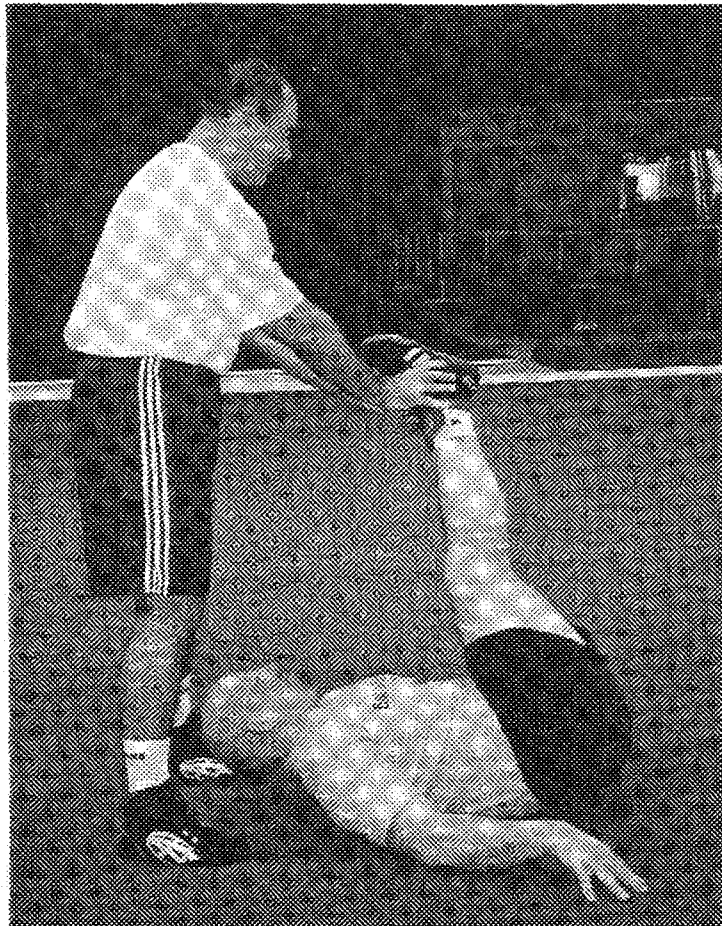
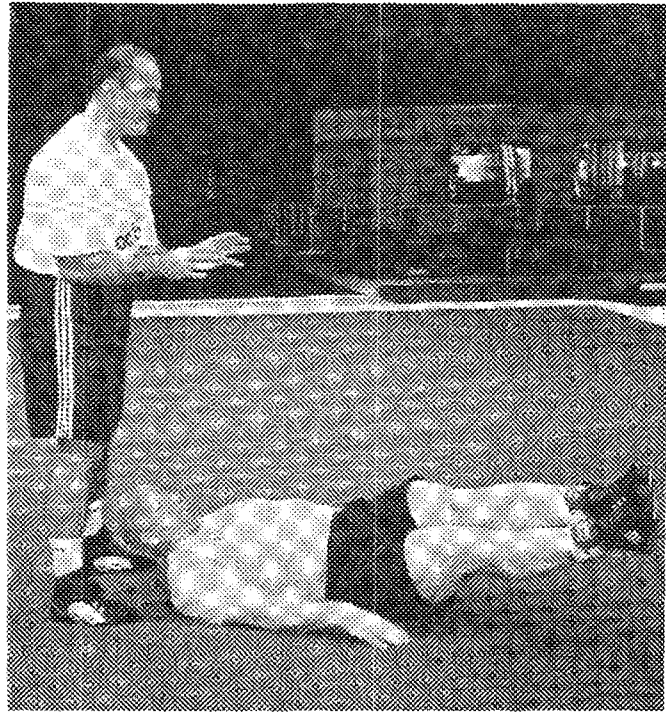
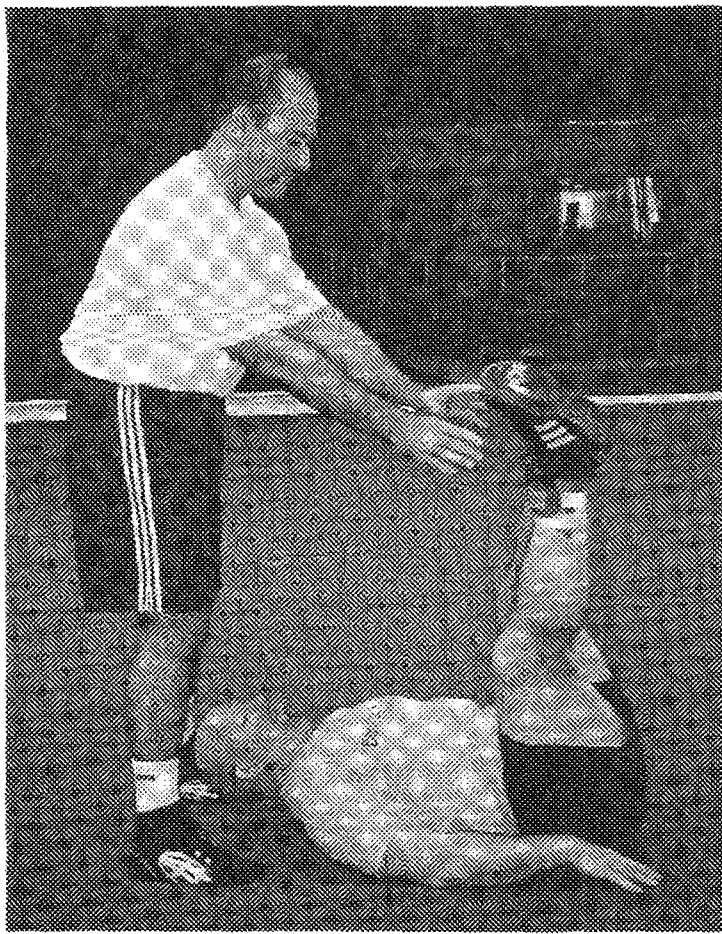




## Throw Down Leg Lifts

This exercise is a ab-kicker. It'll hit you hard in the upper and lower abdominals while simultaneously strengthening your lower back and hip flexors.

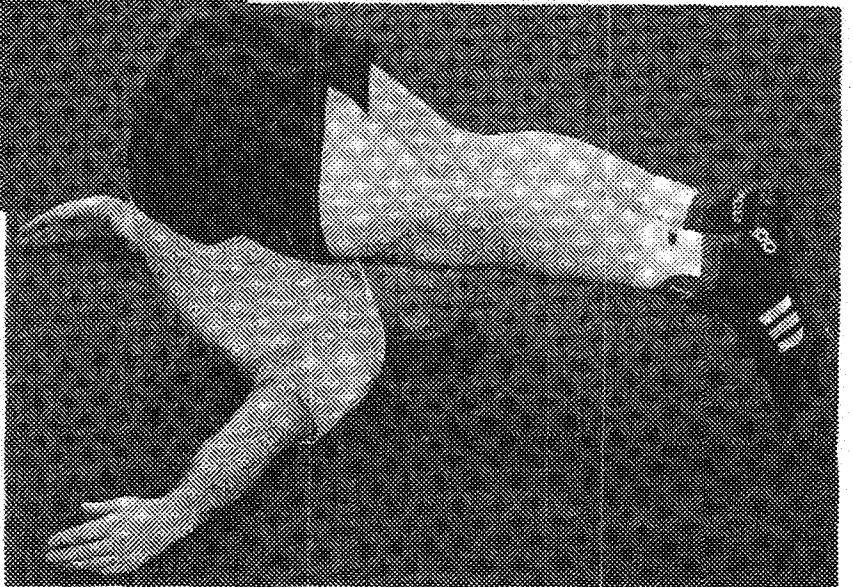
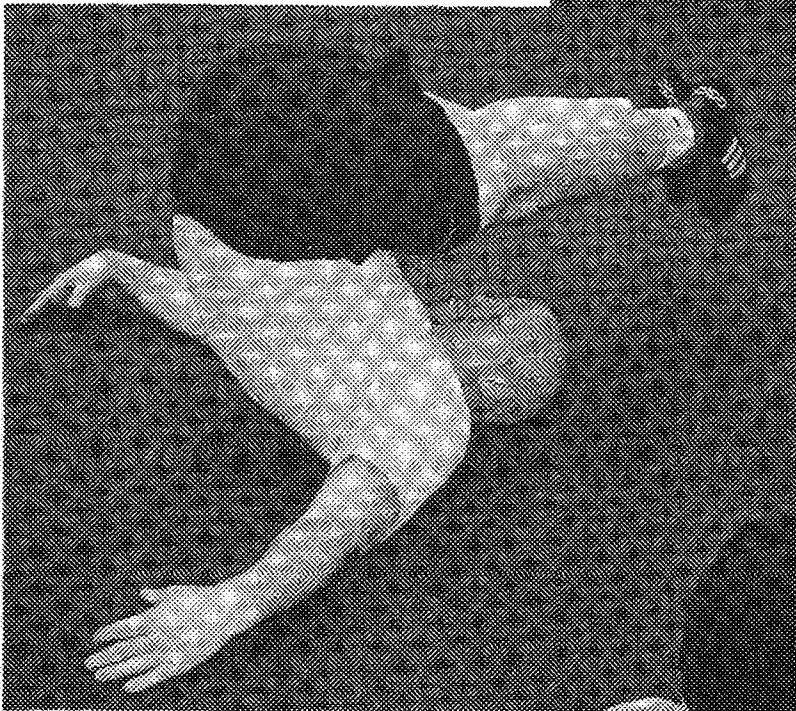
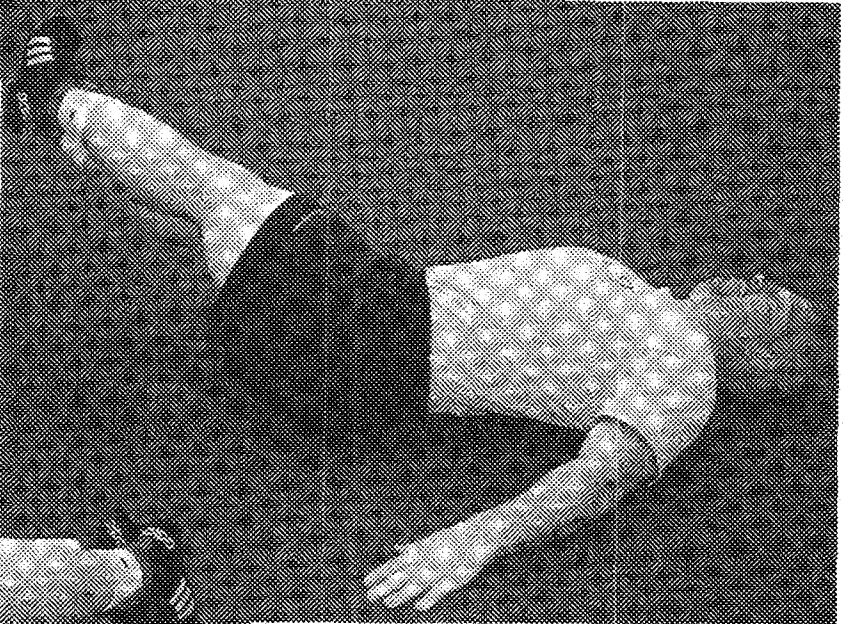
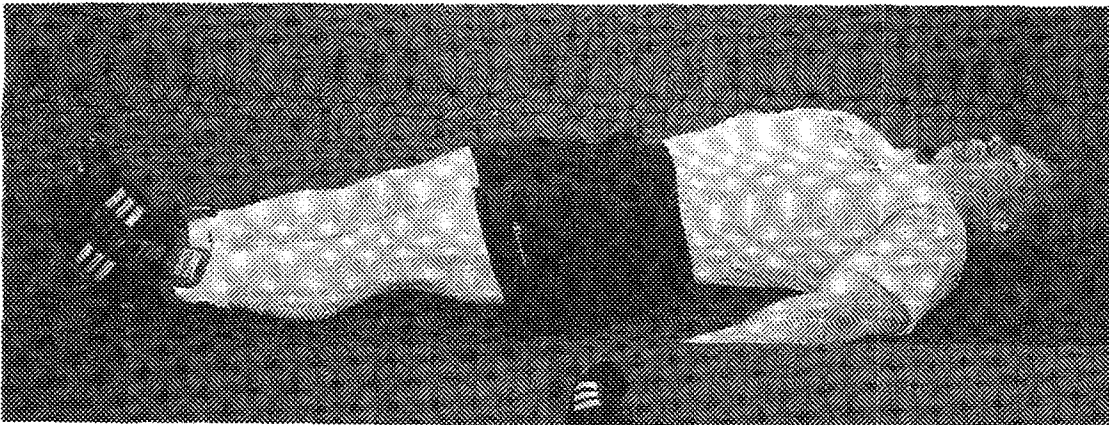
1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides.
2. Your partner will be standing next to your head, facing your feet.
3. Raise your feet off the ground, bringing them back to your partner's waiting hands.
4. Your partner quickly grabs your feet and throws them down toward the ground.
5. You let your legs fly, but stop them before they click the ground. Then you raise them again and you and your partner repeat the process.
6. Repeat for 20-100 repetitions.
7. Inhale up, exhale down.



## Throw Down Leg Lifts In Three Directions

Now let's take the throw downs to another level, hitting them left, right and center. This variation hits all the typical areas (abs, back, hip flexors), but with the change of angle, it hits the obliques as well.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides.
2. Your partner will be standing next to your head, facing your feet.
3. Raise your feet off the ground, bringing them back to your partner's waiting hands.
4. Your partner quickly grabs your feet and throws them to the right, down toward the ground.
5. You let your legs fly, but stop them before they click the ground. Then you raise them again and your partner throws them toward the center. After you raise them a third time he throws them to the left. Then repeat the process in reverse.
6. Repeat for 20-100 repetitions.
7. Inhale up, exhale down.

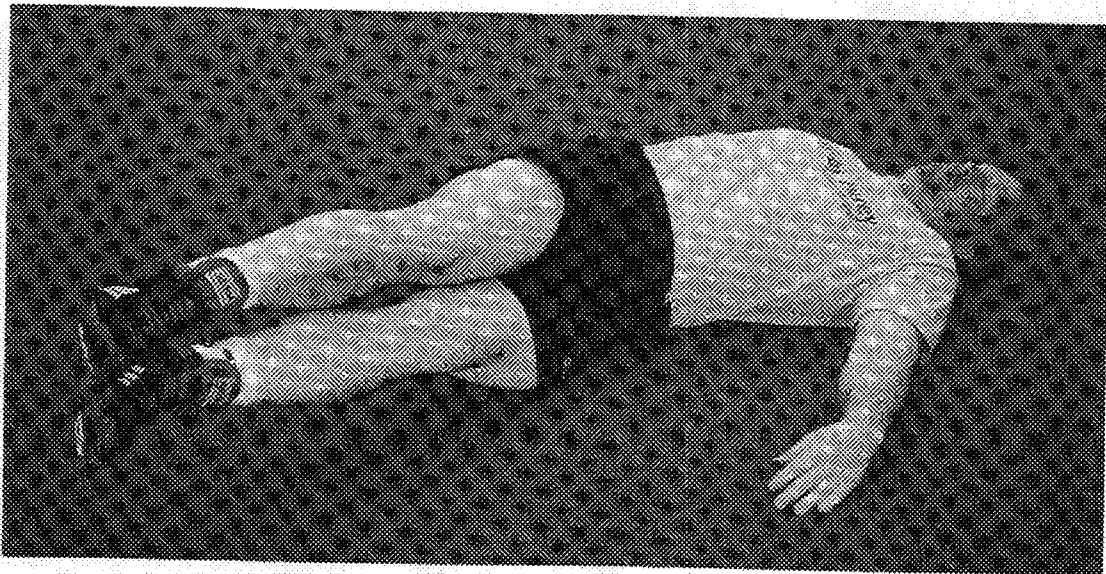


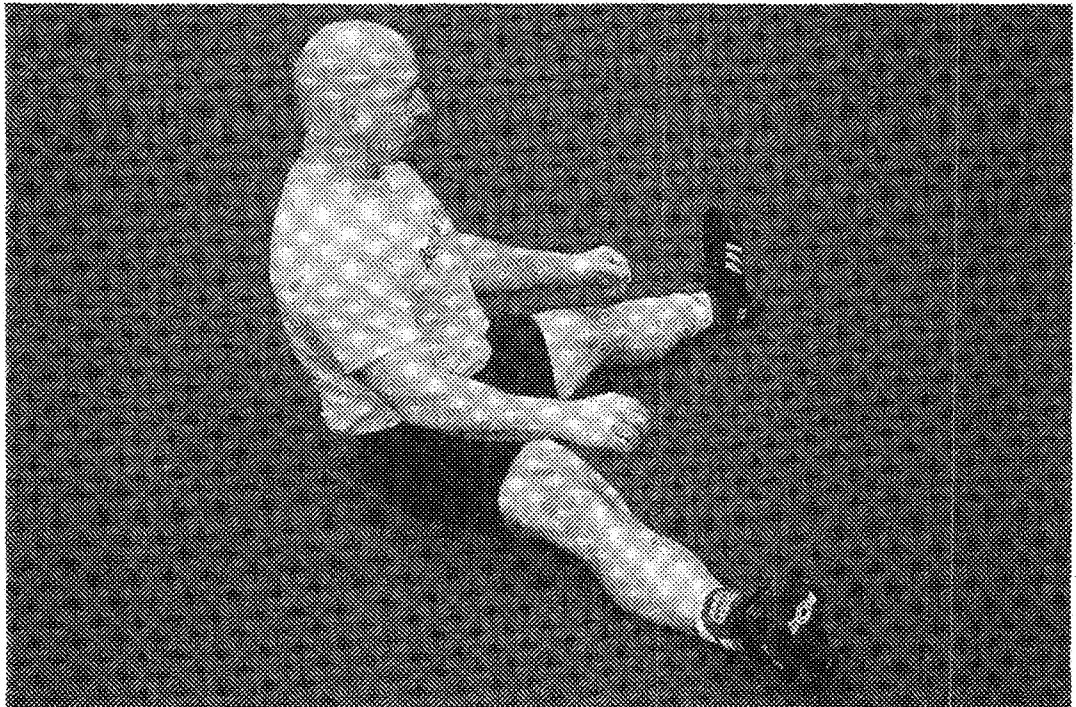
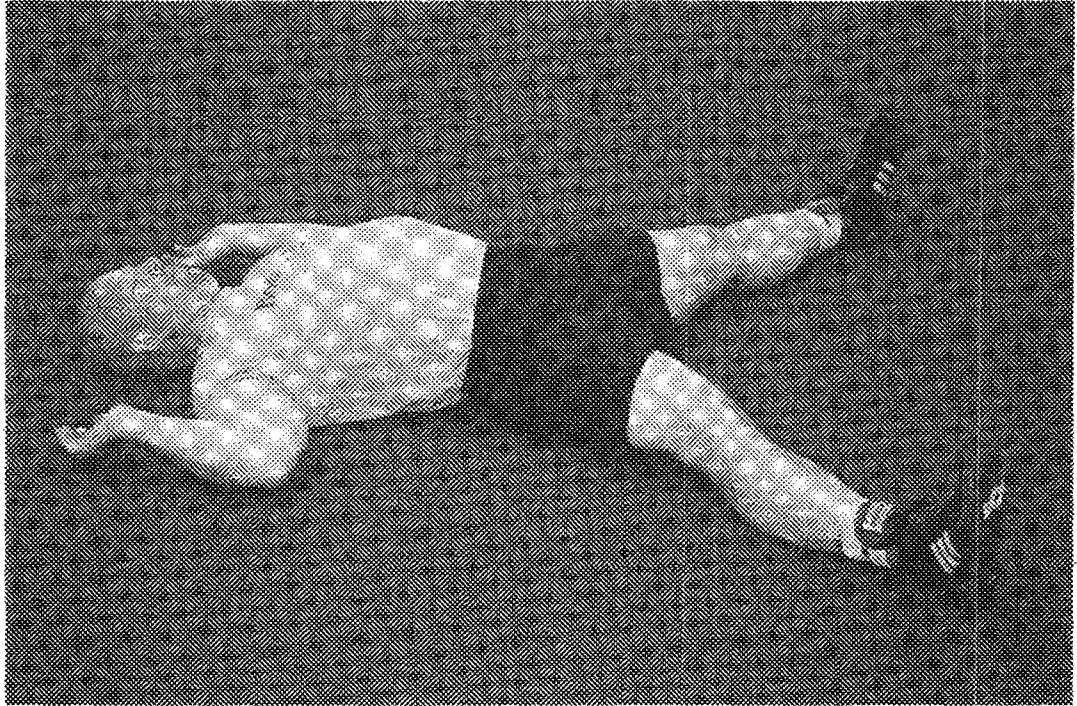


## Circular leg lifts

This leg lift variation is a solo exercise. It develops the upper and lower abs, lower back and hip flexors.

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides.
2. Inhale and raise your legs, tracing a circle with your feet that begins at your feet, hits a peak above your head and ends at your feet.
3. Breathe naturally as you do this exercise.
4. Do 10 repetitions in each direction.



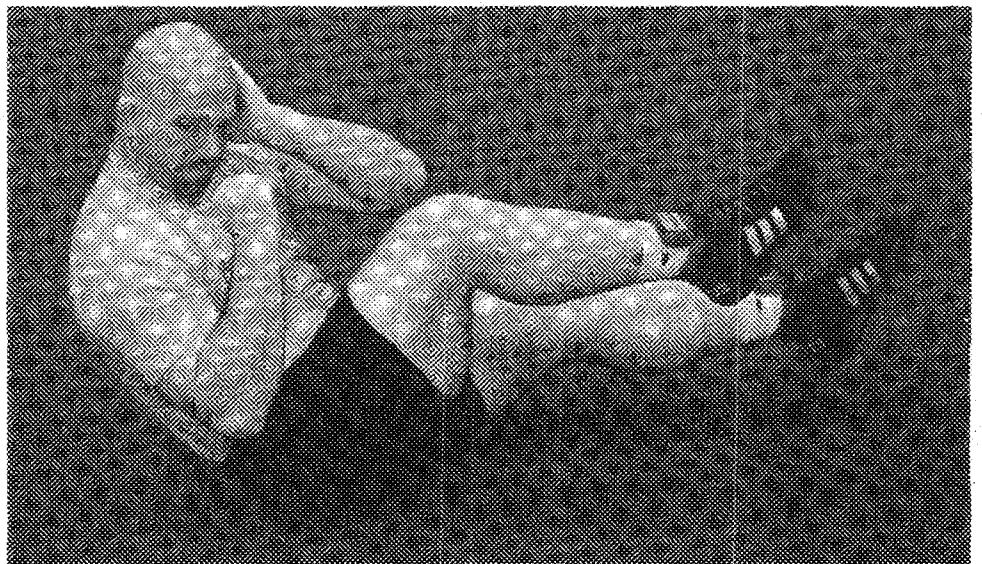
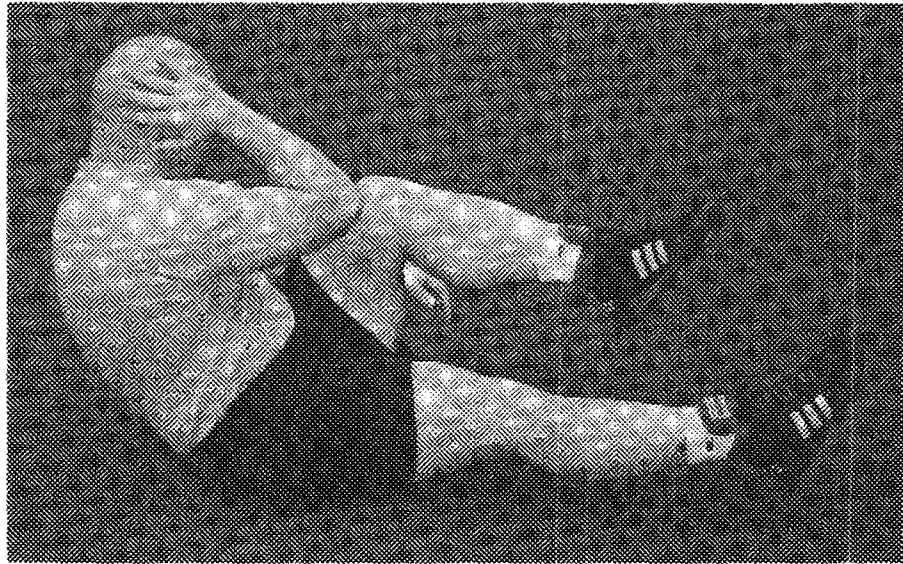
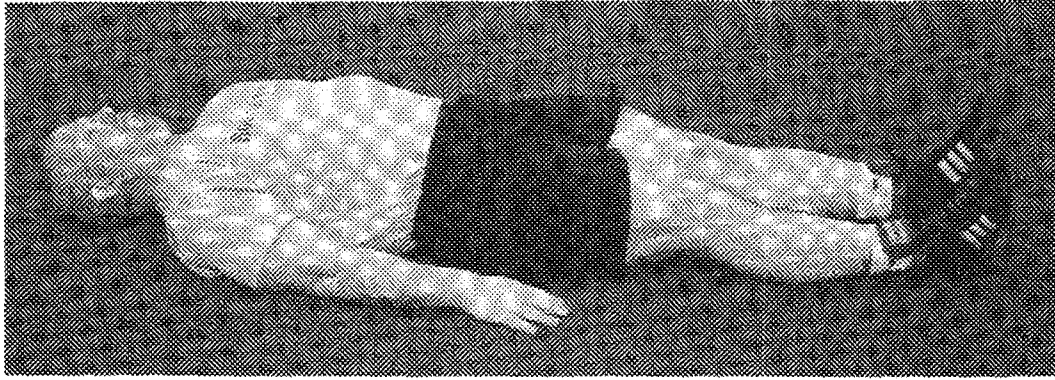


## Spread eagle situps

Spread eagle situps are a great exercise for the abs that also help promote flexibility in the hips.

1. Lie on your back with your legs spread wide. Your hands are at your side.
2. Without letting your heels or legs come off the floor, use your abdominal muscles to sit up.
3. Come all the way up until your torso is perpendicular to the floor.
4. Return to start and repeat as many times as possible.
5. Exhale up, inhale down.

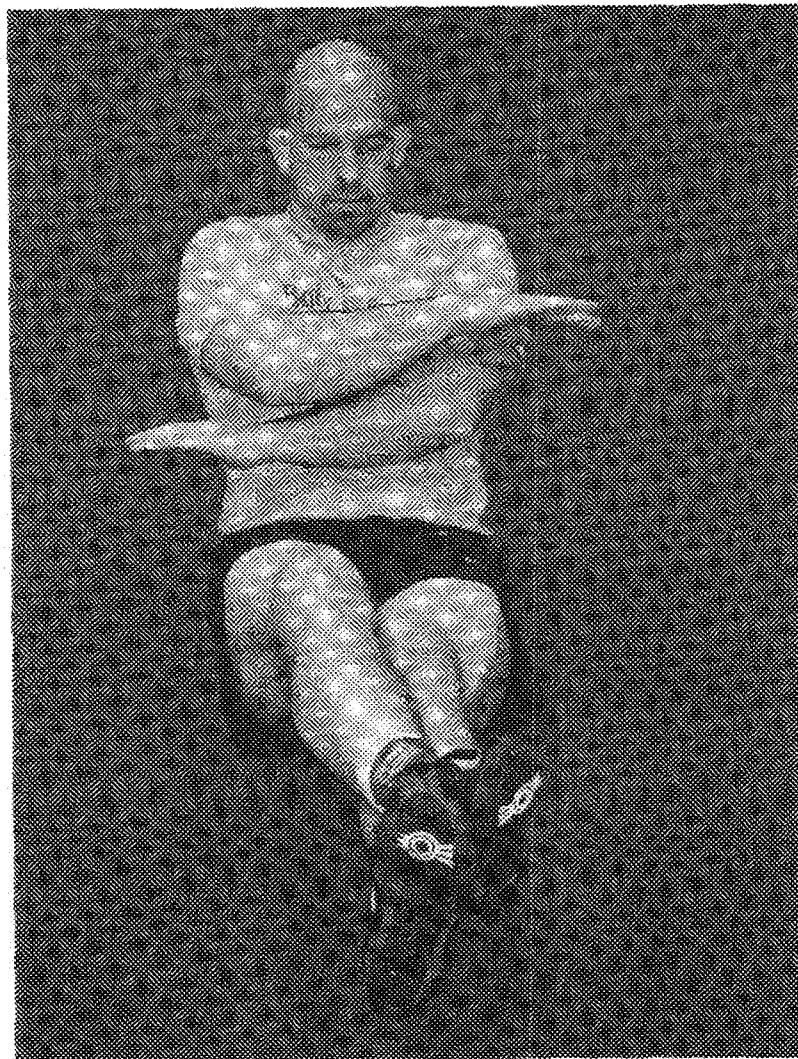
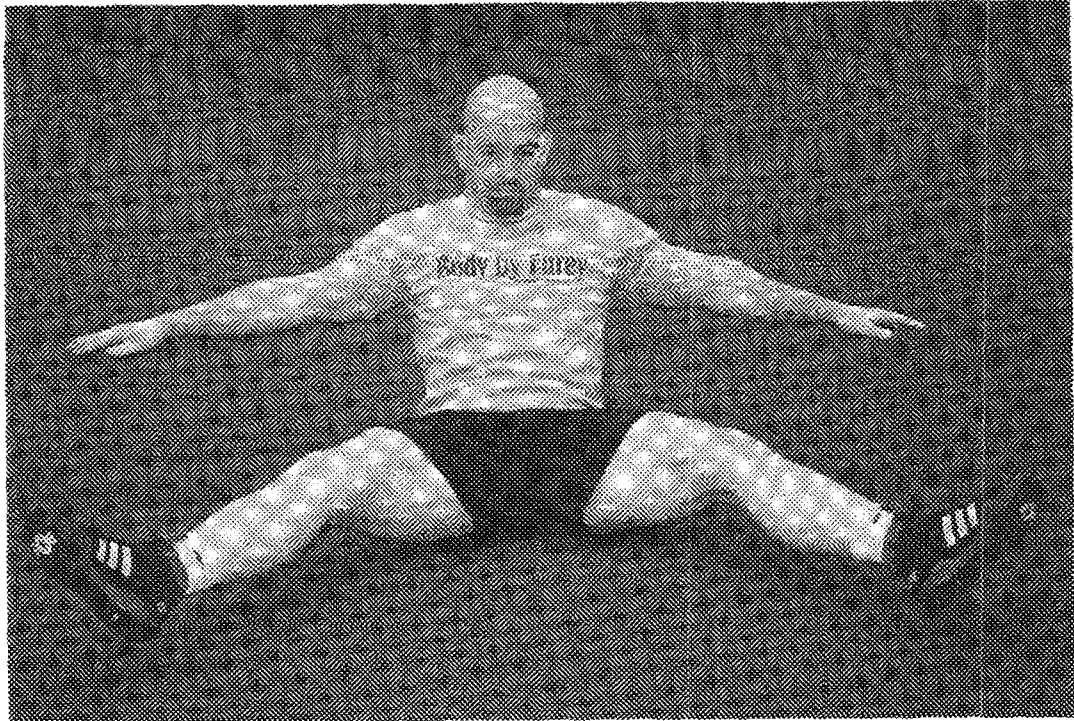




## Bent Knee Alternating Sit up

The bent knee alternating situp takes a certain amount of coordination and timing, but it works the upper and lower abs really well.

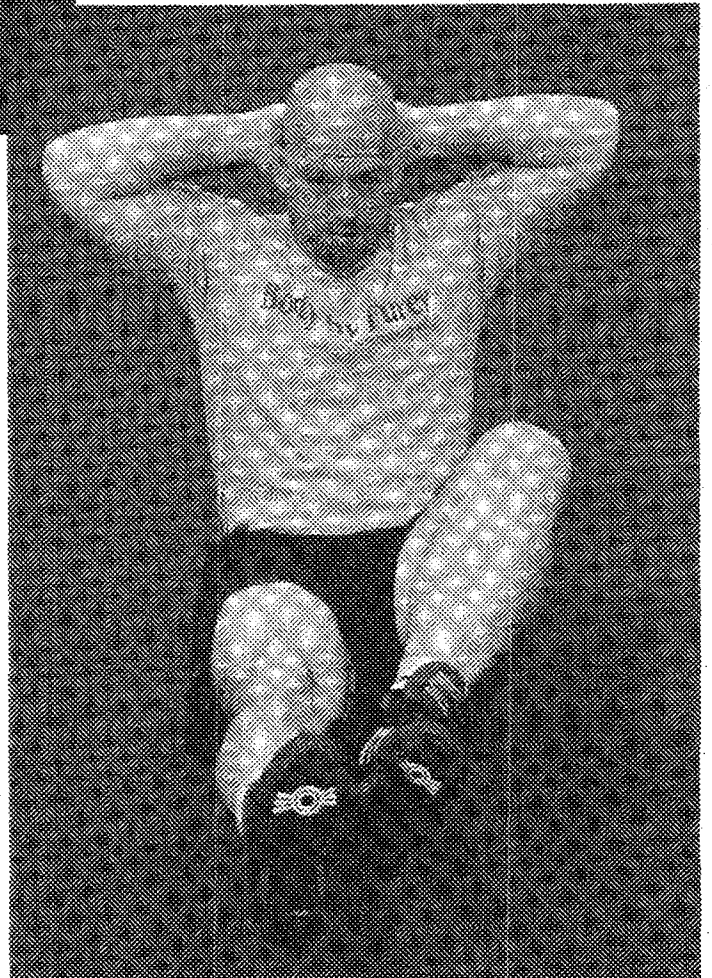
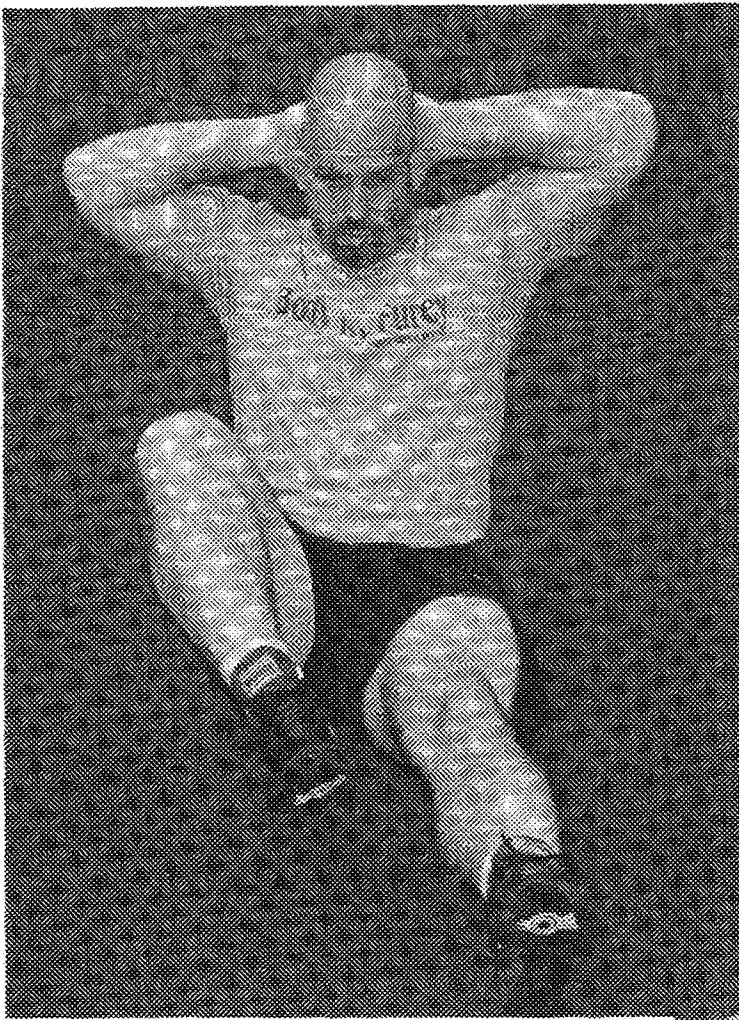
1. Lie on your back with your hands behind your head.
2. Raise both legs a few inches off the floor.
3. As you sit up pull your right leg in. Your left leg remains off the floor.
4. Return to starting position and repeat with the left leg.
5. Do as many repetitions as you can.
6. Exhale up, inhale down.



## Seated arm and leg scissors

The seated arm and leg scissors is not just great for hitting the lower abs and hip flexors, but for the upper body as well. I got this one from Robert Kiphuth, who was in charge of physical education at Yale many decades ago. Kiphuth was also an Olympic swimming coach who helped Johnny Weismuller, aka Tarzan, win several golds in the Olympics.

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight. Keep your spine erect.
2. Lift your legs about six inches off the floor.
3. Open your arms and legs wide, then scissor them, crossing your arms and your ankles.
4. Repeat 25-100 times
5. Exhale when your arms and legs cross. Inhale when you open them.

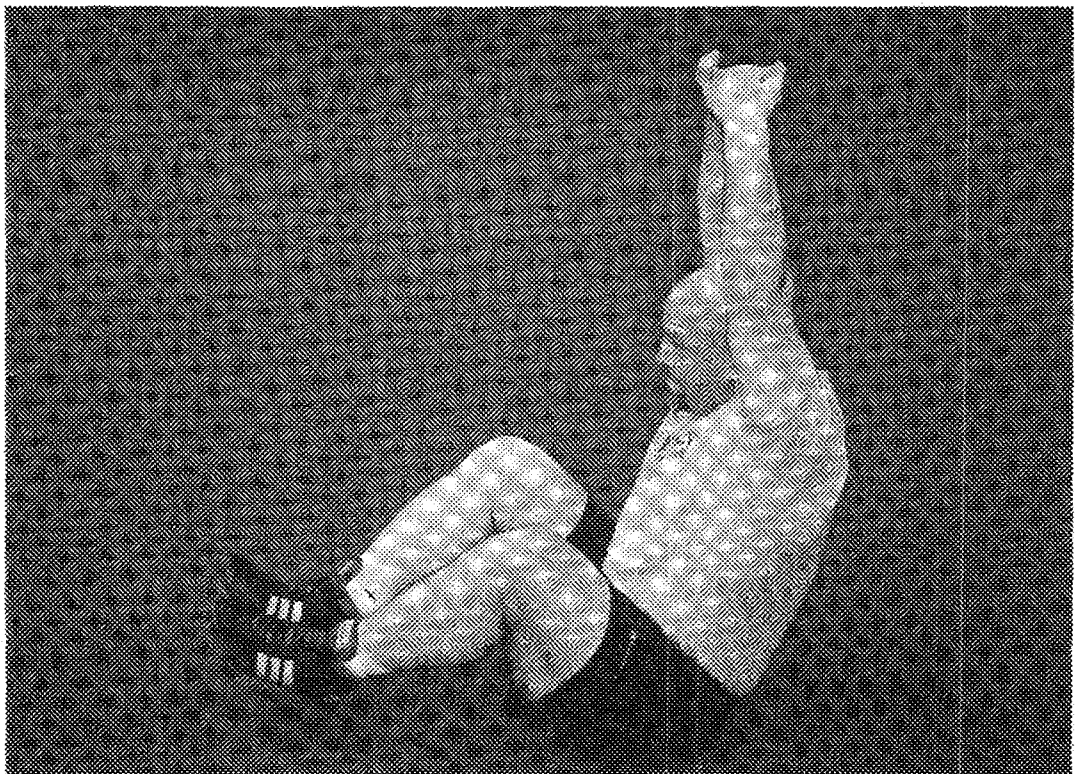
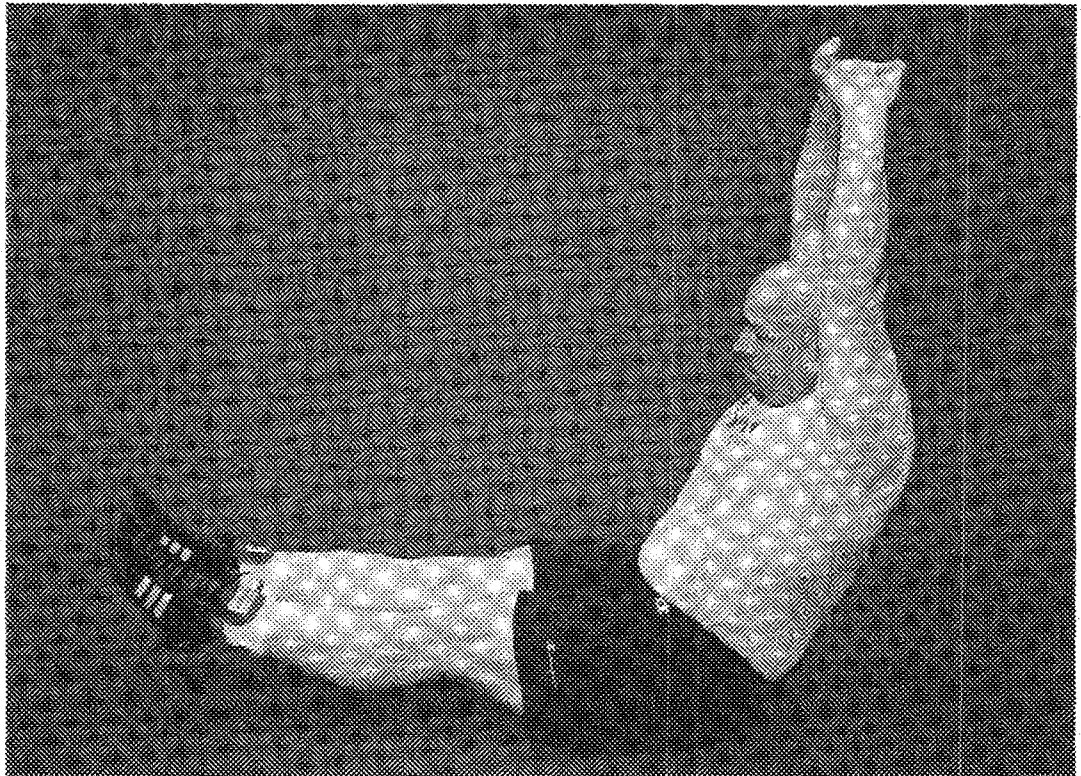


## Bicycle With Hands Behind Head

Bicycling in the manner shown in these photographs strengthens the abdominals, back and hip flexors. When your hands are behind your head, pull your elbows back and keep an erect spine. This will help to Weismueller

1. From a seated position interlock your fingers behind your head.
2. Lift both legs off the floor about six inches.
3. Now breathe naturally as you bicycle your legs back and forth.
4. Keep your back straight.
5. The leg that is not being pulled in remains about six inches from the floor.



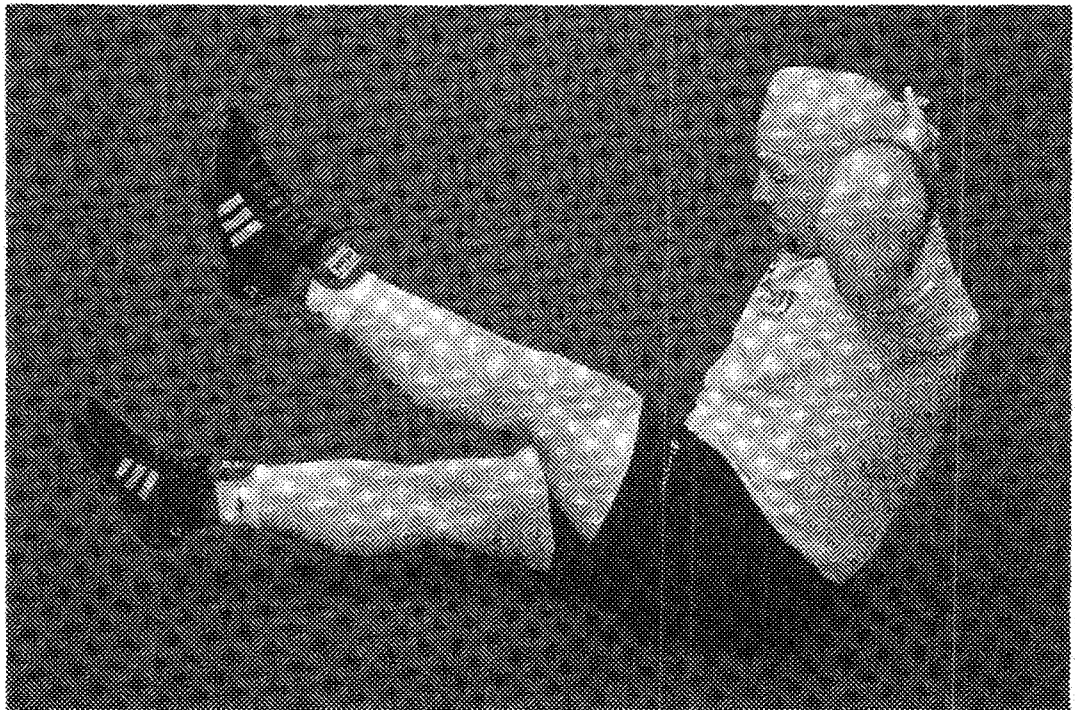
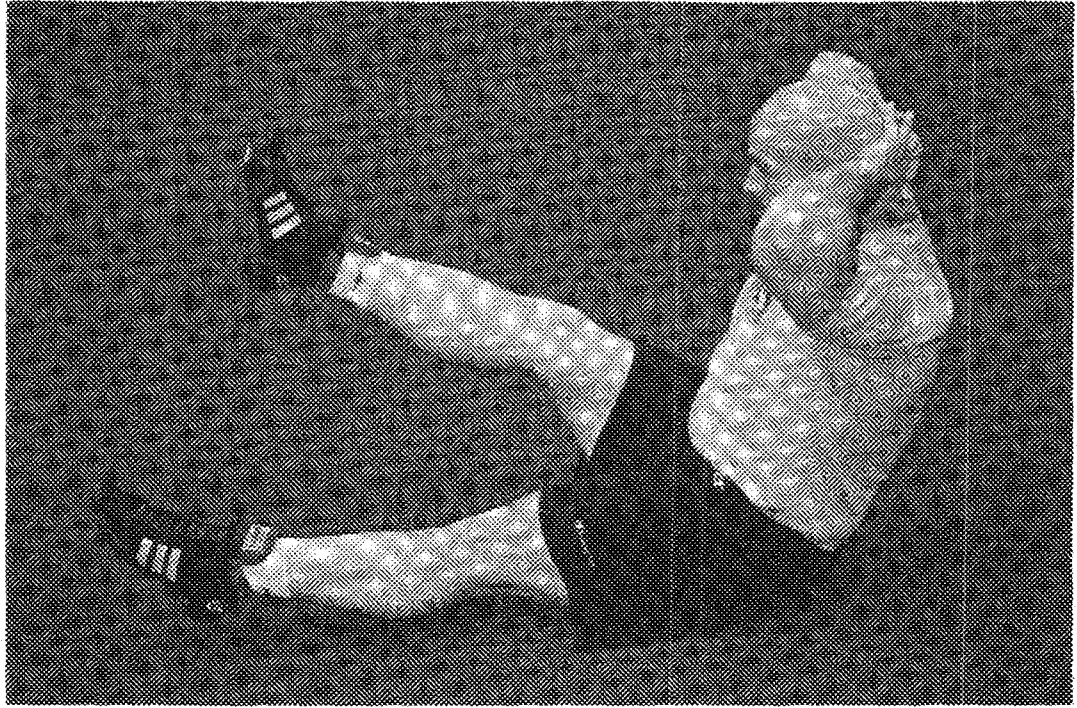




## Leg Pull-In With Hands Clapsed Overhead

This exercise stretches the back and improves posture while exercising the abdominals and hip flexors.

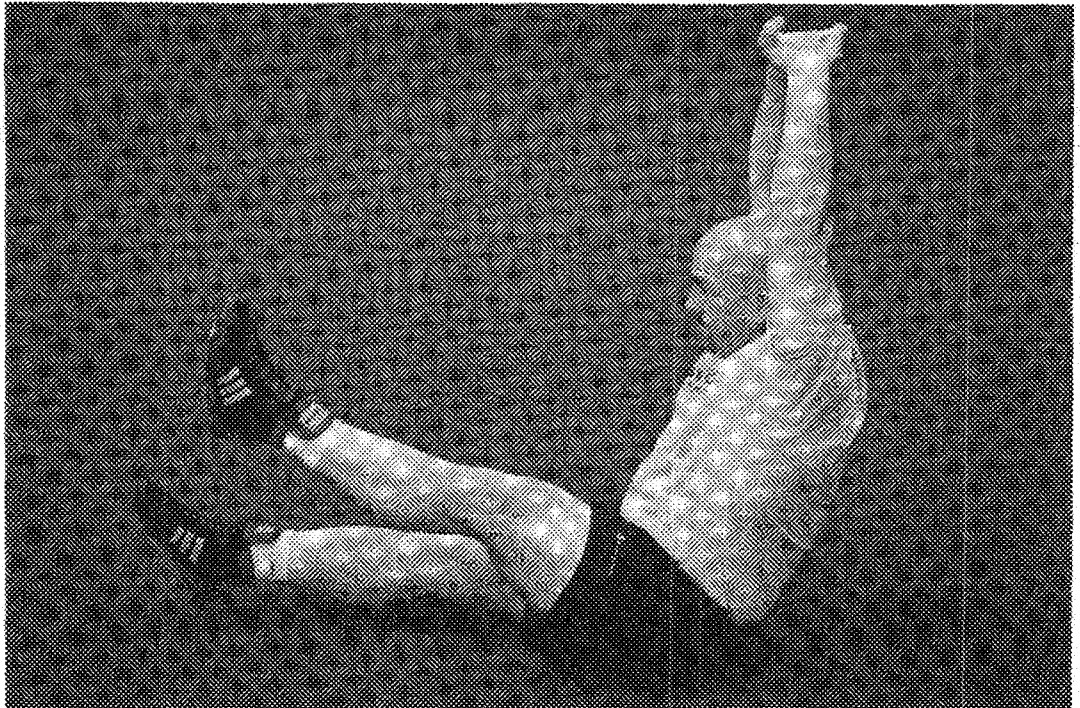
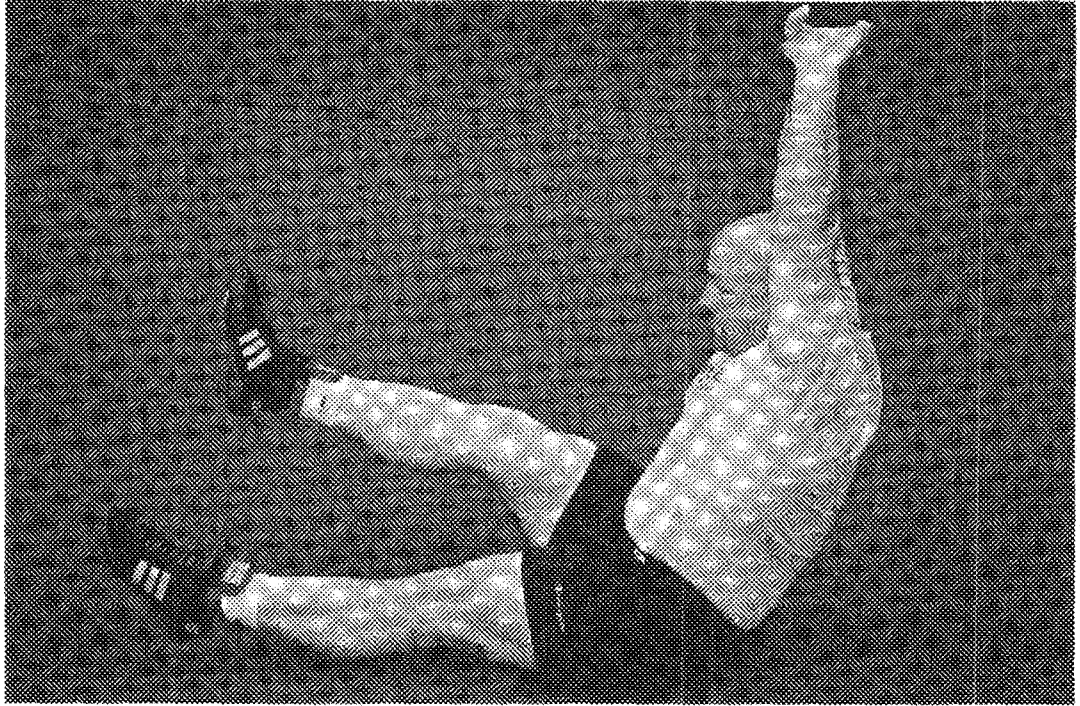
1. Sit on floor with legs straight and fingers interlocked with hands held as high as possible.
2. Lift both legs about six inches from the ground.
3. Pull both knees in toward your stomach at the same time.
4. As your legs straighten, do not let them touch the ground. Keep them about six inches off the floor.
5. Exhale as your legs pull in, inhale on the return.
6. Do as many repetitions as you can.



## Seated Alternating Leg Lifts With Hands Behind Head

Alternating leg lifts with your hands behind your head is a great exercise for improving your posture and upper back strength as you strengthen your lower abs, hip flexors and lower back.

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight. Place both hands behind your head and pull your elbows back as far as you can, straightening your spine.
2. Lift both legs about six inches off the floor.
3. Begin to alternate lifting of the legs.
4. Breathe naturally as you perform this exercise.
5. Do not let either leg touch the floor until you have completed the exercise.
6. Do 25-100 repetitions.

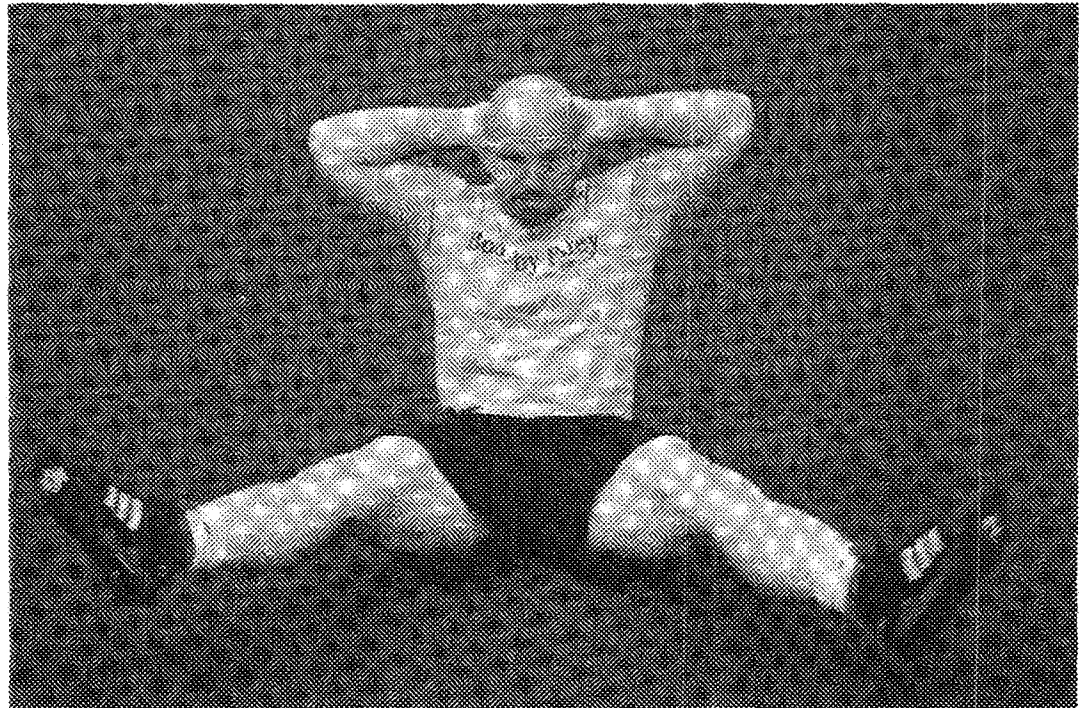
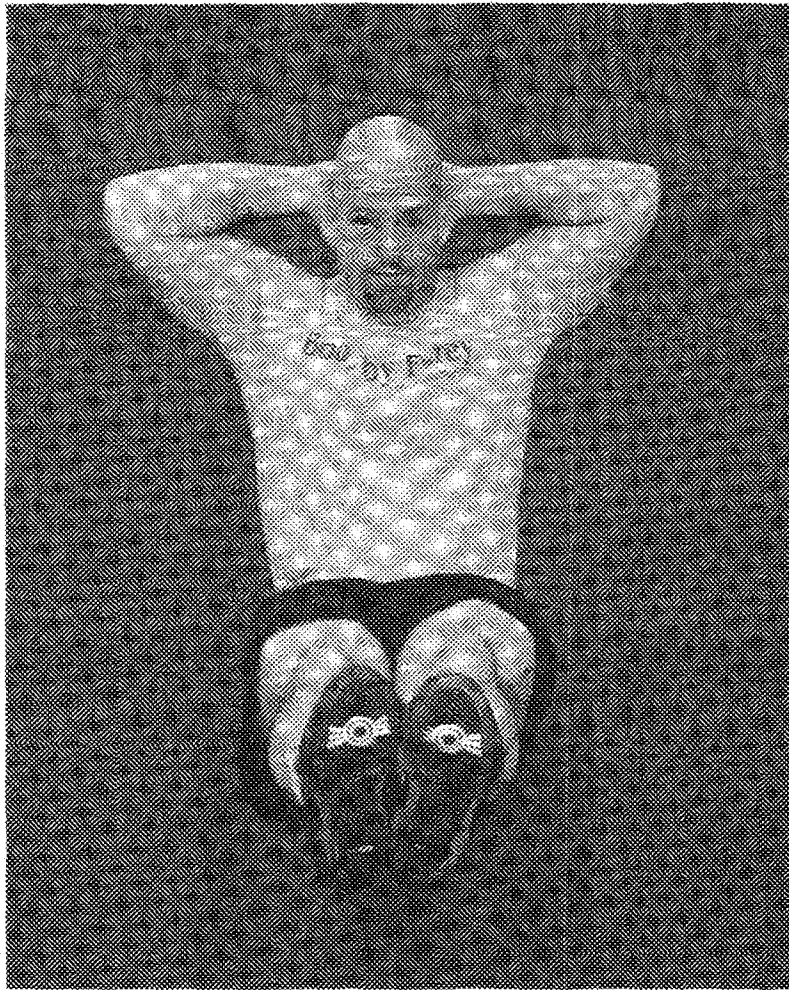


## **Seated Alternating Leg Lifts With Arms Stretched Overhead**

Alternating leg lifts with your hands stretched overhead are great for improving posture. Other areas to benefit are your lower abs, hip flexors and lower back.

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight. Interlock the fingers of both hands and raise to the ceiling.
2. Lift both legs about six inches off the floor.
3. Begin to alternate lifting of the legs.
4. Breathe naturally as you perform this exercise.
5. Do not let either leg touch the floor until you have completed the exercise.
6. Do 25-100 repetitions.



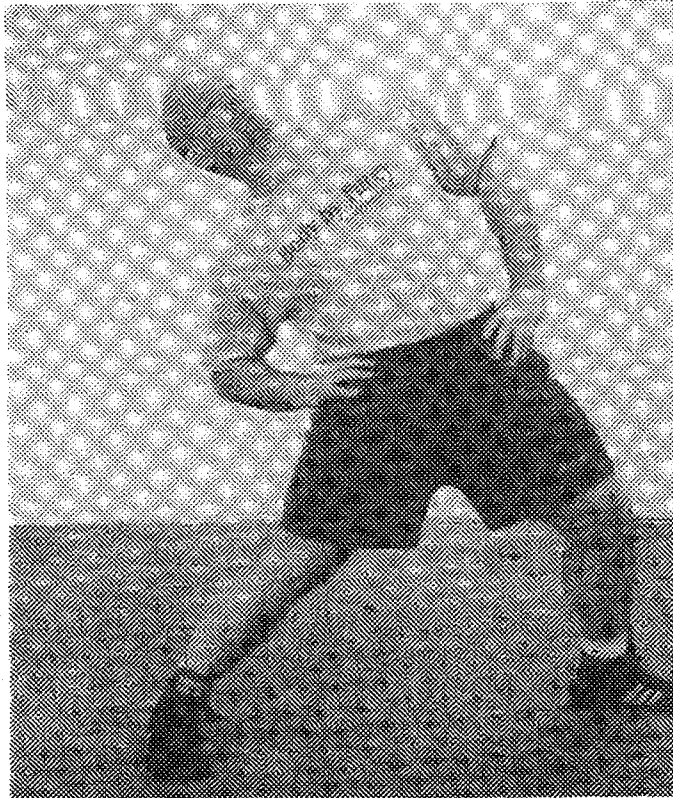
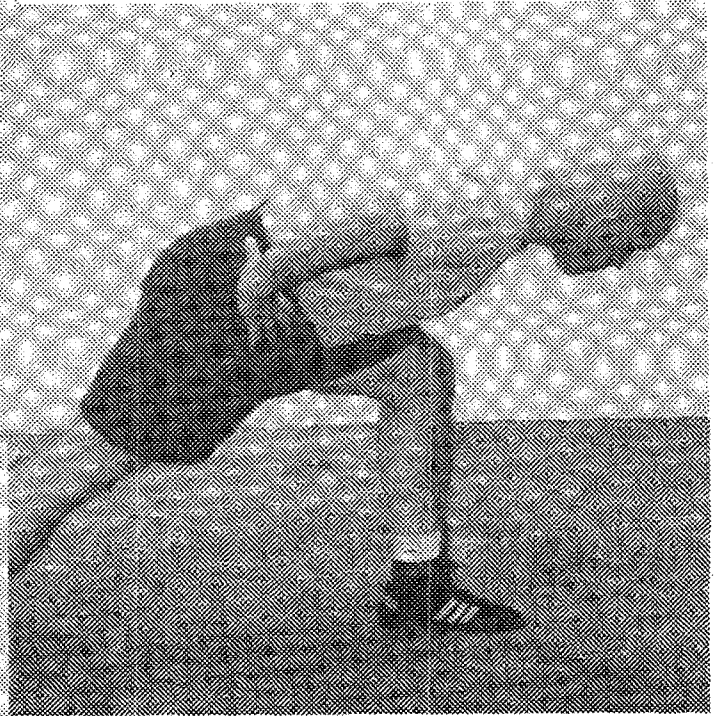
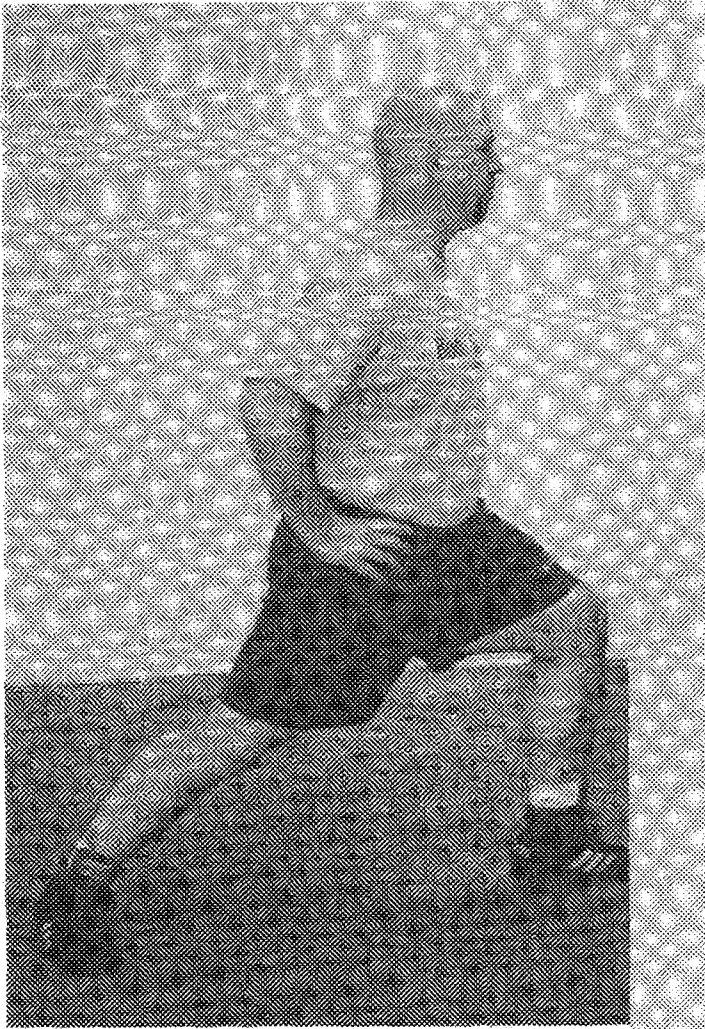


## Seated Leg Lift With Leg Spreader

The seated leg lift with leg spreader is good for improving posture while strengthening the lower abs and hip flexors. Your lower back and inner thighs benefit as well.

1. Sit on the floor with your hands behind your head.
2. Pull your elbows back to straighten your spine.
3. Lift both legs six inches off the floor.
4. Spread your legs as wide as possible, then close them.
5. Do not let your legs touch the floor.
6. Inhale as you spread your legs, exhale as you close them.
7. Do 25-100 repetitions.

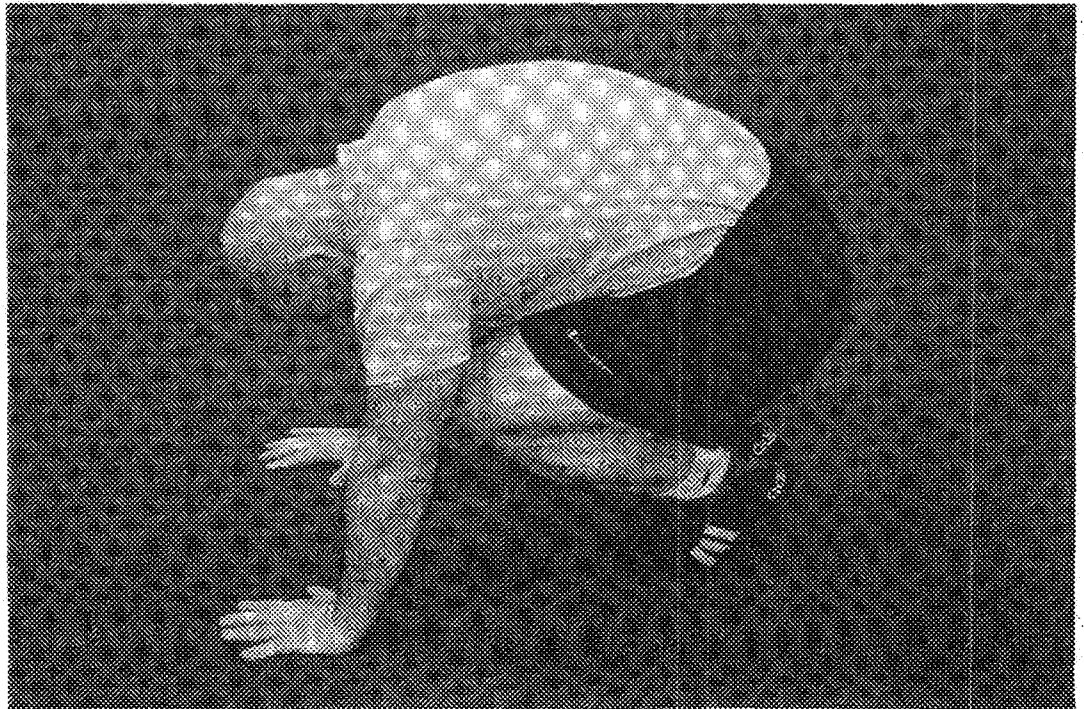
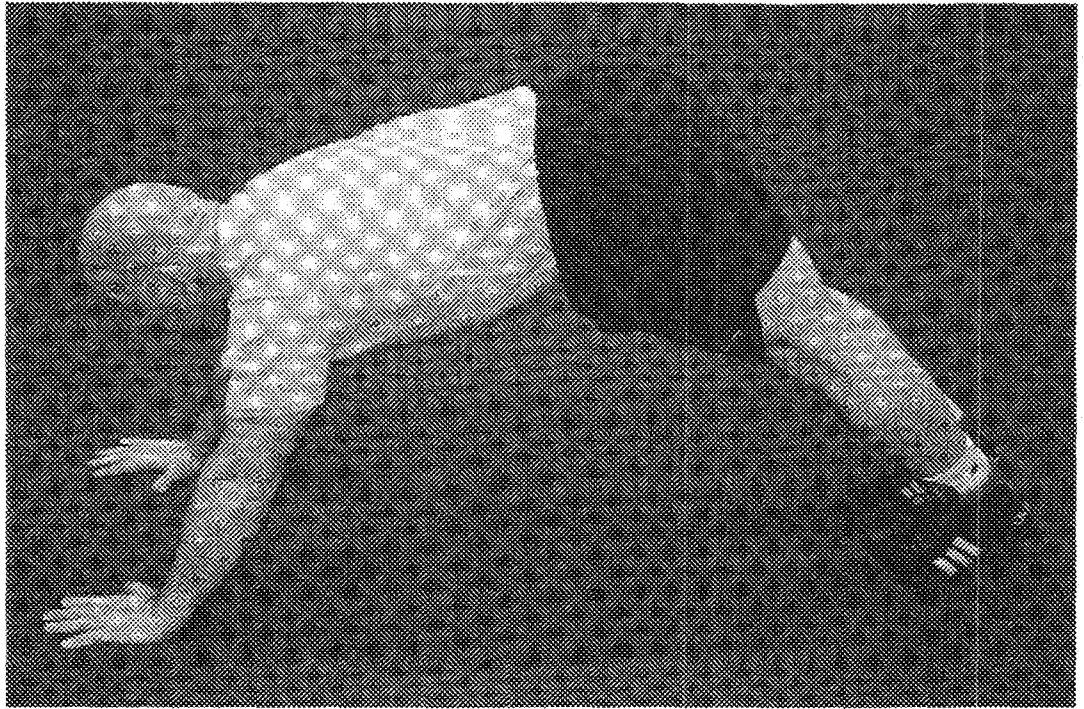




## Bow & Arrow Stance Trunk Rotators

This variation of the trunk rotators seen in the *Magnificent Seven* is great for your abs, back, thighs and hip flexors. The bow-and-arrow stance also helps you develop greater balance and agility.

1. Begin with your left foot forward and bent. Put your right leg back and make sure it is nearly straight.
2. Place your hands on your hips and inhale deeply.
3. Bend forward and begin tracing a clockwise circle with your head and shoulders leading the way.
4. Concentrate on your obliques and abdominals as you rotate.
5. Exhale when you reach the starting position. Do 10 repetitions, then switch directions and do 10 more repetitions.



## Mountain Jumps

This exercise is a variation of mountain climbers. It works the abs and legs while developing lung power.

1. Begin in a modified pushup position with your arms shoulder-width or further apart.
2. Simultaneously jump your two feet forward, with both feet touching between your hands.
3. Keep your hands flat the entire time.
4. Exhale when you jump forward, inhale back.
5. Do these until fatigue hits.

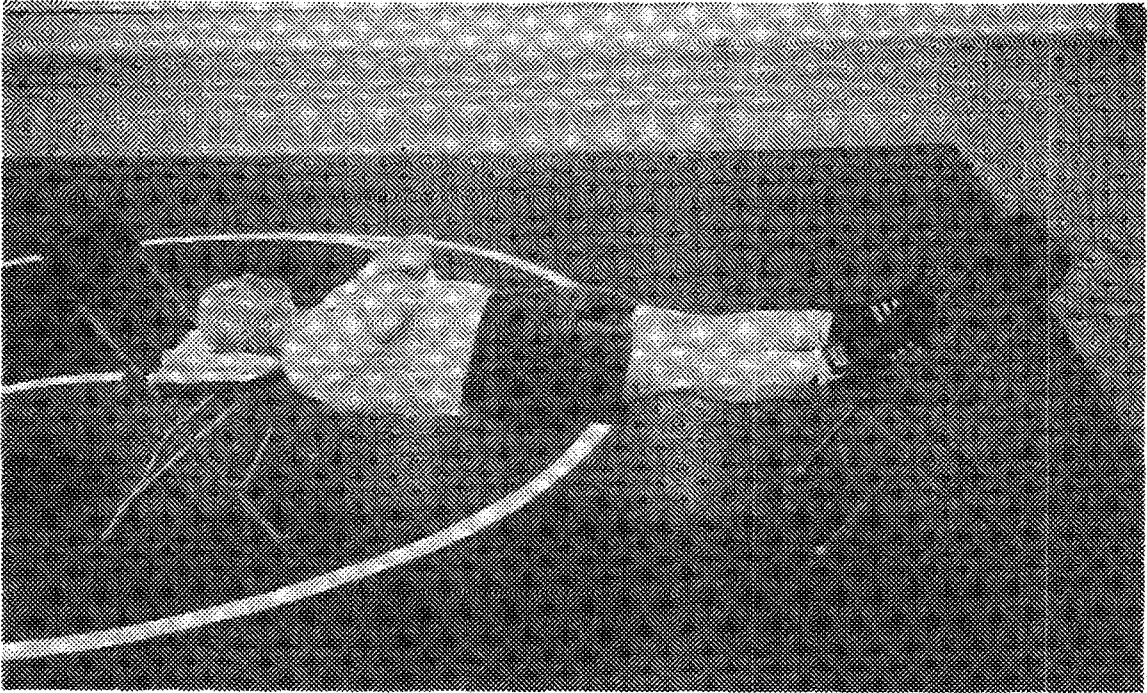
# Advanced Exercises

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The advanced exercises are generally more difficult than the basic and intermediate exercises, but you don't have to wait until you've mastered all the preceding exercises before you try them. In fact, some people will be able to do a few of the advanced exercises right away. This is usually because of previous experience in other activities.

The most important thing for you to do is find the exercises in this book, regardless of what section they are in, and weave a program around them. Follow that program for a short while, then repeatedly switch exercises. Some people never repeat the same workout two times in a row. This is a smart way to train, especially after you've gotten over the initial soreness you may have when you began to emphasize daily exercises for the midsection. Continually play with the sequence so that your body has to adapt on a regular basis. Plus, when you do this, your training will always be new, fun and interesting.

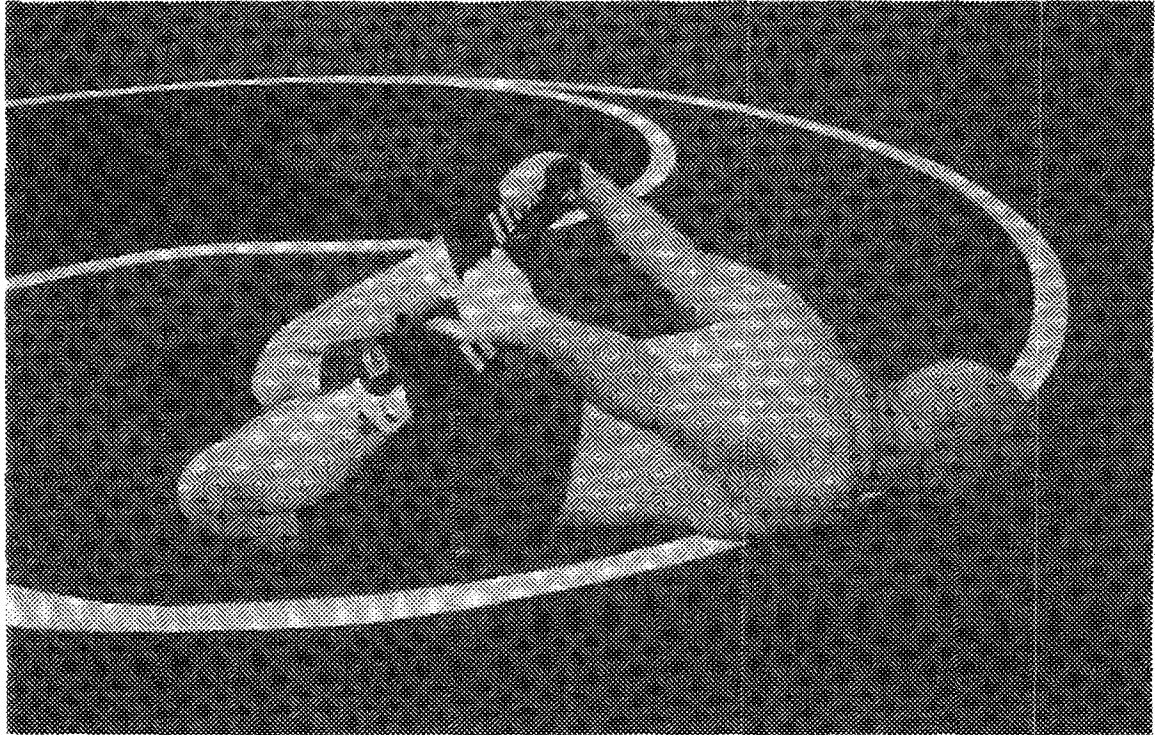
Once again, do the Magnificent Seven each morning upon arising. Those seven exercises keep everything moving, conditioning your body for more vigorous training later in the day.





## Holding Back of Head and Feet Between Two Chairs

This exercise strengthens the abdominals as well as the muscles of the back and neck. It is strenuous, but it gets results. When you can hold for a minute without discomfort you've made great progress. At first you can have the chairs closer together, to give yourself a boost. After you get better though, spread the chairs wider and you'll find it much harder. Breathe naturally as you perform this exercise and remain as relaxed as possible.



## Abdominal Jumps

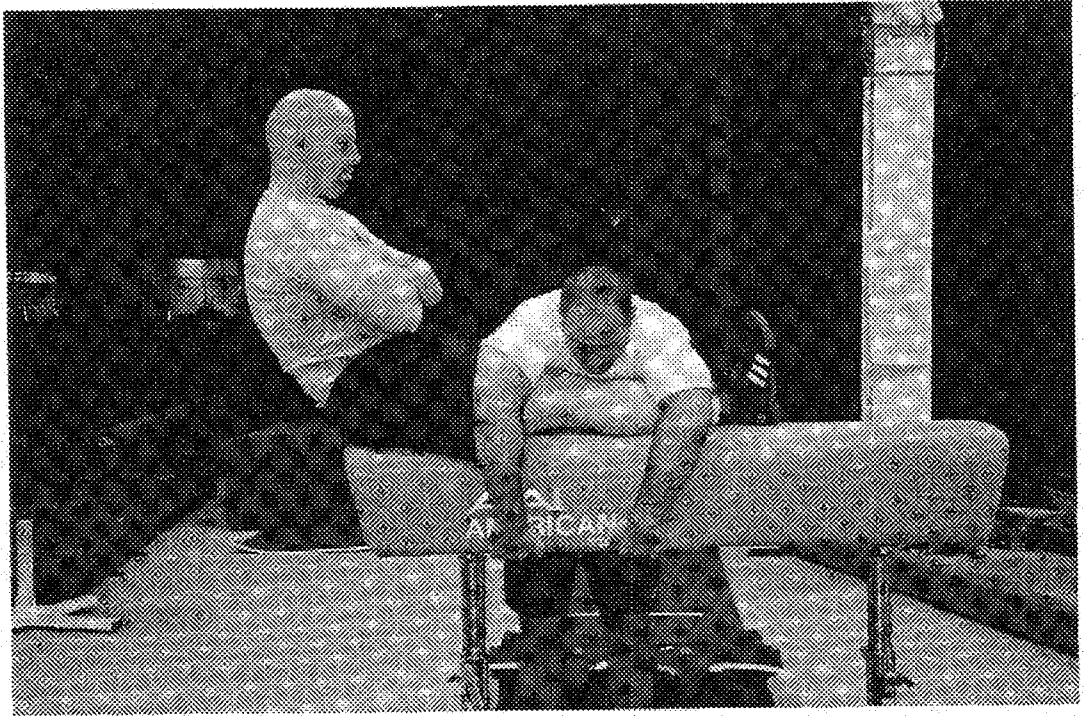
This is an exercise I learned from Gogi Parseghian, a former Soviet Union Greco-Roman silver medalist. When described, it may sound impossible, but when you see it done, and better yet, figure it out for yourself, you'll believe. Abdominal jumps strengthen the abdominals and lower back. They make you more explosive. Your quadriceps, lower back and shoulders also receive a good stretch. This exercise will enhance your ability to take a punch because you are conditioning your abdominals to meet force with force.

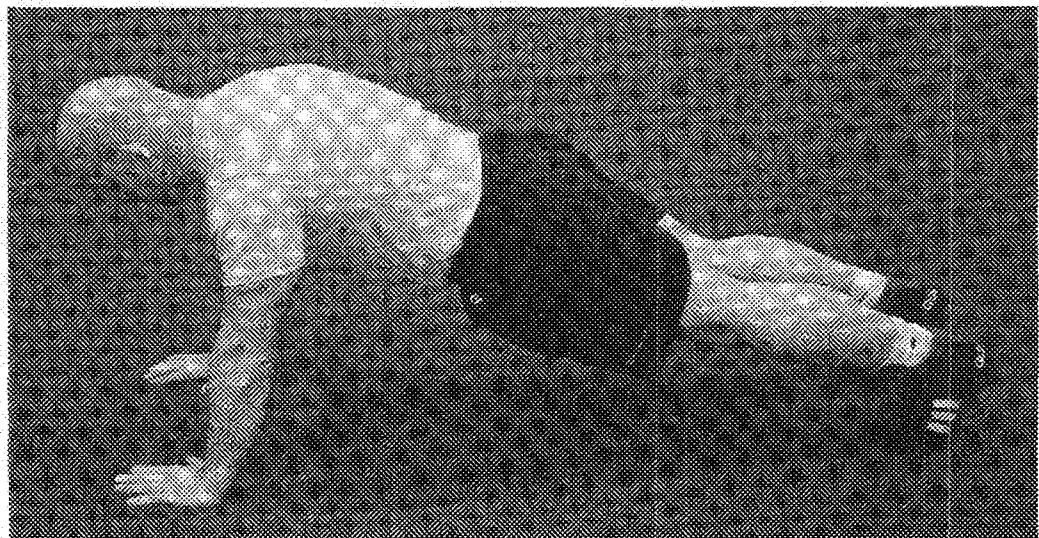
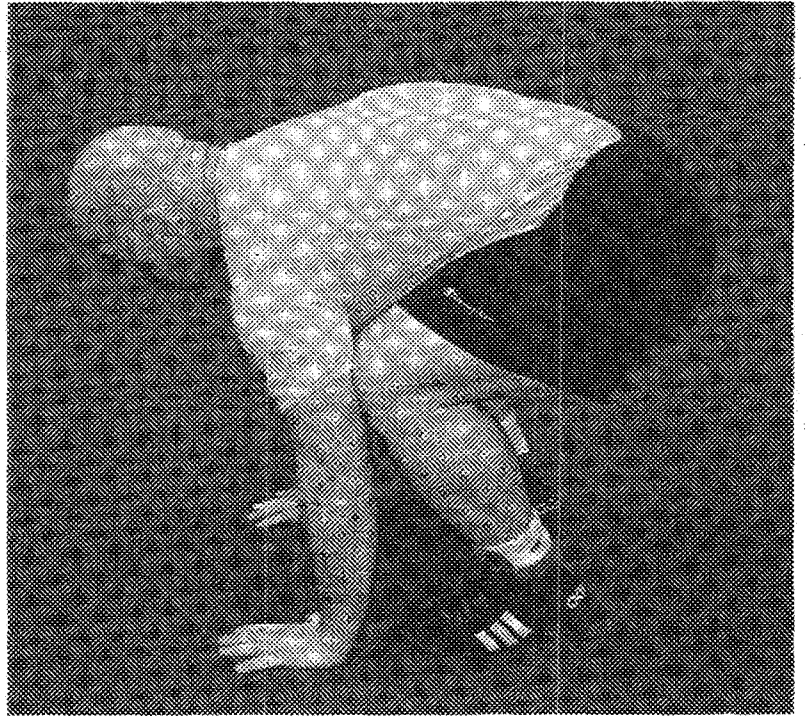
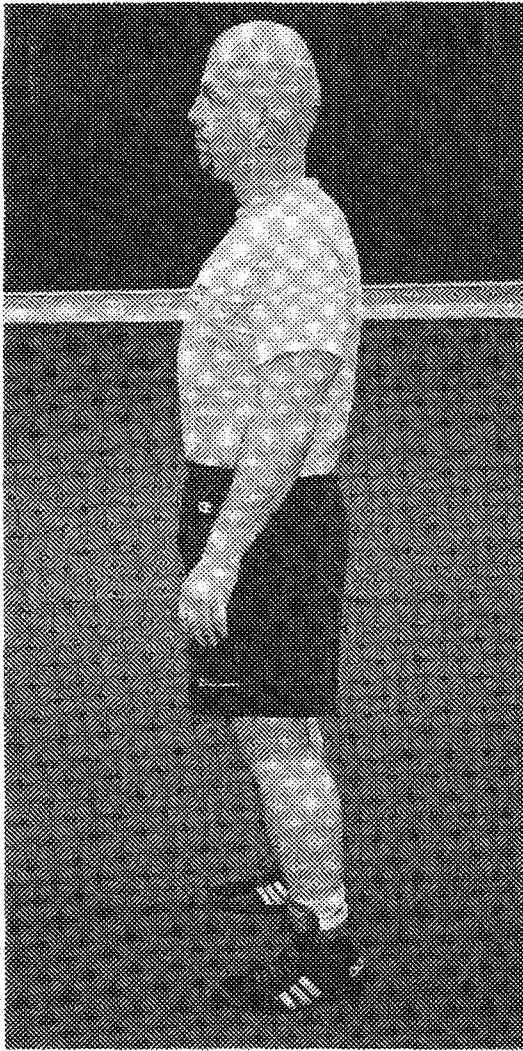
1. Lie face down with your legs bent backward.
2. Reach back and grab your ankles.
3. Inhale and focus your mind on your abdominals.
4. Simultaneously pull up on your feet and explode by pushing your abdominals off the mat. This will cause you to spring an inch or more off the floor. Exhale as you explode.
5. Work up to ten repetitions of this exercise.

## Pommel Horse Situps

This partner-assisted exercise will get your attention. It's one of my favorites. Pommel horse situps give you a good stretch in your spine on the way down, then strengthen your abs, lower back and hip flexors on the way up. Make sure you have a partner whom you trust. This exercise could also be done off a sturdy table.

1. Sit on a pommel horse with your buttocks close to the edge. Your legs are straight.
2. Have your partner press the weight of his chest on your thighs.
3. Place your hands above your head and lean back as far as you can comfortably stretch. Inhale as you are leaning back.
4. Hold the stretch for a count and relax. No jerking or bouncing is tolerated.
5. Now situp and exhale at the top.
6. Repeat as many times as you can.



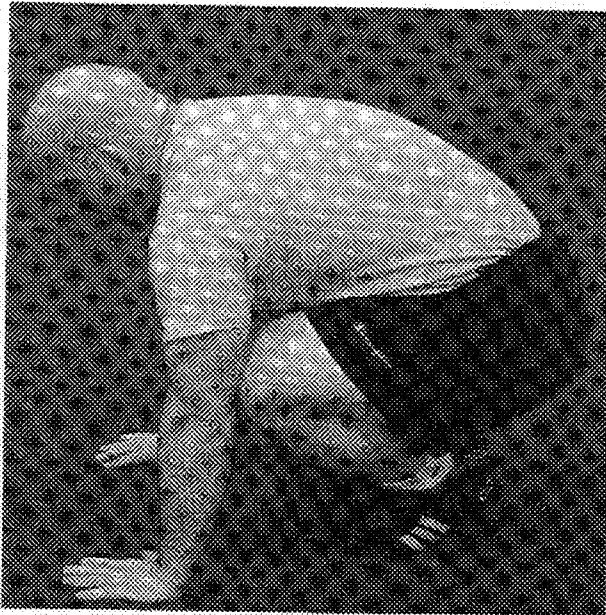


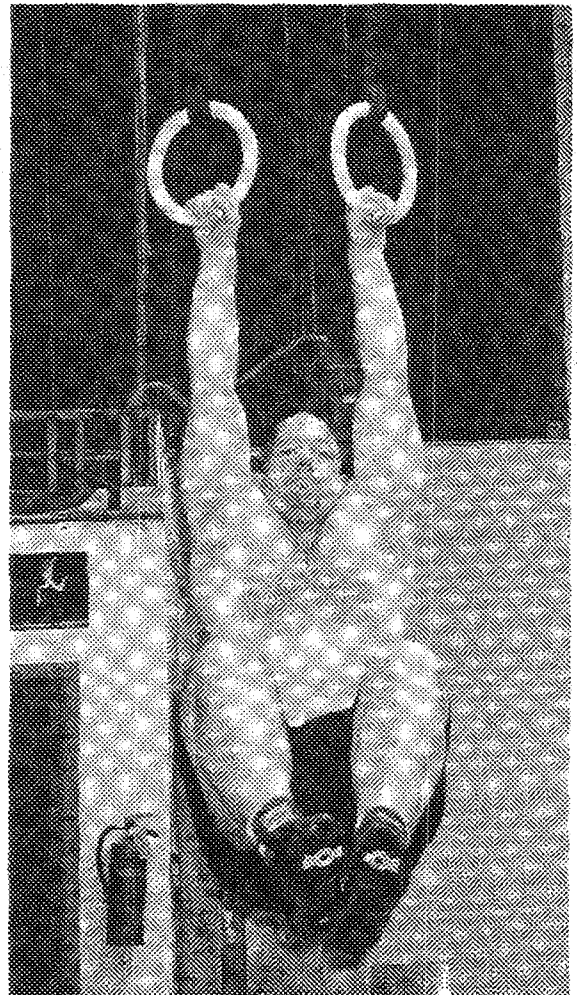
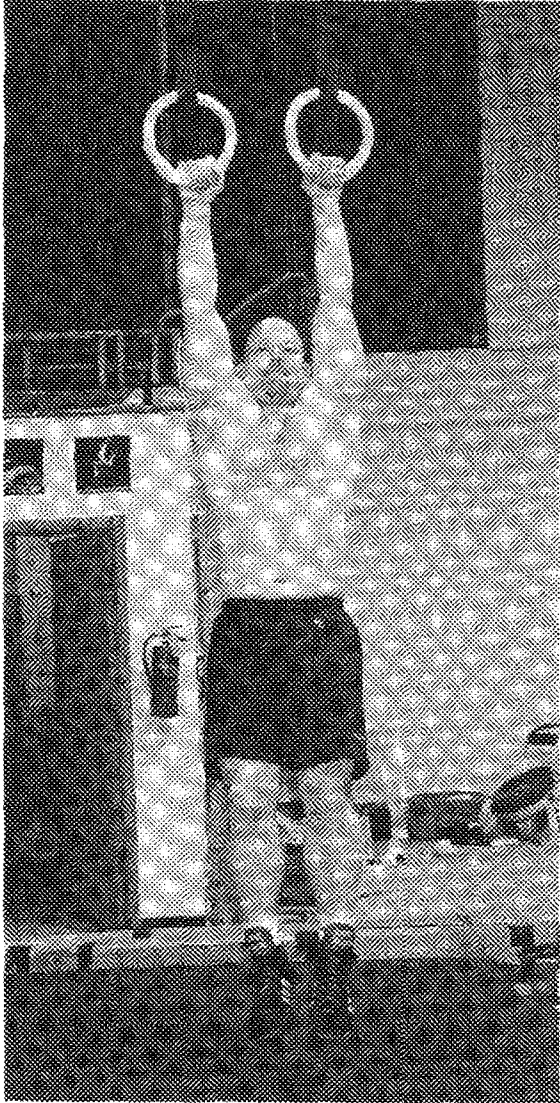


## Burpees

Often used in basic training for the military, burpees are an overall body conditioner. Jumping into and out of position works the abdominals, legs, hips, buttocks and arms ... and the deep breathing accompanied by this exercise builds lung power.

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and hands hanging at sides.
2. Lean forward, placing your palms near your feet.
3. Jump back into a pushup position.
4. Then hop your feet back to where your hands are.
5. From there you pop back to a standing position.
6. Do at least 10 repetitions.
7. Breathe naturally throughout this exercise.

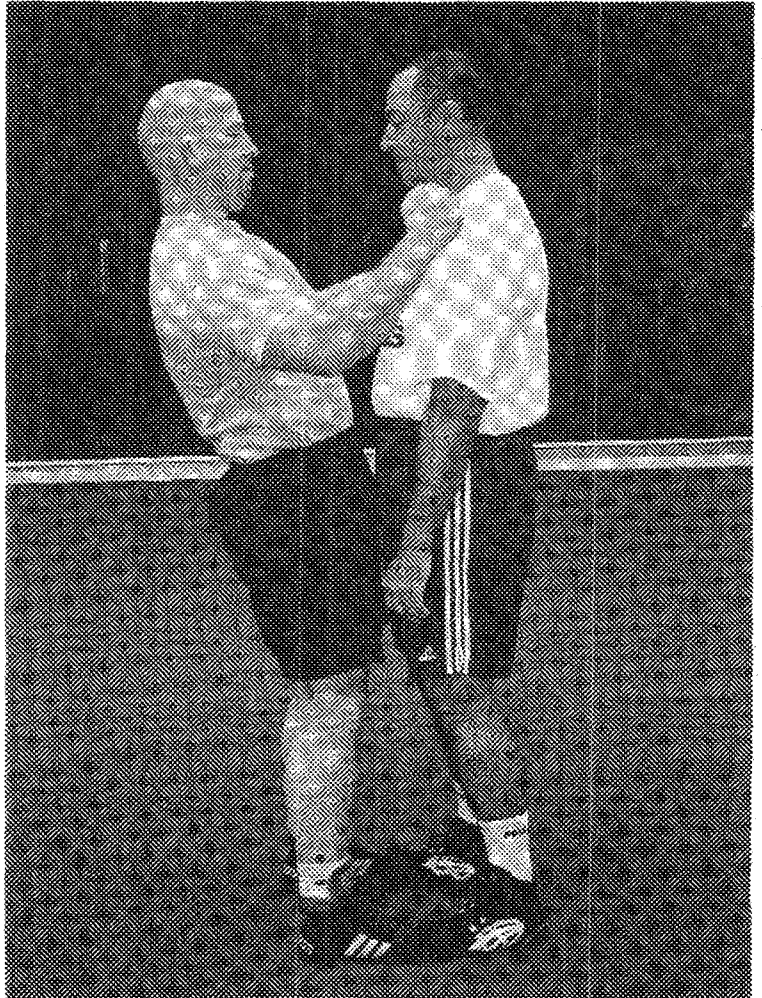
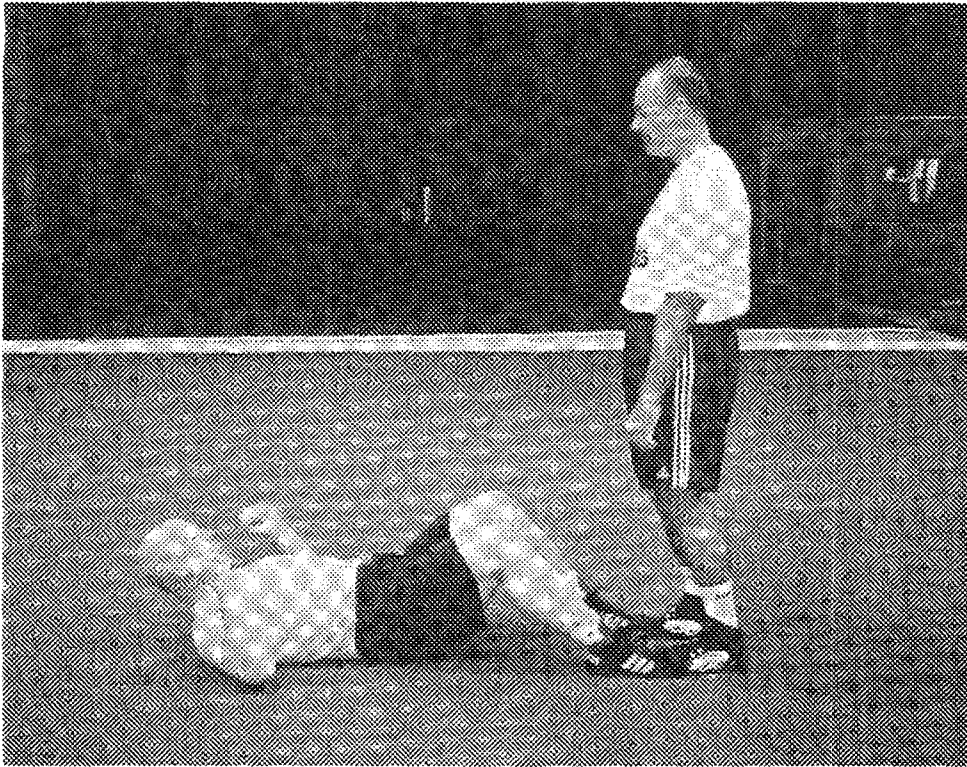




## Hanging Knee Pullin from Still Rings

This exercise works your abdominals and grip at the same time. It isn't easy to hang on while you train, but it gets your attention. You can perform this with any type of chin-up apparatus. I'm using the still rings because they are harder to control, which makes the exercise even better.

1. Jump up and grab onto the still rings or to any chin-up bar.
2. While holding on, lift your bent knees and bring them up as high as possible.
3. Round your back as you lift.
4. Exhale as your knees come up, inhale down.
5. Do as many repetitions as you can.

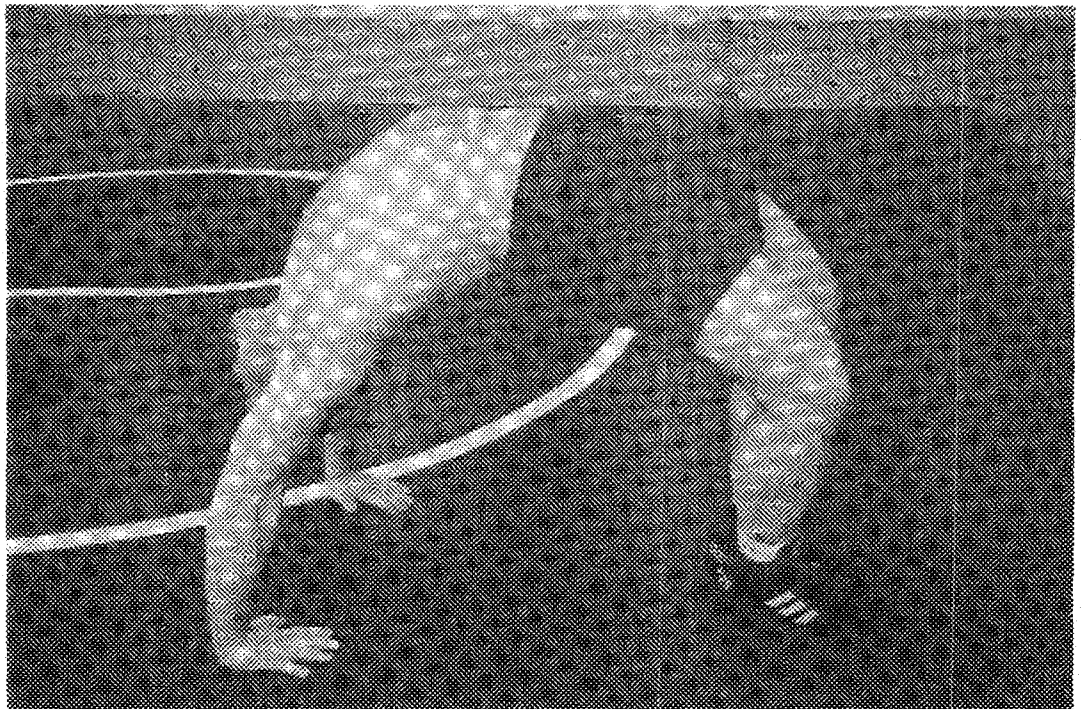
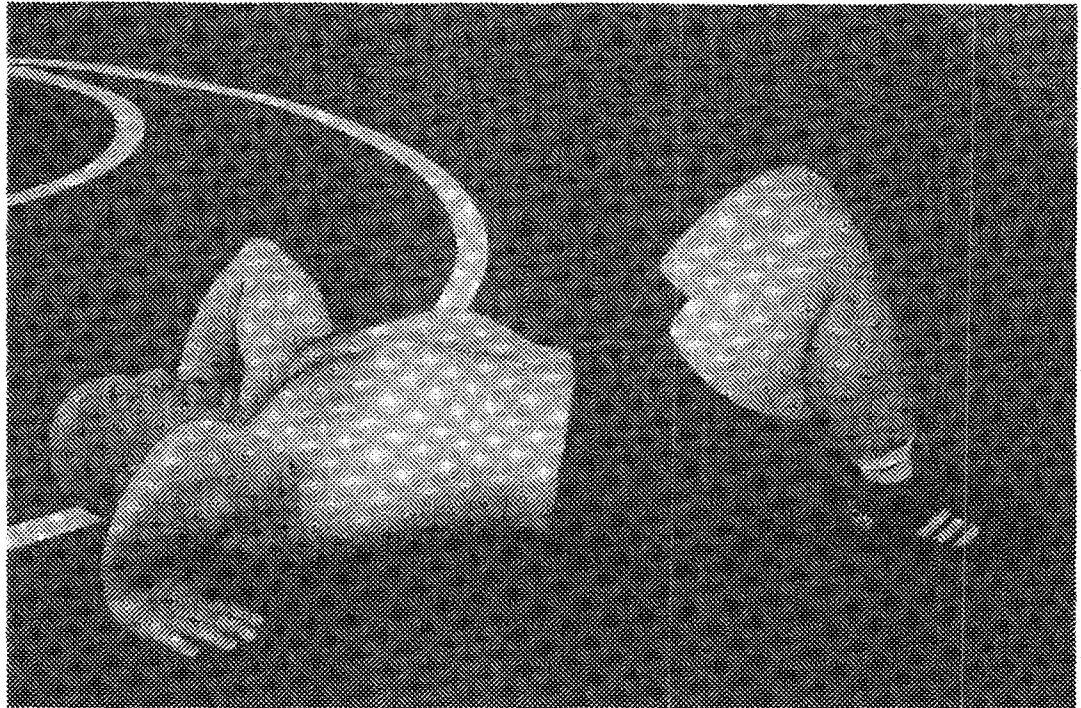


## Situp to Standing With Partner Standing On Toes

I learned this dynamic exercise from a former Russian Spetznaz officer, Vladimir Vasiliev. Situps done this way require strength and agility. Do the best you can on this one.

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
2. Your partner stands on your toes.
3. Situp and quickly spring to a standing position.
4. Return to starting position and repeat.
5. Exhale at the top of the movement, inhale down.





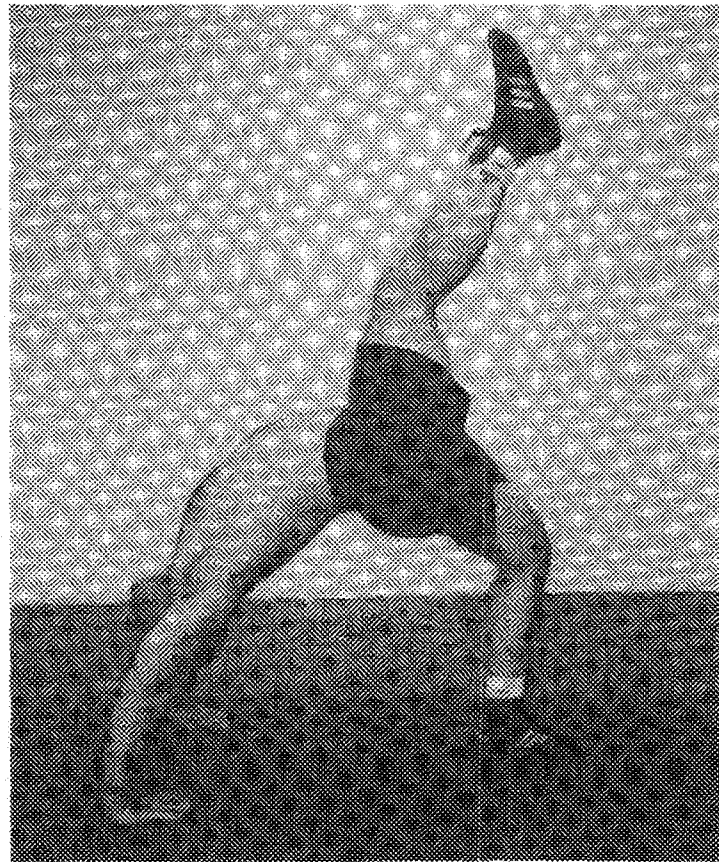
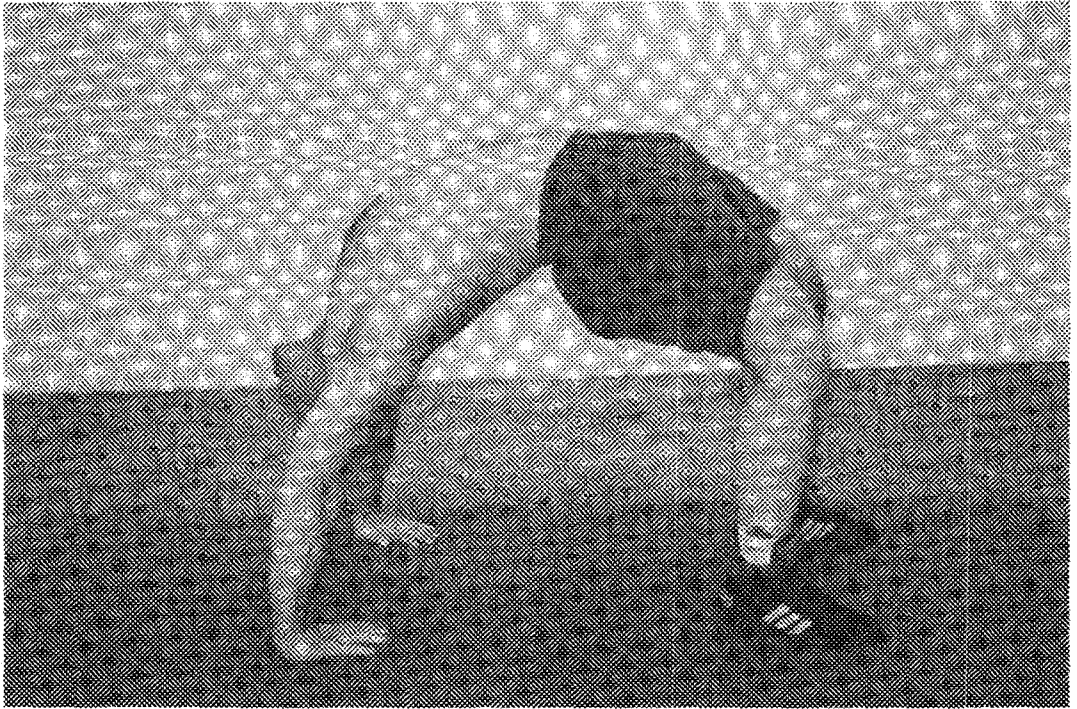


## Gymnastic Bridge

When Karl Gotch first began teaching me how to bridge properly, every muscle in my body would resist. The gymnastic bridge is an incredible workout for your abdominals, arms, back, shoulders, legs, hips and buttocks. Any exercise that hits so many muscle groups at once has to be an effective fat-burning, muscle-builder. And guess what it does for functional strength? The results are well worth the effort. I'll cover this subject in greater detail in the future. For now, realize that in terms of overall body development there isn't anything better than bridging.

Unlike the wrestler's bridge, the gymnastic bridge takes you off your head. Getting into this position and holding for time will do more to change your body than you can imagine. You'll get much stronger and a lot more flexible.

1. From flat on your back, place your hands by your shoulders.
2. Push off your bent legs and straighten your arms.
3. Put your two feet together and squeeze your thighs together. Keep your feet flat. This creates a forward weight shift and stretches your spine and shoulders.
4. Now breathe deeply and hold the position. Shoot for a minute at first, then eventually work up to three minutes.

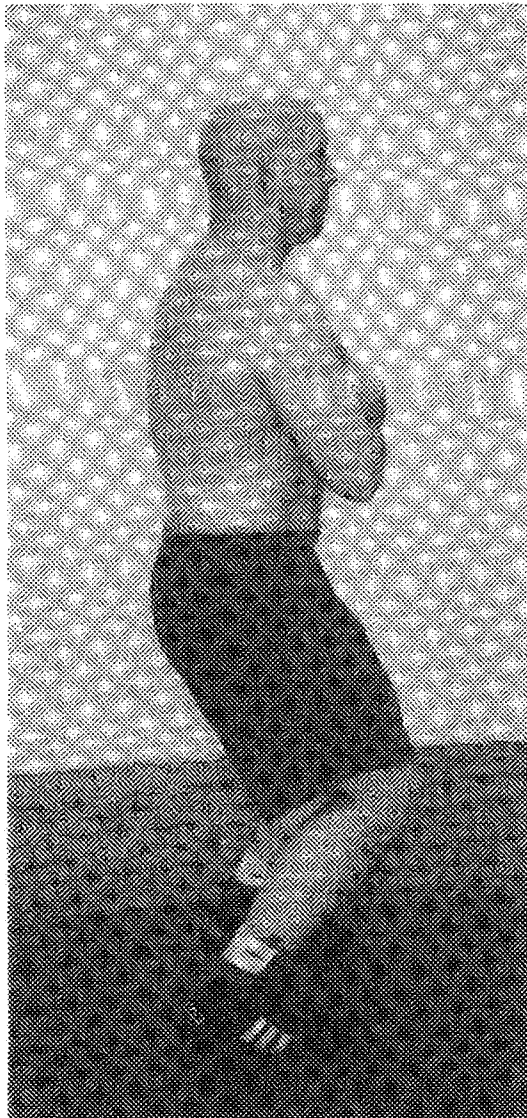
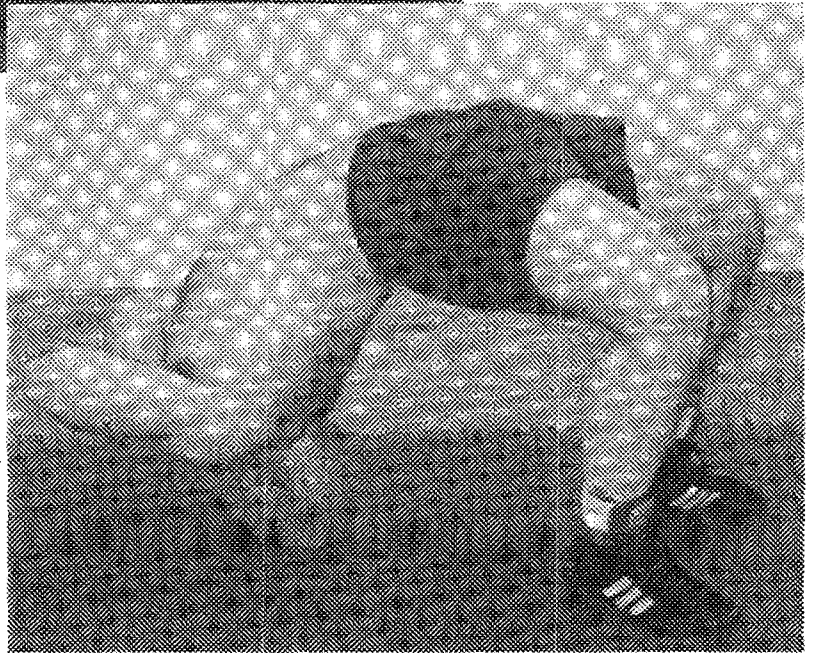
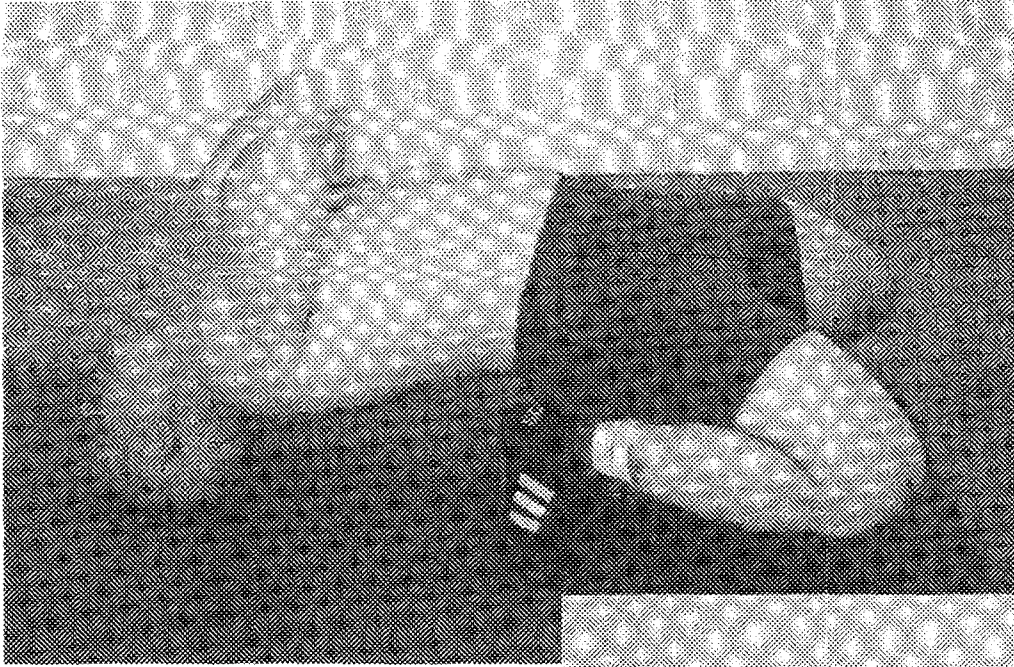


## Gymnastic Bridge With One Leg In Air

After you've diligently practiced the other bridging and back arching exercises in this book, you may be ready to fall straight into a gymnastic bridge from standing. For now, while holding the gymnastic bridge, put one leg high in the air. Doing this takes agility, strength and overall concentration. And you can't do it with a weak midsection.

1. Once you've pushed yourself into the gymnastic bridge, hold the position.
2. Move both feet together and squeeze your thighs together. Keep your feet flat.
3. Breathe deeply and concentrate.
4. Now, while holding a stable position, lift your right leg high in the air with your toe pointing to the ceiling. Hold for a two-count and lower.
5. Now do the same with your left leg.
6. Repeat five or more times each leg.

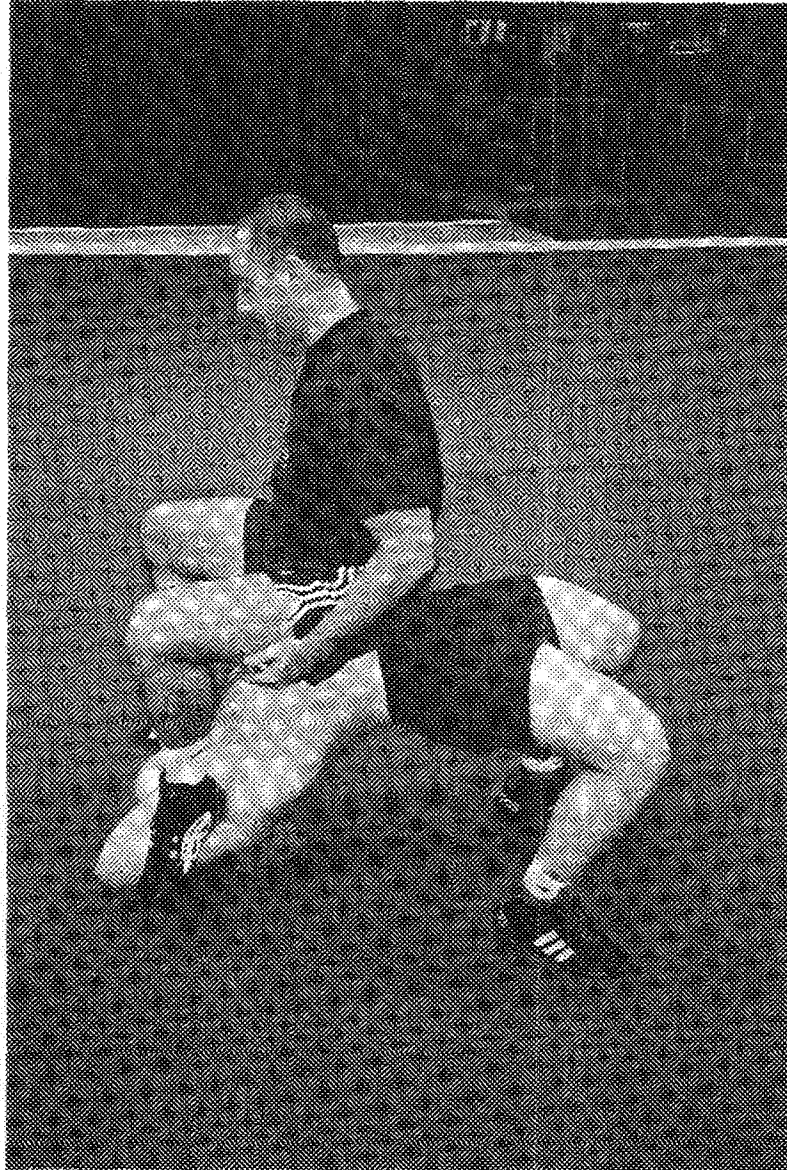
Note: This exercise can also be done with the back bridges shown in the other sections.



## Situp-Standup From Wrestler's Bridge

The wrestler's bridge is a super exercise because it strengthens your neck, something you cannot do in the gymnastic bridge. Assuming you already have a good wrestler's bridge, you are now ready to do a situp-standup from that position.

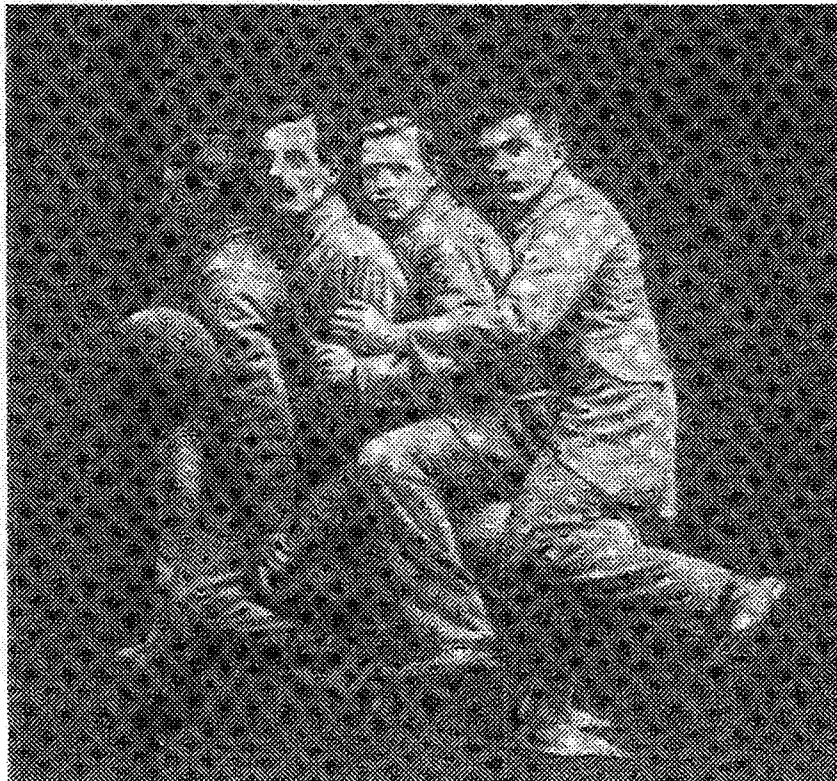
1. Get into a wrestler's bridge with your arms folded across your chest.
2. Arch backward, touching your nose to the mat.
3. Now begin to lean forward. Without touching your hands to the ground, begin to come up.
4. Sit up, then push off your feet and come to a standing position.
5. Repeat 10 times.
6. Breathe naturally as you do this exercise.

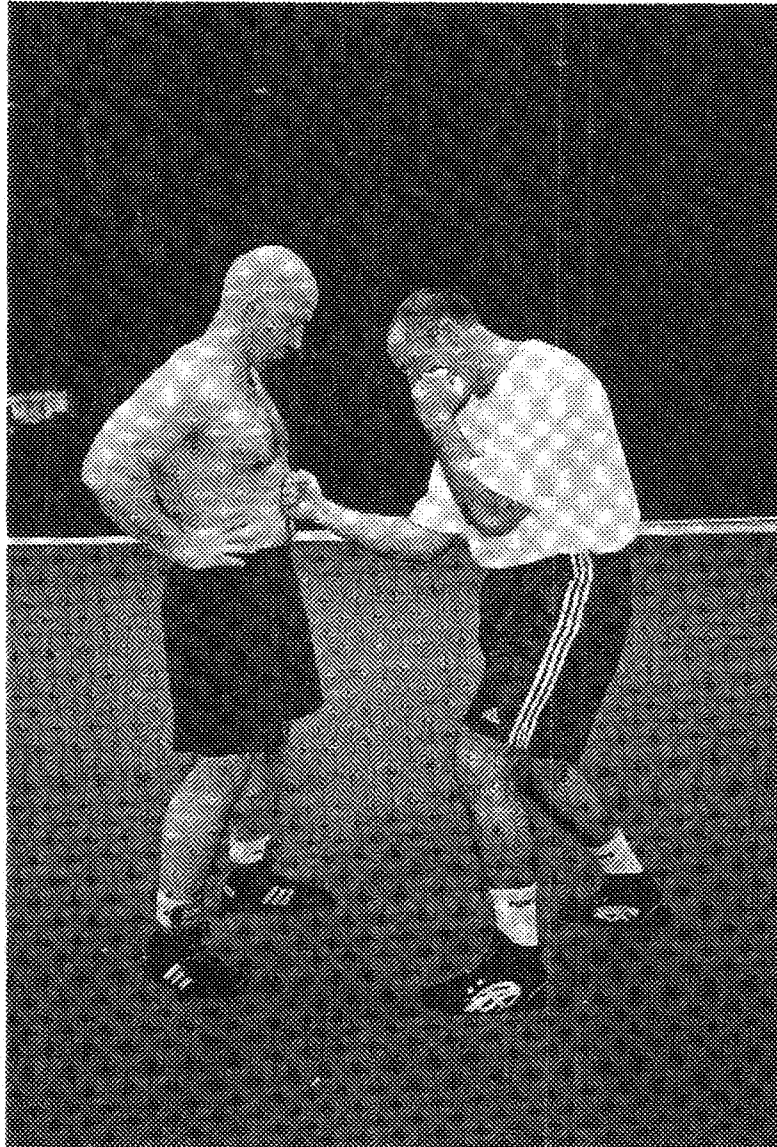




## Wrestler's Bridge With Partner on Chest

Once you have a good bridge that you can hold without any trouble for three minutes, you may wish to try it with someone on your chest. Start with someone or something light. The person who gets on your chest should do so slowly and with caution. Once he is sitting on your chest, he should gently place his feet in your armpits. Believe it or don't, you can work up to holding four people this way. Take a look below at the picture of the late George Lurich, a famous Russian wrestler and strongman from the early 1900's, holding four people in the wrestler's bridge while pressing a barbell in the air. Kind of makes you wonder if there are any limits to human feats of strength, doesn't it?





## Punches to Stomach

If you're going to build punch proof abs, it's also a good idea to begin testing yourself, so you get over your fear of being punched. Build up to it with light hits to your abdominals. In Chinese kung fu they have a saying, "First learn to take hits, then learn to punch."

If you don't have a partner, deliver light punches to your entire abdominal region. Start slowly at first. When you are hit, exhale and let your abdominal muscles push into the blow. Gradually increase the force behind each punch.

When you have a partner, have him punch you throughout the entire abdominal region. Don't try to take hard blows right away. Take a couple weeks or more to build up to it. Remember also, to diligently practice the "Farmer" Burns' stomach flattener as depicted in the *Magnificent Seven*. This exercise alone can give you the ability to defend hard punches with a smirk.



# **The Powerwheel Workout**

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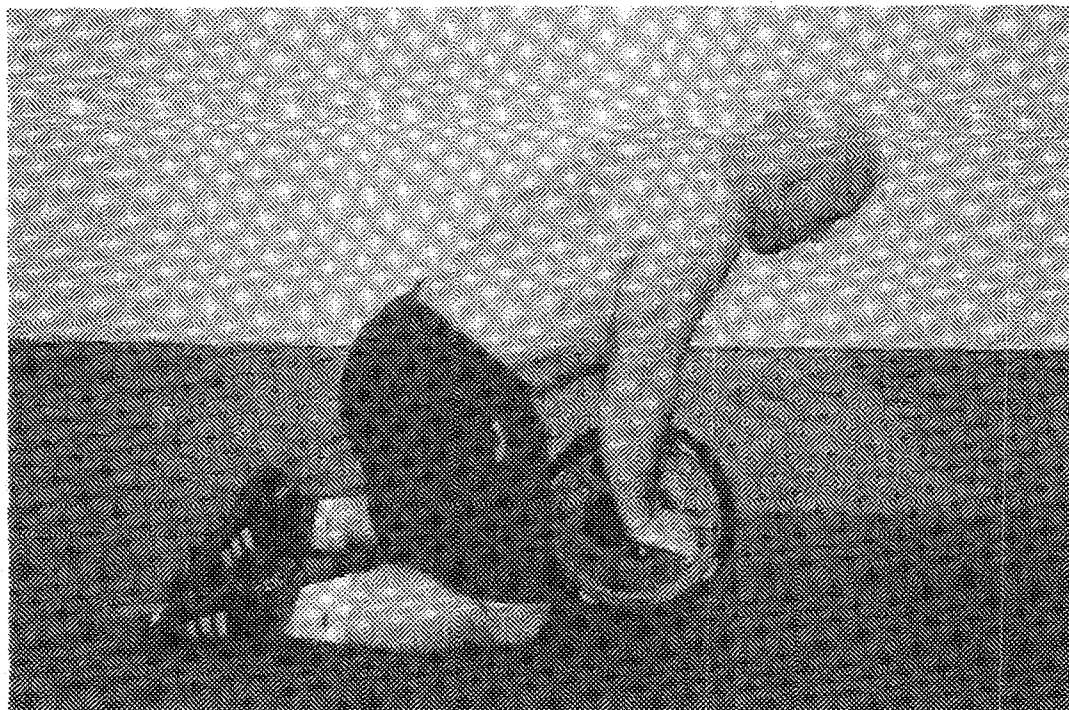
**The Power Wheel is one piece of exercise equipment that I greatly recommend because it goes along with my philosophy of doing bodyweight calisthenics from every conceivable angle and direction. Remember: The more you train your body from different angles and directions, the more functional your strength will be.**

**I have used the Power Wheel to supplement the other exercises in this book, and I find it to be invaluable. When you use this wheel on a regular basis, you won't believe the difference it makes. It targets a problem area for so many people, namely, your lower abs.**

**But the Power Wheel doesn't stop there. In fact, it simultaneously hits your lower abs while also working your upper abs, obliques, lower back, hip flexors, arms and shoulders. Talk about revolutionary.**

**Any type of abdominal wheel will greatly benefit those who use it. But the Power Wheel does it far, far, FAR better. The reason why will be obvious when you see the exercises demonstrated with this device.**

**The Power Wheel was invented two years ago by Jon Hinds, a man who truly knows fitness and conditioning. Jon used to live in Los Angeles, where he trained professional athletes in many different sports, including the NBA. He recently moved back to Madison, Wisconsin, where he opened The Monkey Bar, a 5000-square foot training facility filled with ropes, rings and other bodyweight calisthenic devices. I not only recommend Jon's Power Wheel, but I recommend his services at The Monkey Bar. If you're ever in Madison, be sure to look him up.**





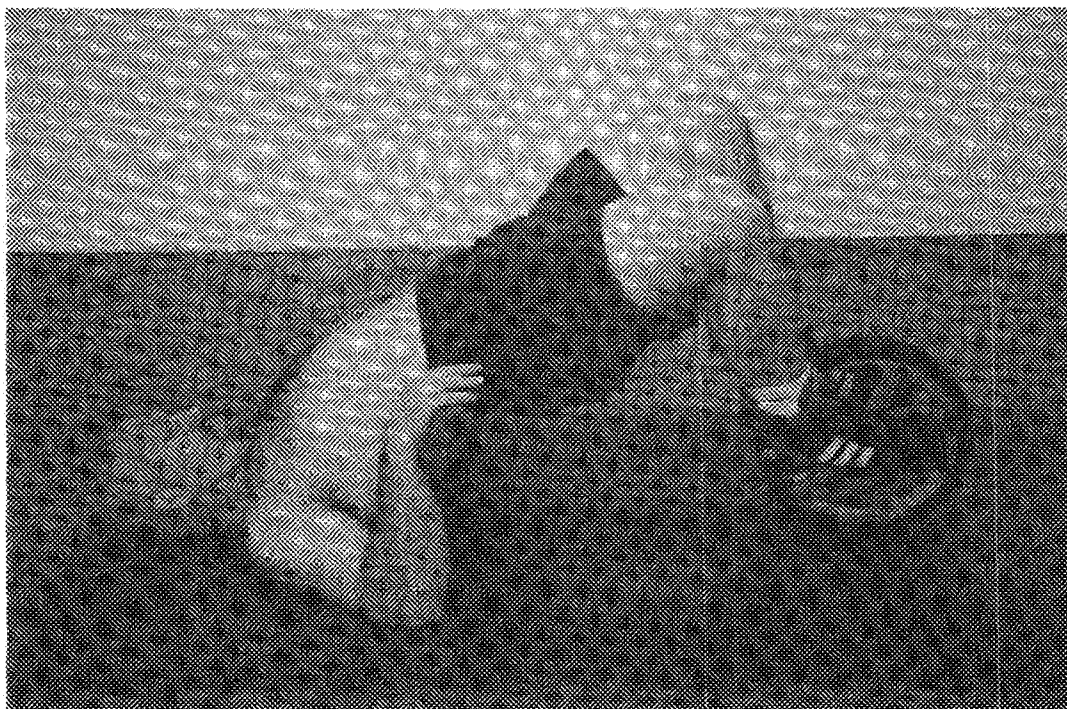
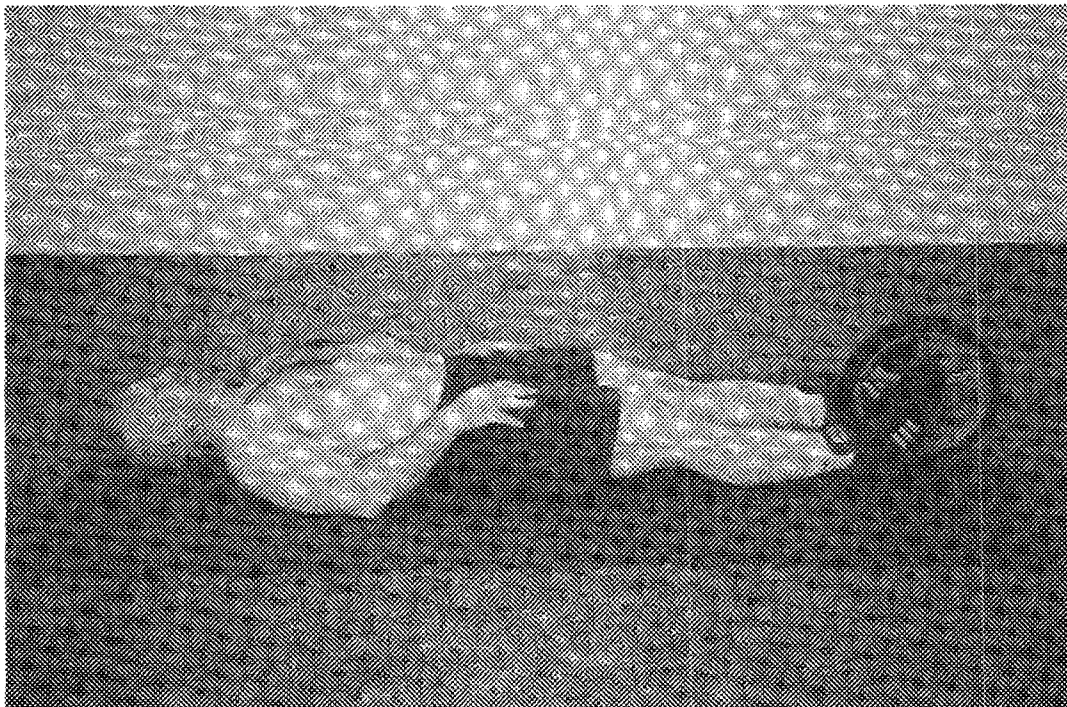
## Power Wheel From Knees

Many of you have probably seen the infomercials for various abdominal wheels. Although any type of wheel is usually a good product, I have found the Power Wheel, created by Lifeline Fitness to be the supreme ultimate. It works your abdominals, legs and upper body in ways you cannot duplicate with other wheels or abdominal devices. When you combine Power Wheel training with the other exercises in this book, in particular, the "Farmer Burns Stomach Flattener" - the results will be apparent within days.

Note: Until you get your very own Power Wheel, you can get a general understanding of this exercise by sliding a small mat, a hardbound book or some other easily moveable object forward.

Abdominal exercises done from the knees in this fashion give you a great upper body workout. They simultaneously train, trim, tone and strengthen, many muscle groups. When you begin doing this exercise, start only with the range of motion you can comfortably handle. As you train each day, your range of motion will increase due to increased strength in the lower back and abs.

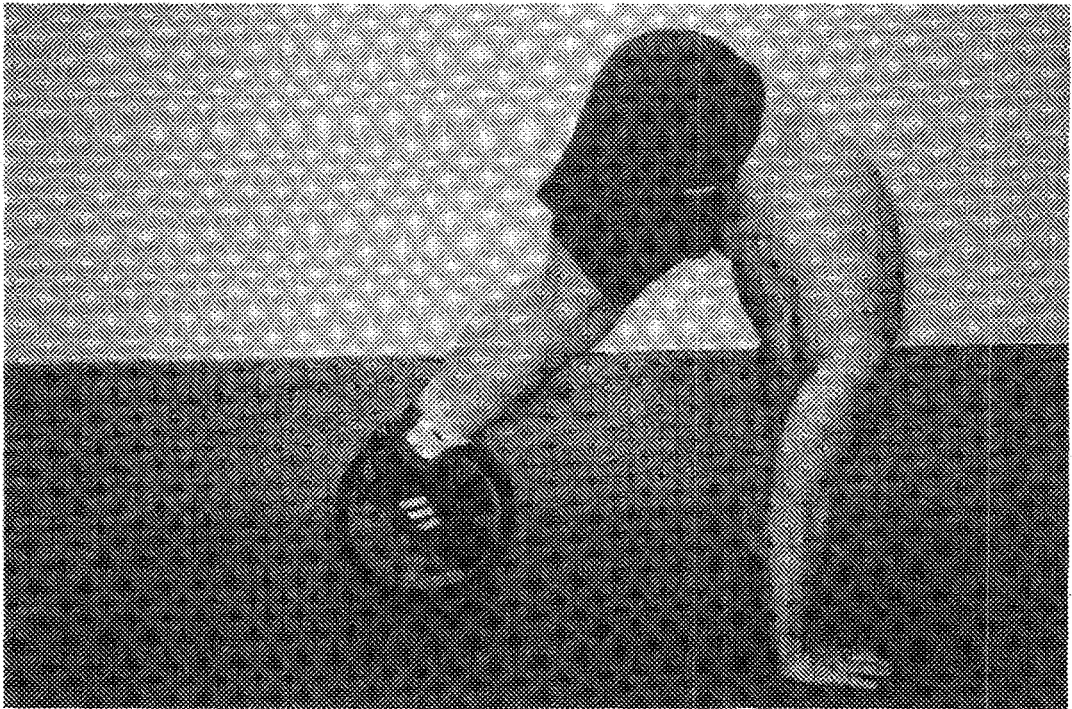
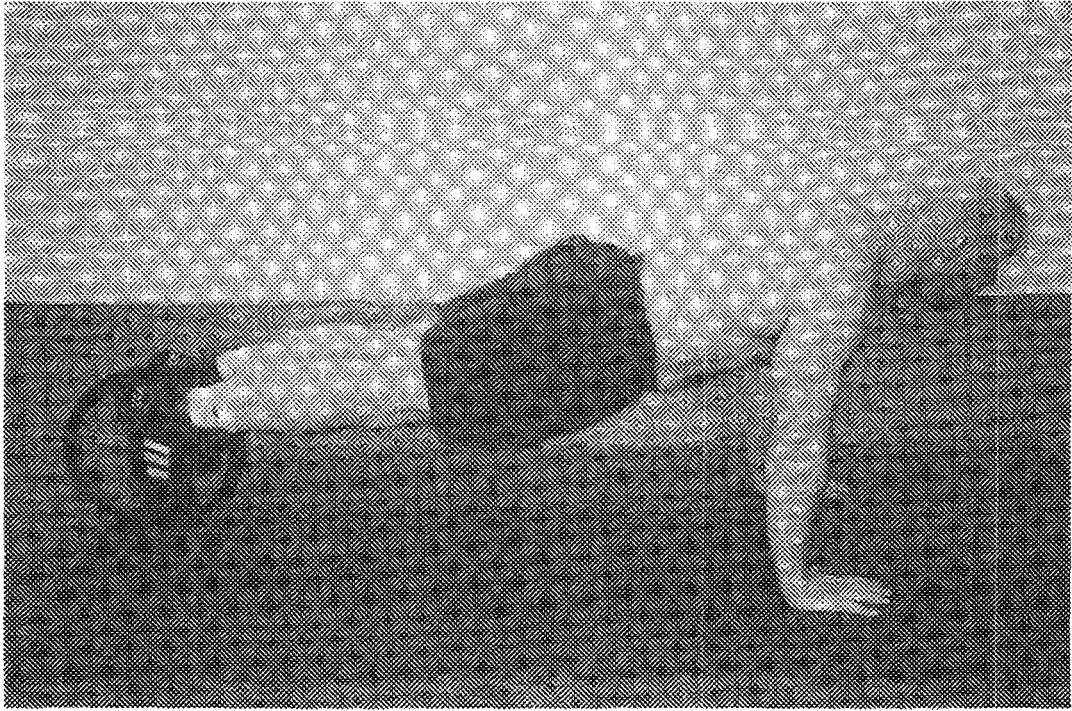
1. Kneel on the floor (preferably a soft surface). Place your hands on the Power Wheel that is in front of you.
2. Inhale and begin pushing yourself forward. Only go as far as is comfortable.
3. Exhale and pull yourself back to the start.
4. Do 10 or more repetitions at first. More than that in the beginning, may leave you incredibly sore.



## Power Wheel Hamstring Curl With Leg Pull-in

This exercise is also done with the Power Wheel ... but you'll be on your back instead of kneeling. It simultaneously works the abdominals, hip flexors, back and legs.

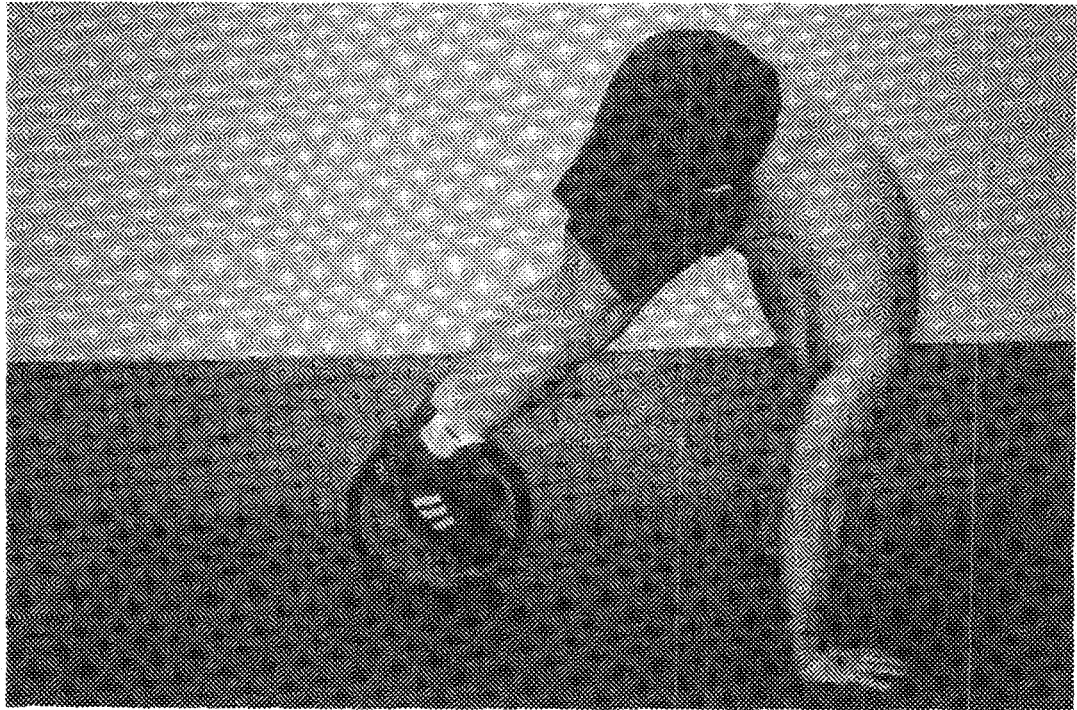
1. Lie on the floor with your legs almost straight..
2. Inhale deeply and simultaneously pull the wheel toward your buttocks while lifting your butt hig the air.
3. Exhale and return to the starting position.
4. Repeat 10 or more times.
5. Focus on your abs and hamstrings as you train.



## Power Wheel Pike Pull In

This is another variation done from a pushup position. It simultaneously works the abdominals, hip flexors, legs, chest, arms and shoulders. An incredible exercise and one of my all-time favorites.

1. Start from the pushup position with your feet strapped into the Power Wheel.
2. Pull your feet toward your hands as far as possible.
3. Exhale and roll your feet back to the beginning position.
4. Do as many repetitions as you can while focusing on your abdominals.

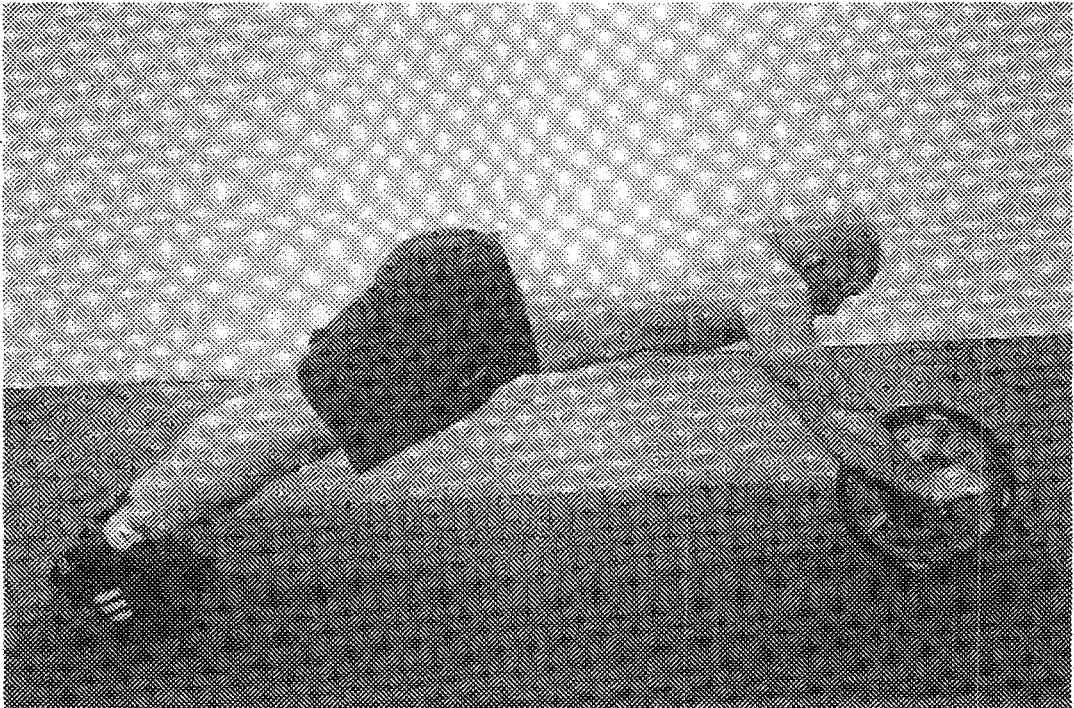




## Power Wheel Pike Position and Hold

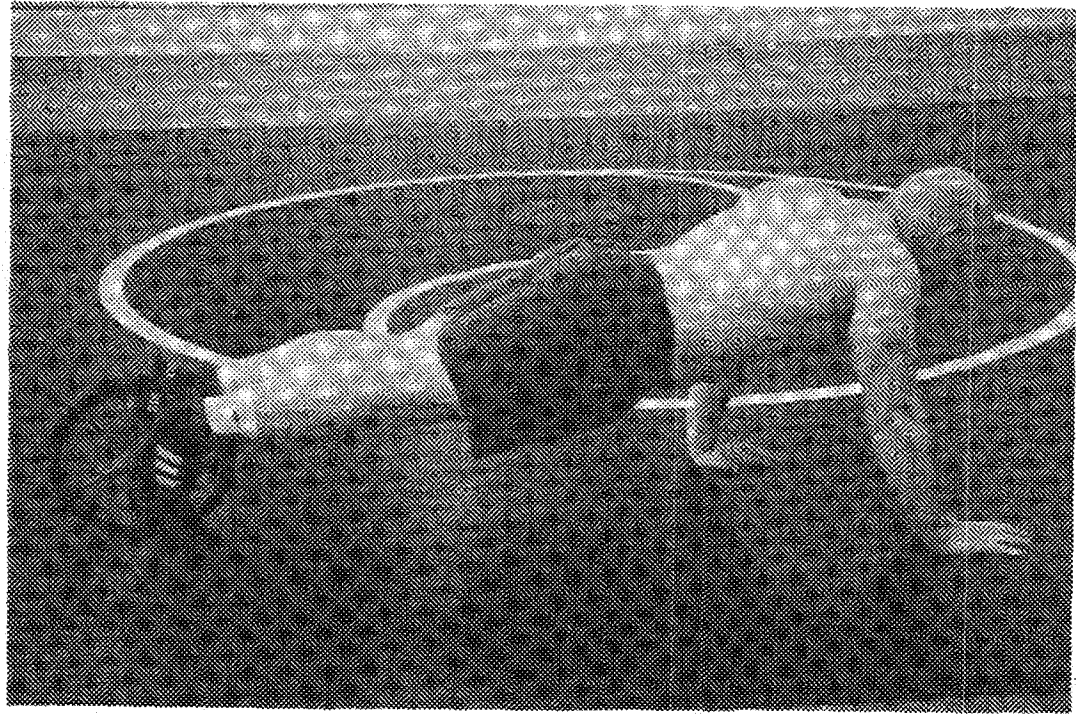
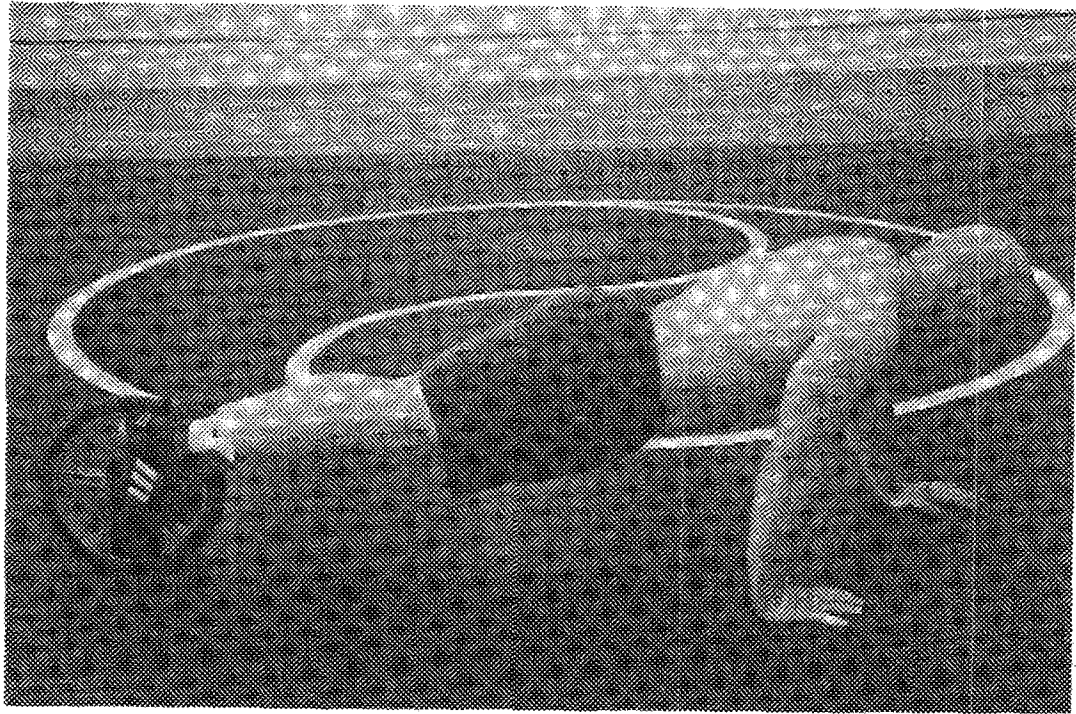
This exercise is the same as the preceding one, but instead of doing repetitions, you simply hold the position for time.

1. Start from the pushup position with your feet strapped into the Power Wheel.
2. Pull your feet toward your hands as far as possible.
3. Now hold the position and breathe deeply while holding for time.
4. Shoot for 30 seconds. As you progress, add more time.



## Power Wheel Forward from Standing

This is the same exercise you do from the knees, but a helluva lot harder. I am doing it with my feet close to each other. It is easier to start with your feet much wider. When you can do this exercise smoothly and effortlessly, you are in extremely good condition, with a powerhouse midsection that will not only be flat and fat free, but will be highly functional for any type of sport.



## Power Wheel Walk on Hands

This exercise is practically self-explanatory. Get into pushup position while your feet are strapped inside the Power Wheel. From there, begin walking forward or backward on your hands. This is a real challenge and it works your abdominals along with the rest of your upper body. It also trains your lower back and hips. In fact, you may feel them shaking uncontrollably as you walk this way, a sure sign that you're working out like never before.

**To order your own Power Wheel, call my office at (813) 994-8267.**





# The Combat Abs Nutrition Program

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Before my senior season of high school wrestling began, my mother gave me the following advice: "Matt, if you just cut out the bread and the pasta, you won't have any trouble losing weight."

Now, I know that my mother's advice conflicts with a lot of the literature on dieting we see today. Most of it says that we should eat lots of pasta, rice and bread - because it's low in fat. I know that people can lose weight following a low-fat diet, but fat loss is easier when you do what the late Paul Bragg advised. And that is ... "Follow Nature's Laws."

## What does that mean?

It means that you don't eat (or at the minimum, cut way back) foods that are processed, devitalized, demineralized and unnatural. If you want to be lean, eat foods that you find in nature. If you can't go outside and hunt for what you are eating, if you can't pull it off a tree or pick it from a plant growing in the soil - when it goes into your body, it won't make you as lean as natural food will.

When you follow nature's laws - most starches are definitely out. And, as far as fat is concerned, you will find that the worst kind of food is that which is high in carbohydrates AND high in fat. Hamburgers and French fries, spaghetti and meat balls, fried eggs with toast and potatoes - these are perfect examples of eating habits that create excess flab. These unhealthy combinations of fat and starch are, in my estimation, the biggest reason why people gain excess weight.

Again, I am not saying that you should NEVER eat starches or unnatural foods. But you should refrain from having them at least 90% of the time. To say that you should never eat them is wrong. It is an ideal that I can't even live up to, so why should I impose it on you.

A better approach is to suggest that you cut way back on them. You should do as some people do, go six days without starches, then have some. Then you go back to no starches again for another six days and so on.

Here are some guidelines on how to follow nature's laws:

1. Do not eat foods that come in a box, bag or wrapper.
2. Do not eat foods that are processed.
3. Do not eat foods that are laced with sugar, salt, preservatives, chemicals.
4. If you eat foods that are natural, like fish, eggs, meat and poultry, don't combine them with starches.

Below is a list of many of the unnatural (high fat/high starch) foods that you can cut back on when you need to drop excess flab from your waistline. Please note that a couple of them are vegetables. Although most vegetables are good for you, some contain far too much starch.

### **Foods to avoid (90% of the time)**

Breads - especially white  
Pancakes, waffles and French toast  
Bagels, muffins, donuts, pastries and cakes  
Pizza and pasta  
Crackers, chips and rice cakes  
Popcorn - especially microwave popcorn  
Rice - especially white  
Refried beans  
Cereals  
Potatoes, especially French fries  
Food containing corn, wheat or white flour  
Chocolate and other types of sugary candy  
Ice Cream  
Soda Pop  
Diet soda pop - it's all chemicals  
Beverages containing high fructose corn syrup

By avoiding the foods listed above, you will lose unwanted body fat. Guaranteed!

### **Foods To Eat**

Unlike most diet programs, where you count calories and fat grams, you won't have to do that on this diet. The only thing you need to do is make sure you follow nature's laws. Avoid

starch/fat combinations, and keep the bagged, boxed and wrapped food out of your mouth.

One of the popular approaches seen today in diet books is the total restriction of carbohydrates. Fat and protein intake are O.K. - but carbohydrates, even fruit and vegetables, are said to be anathema. I have tried this method before and I don't like it or recommend it. I don't believe that ALL carbohydrates are bad for you; only starchy carbohydrates. And even with starches, I don't believe you should NEVER eat them. Simply quit eating so much of them.

In 1997, when I was preparing for the world kung fu shuai-chiao tournament held in Beijing, China, I needed to drop 20 pounds to make weight. The tournament was six weeks off when I began my starch-free diet program. I ate plenty of turkey, chicken, beef and pork, as well as vegetables, fruit, nuts and yogurt. And the weight flew off me. This approach works best for me. I think you'll find it much easier to stay on as well.

Listed below is a brief sample of how I got my weight down for the tournament in China:

**Breakfast**

Fresh fruit  
or Yogurt mixed with fruit

**Mid-morning snack**

Raw almonds

**Lunch**

Baked or roasted chicken  
Salad with dressing or steamed or stir-fried vegetables

**Mid-afternoon**

Fresh fruit

**Dinner**

One salmon fillet or some other protein  
Salad with dressing or steamed or stir-fried vegetables

The dietary program listed above will accomplish the following:

1. It will give you enough protein to speed up your metabolism. The eating of refined, unnatural foods slows down your metabolism; causing your body to release excessive amounts of insulin.

2. It will give you a lot more energy.

3. It will help your body quickly melt off excess body fat.

4. It will help you maintain muscle mass while you lose weight.

5. It will fuel your brain and your body with a greater supply of energy.

### **Planned Splurging**

We human beings are a strange group. We do what works until we get the results we want, then we revert back to the behavior that made us fat to begin with. We can see this in all facets of life; in how we diet and in how we exercise. Whatever it is that we did to make ourselves successful, we think we don't have to do it afterward. Be on guard against this tendency.

Keep following nature's laws! The key to continued success is to continue doing what works.

However, because we are human, it is difficult to follow nature's laws 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Therefore, we can take this into consideration and give ourselves a day each week in which we "let ourselves go."

Once a week, I like to eat pizza, ice cream, and the like. But I don't do it everyday. I have certain days that I give myself permission to splurge. But if one day turns into two, and two days turns into a week, and a week turns into a couple months, I know what will happen. I will start putting on excess weight.

The way around this tendency is to plan on splurging every week. From Monday through Friday eat carefully. But when the clocks tolls 12 noon on Saturday, indulge a bit. Eat what you want in moderation, but don't keep splurging. Some people do well by setting a one-hour time limit on their feast.

Some people find it rewarding to follow this routine. They eat perfectly from Monday through Friday, then give themselves a prize on the weekend. This gives them an incentive to stay on the program. But telling them they can never eat pizza again - that is a mistake.

At any rate, you will have to make these decisions yourself. If you don't have any trouble following nature's laws seven days a week, then do so and more power to you.

## Set Goals - Keep Score - Take Action

In the summer of 1979, I attended a wrestling camp at the University of Iowa, where my idol, 1972 Olympic gold medalist Dan Gable, was the featured clinician. I had admired Gable for years and hoped that someday I could wrestle for him.

He spent a couple days out of the five-day camp working his way around to each group of athletes, demonstrating moves with a skillfulness I had never seen before. Halfway through the camp, when Gable was off to another part of the country to help other kids, the other clinicians took us up to the wrestling room and showed us a short movie on the life of Gable.

The movie showed him working out and it showed him competing. There was something else, though, on this documentary that was talked about but not demonstrated. That something else was Gable talking about what he did with his mind when he was training.

He didn't merely go through the motions of training, nor did he simply concentrate on the exercises he was doing. He thought about the results he wanted to create in his life, the goals he wanted to attain. While he trained, he imagined being a state champion, a national champion and an Olympic champion. He pictured himself standing on the top step in an award ceremony for these different titles, and he pictured himself receiving the gold medal or the first place plaque. I don't think it was coincidental that Gable won every one of these awards. Physical effort combined with keen mental focus will bring you what you desire.

When Gable set the goals he wanted to accomplish in life he separated himself from the masses. He placed himself into an elite category; the top 2% in society, the people who have goals and achieve what they desire.

Setting a goal isn't enough. Having a goal and taking action, aren't enough either. To get the results you want, you have to keep score.

Listed below is a process I often use, part of which I learned from Robert Fritz, author of *The Path of Least Resistance* and *Creating*.

**What do you want to accomplish?** (Write out the most important fitness goal you have.)

Where are you now in relation to this goal? (Write out where you are physically, as well as any fears or doubts you might be having. This is where you begin learning to keep score.)

## **Assess Your Present Condition**

When you have answered the second question, you have started keeping score. This is essential. When you don't know the score, you will lack motivation to reach your goal.

Knowing where you are in the present moment is just as important as having a goal. Whenever you admit the truth about your condition you have the power to change. Every time you face the truth and keep score in relation to your goal, you gain momentum to make improvements. Listed below are some of the methods you can use to keep your goal and your present condition in clear view.

### **Ways to Keep Score**

#### **1. Have a Physical Examination With Your Doctor**

Provided your doctor isn't overweight, doesn't smoke, drink and take drugs, you can probably get a good shot of focused energy from him. Today, many doctors have a polished way of letting you know how healthy you are. But be wary of any doctor who prefers drugs and surgery over exercise and clean living.

#### **2. Mirror Assessment**

The simplest method of keeping score is a good look in the mirror, without clothing. When you look in the mirror, observe your features from head to toe, and from every angle. Turn around a time or two and tell

yourself the unmitigated truth about your appearance. Don't brow beat yourself or put on a dramatic act. Simply report your condition. Are you too heavy or too thin? Do you have good posture? Do your muscles look strong or weak?

You can observe how you look in the mirror with clothes on, too, but the most accurate assessment is without them. Take a few minutes each day to note whether you're getting better or worse. Daily self-examination in the mirror while imagining how I want to look (your goal), gives you incredible focus and motivation to improve.



When you look in the mirror, imagine that you are an observer from across the room. The observer is only giving the facts, not determining whether or not you're a worthwhile, lovable human being.

After you see the things you want to improve upon, you can also take some time to express gratitude for what is good about your body.

### **Everyone Has Positive Features To Be Grateful For**

Occasionally I have met someone who says he doesn't like anything about his body, that he doesn't want to look at himself in the mirror. The idea seems repulsive to him; glorification of the self; unadulterated vanity.

This same person can be taught to see that he or she has positive features to examine, even if they are covered up with excess weight. Many of us take what is good about our bodies for granted. We think only of the negative.

A number of years ago I remember talking to Theresa, a lady I trained who was a perfect 10. Sadly, she thought she was fat and ugly. One day I asked her if she could tell me what she liked about her body and she said, "Nothing. I don't like anything. I can find one hundred things I don't like - just in my face."

"Is there anything you like about your face?" I asked.

"Nothing. I hate it."

"How about your eyes? Do you like them?"

"No. They're ugly."

"Would you prefer to have them taken away? Do you prefer being blind?"

"No, of course not."

"So you do like your eyes then, right?"

"I guess so."

"What about the skin on your face?"

"Oh, God, I hate my skin," she said.

"How about not having any? Does that sound okay to you?"

"No."

"Then you do like your skin, don't you?"

"Yes, I guess I do. You're right."

"What about your teeth?"

"They're not white enough, they're a little crooked, too."

"How about dentures then?"

"I'll keep what I have. I'd never wear dentures."

"So you like your teeth?"

"Right."

"You've just given me three things you like about your face. I'll bet we can find more - and we haven't even started on your body," I said.

Before long Theresa and I had an entire list of what she liked about her body: Her heart, lungs, fingers, toes, bones, skin, hair, leg muscles, spine, brain and so on. She needed help in seeing the positive because she had trained herself to look only for negatives. Your present condition includes what you like and what you dislike. So report accurately.

### 3. Weighing in

Some fitness books tell you to weigh yourself no more than once a week while others tell you to throw your scale out and judge yourself by other factors. I have nothing against either method, as long as you are keeping score in other ways.

Without a regular weigh in, though, I have seen far too many people get lazy and careless about their eating habits because they don't do anything else to judge their progress. Before long, they are gaining weight. The scale, in a sense, can help to keep them honest.

Based upon my experience of helping people to gain muscle mass or lose excess fat, I can say this about weighing in: It can really help you stay focused. My only caution is that the scale doesn't tell the whole story. You can be losing fat and gaining muscle and getting in much better shape, but the scale won't tell you that. So be sure to never use the scale as the primary indicator of your progress.

If you are the type of person who is easily discouraged when you check your weight,

what do you do to yourself to feel discouraged? Most likely, you take your focus off your vision and you dwell on a cesspool of fear, self-doubt, self-pity and worry.

The scale doesn't care what you weigh. Don't be angry with it. It's only reading out a number. It's only giving one factor in which you can judge your progress.

At the same time, if you truly focus better without the scale, then don't use it. But I find it never harms people as much as they say it does. The harm arises out of the inability of the person weighing in to look at the facts and accept them. In a nutshell, the person on the scale doesn't like the score.

### **Using The Scale a Bite at a Time**

There is an effective way to use the scale, one that I have found easier on people who get frustrated with weighing in. And that is to set a target weight, determine the date you want to accomplish it by, and work backwards.

For example, let's say you want to drop your weight to 150 and you now weigh 175. You could set a goal to be at 150 in three months. Figure out how many weeks that is from now; usually twelve or thirteen. Let's say it's twelve. Divide 25 by 12 weeks. That comes to 2.08 pounds lost per week. Divide the 2.08 by seven days and it comes out to .297 pounds per day.

When you do this you give yourself a goal that you can accomplish, a bite at a time. You give yourself a goal for each week, a goal for each day. When you accomplish your bite-sized goal each day you build momentum toward the longer-range target. You feel excited and optimistic because you know you're making progress.

I know people who use this same method of breaking their goal into bite-size chunks for everything they do. Whether it's earning a million dollars, increasing their business, learning a new language or losing weight, they follow the system and they slowly but surely accomplish their goals.

### **4. Take pictures**

If your goal is to improve your appearance, before and after pictures are a great focusing tool.

Several years ago, Steve came in for his first training session with his own camera. This was the first time someone I trained was that focused. Although Steve was in pitiful shape when he took his before pictures, he was honest with himself and able to look at the truth. He taped the fat, blubbery images of himself to his dresser and set a goal to have a flat stomach. He weighed himself regularly, followed the workouts I gave him and modified his diet so that he was dropping 1.5 pounds a week. Within two months his stomach was flat.

We took a second set of pictures and after he developed them, he tacked them next to the old ones. This helped him feel great pride in his accomplishment.

Seeing the embarrassing truth in pictures may leave your ego bruised, but it is a bruise that is soon forgotten when you see the new and improved pictures of yourself.

### **5. Body fat test**

There are many ways to measure your percentage of body fat; some are more accurate than others. Whatever method you use though, should be the one you continually use, simply because the calculations are a little different for each.

Having your body fat checked is good because it can show what is not visible in the mirror or on the scale. You can be losing body fat while your weight stays the same. The scale will never tell you this.

The only negative about the body fat test is that some people using it become overly concerned with what their percentage of body fat is, while ignoring how much physical strength and stamina they have gained. A body with a low percentage of fat but little strength is of no use to me. I don't mind a little extra fat, so long as I feel vigorous and healthy. However, when I say a little extra fat I don't mean a lot.

### **6. Measuring your waistline**

The late Paul Bragg, one of this country's first fitness pioneers used to say, "Your waistline is your lifeline and your dateline. Your waistline should never be any larger than it was in your prime."

I agree - to a degree.

Of course, there are no guarantees that you will live a long life merely because your waistline is slender, but how much fat you have around the midsection does indicate the direction you are heading in life. Large waistlines are a signal that you are overeating, not fully digesting your food, under exercising, and at greater risk for heart disease. Too much fat in the blood stream, too much fat around the waistline, clogged arteries, clogged intestines - these are all indicators of dissipating health.

What can you do to stay focused on keeping your waistline flat?

Use a tape measurer.

It's that simple. When you get up each morning, slip the tape around your waistline, measuring right across the navel. Don't look down while you measure and don't suck in your gut. Record the number.

If the scale reflects the same weight and your waist measurement is shrinking, that means you are losing excess fat while building muscle.

### **7. How do your clothes fit?**

How your clothes are fitting is yet another way of keeping score. But because so many people use clothes (size, shape and color) to hide their bodies, they have turned a reality check into another method of staying unconscious. That's why I tell people to face the mirror without clothes.

Some people, though, don't try to hide in their clothes. They know that their belly hangs over their belt and hips; they know their thighs and buttocks are pushing out on all sides. So, they set a goal to go down a size or two.

In defining what you want, you can imagine the jeans, swimming suit or dress you want to wear as your vision. What you are wearing now is the current score on the board.

One of my friends hung his three-piece suit where he could see it each day, and before long he packed the larger one away and started wearing the old one. You can do the same.

**Summary:** Now you know the keys to achievement. It is one thing to have a goal, but you will be much better off and much more motivated if you track your progress.

Now get started with this program and watch your life change - for the better.

I look forward to hearing about your successes.

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## **How much water should I drink each day?**

Eight glasses of water per day is the generally accepted amount. Most of your body is water, so taking in plenty of fluids is important. However, eight glasses may not be enough for some people, especially if they're training hard. So make sure you are well hydrated.

On the other hand, in order to get the best results from your training and diet, I have found an ideal time to drink water. And it isn't during a meal. When you eat, I suggest you take small sips of water, coffee or tea, but don't chug a glass or two of water. The time to drink water is 30 minutes before a meal and two hours after a meal.

Over the years I have read books that said drinking water with meals interferes with the digestion process. Other books have said this is folly. Who is telling the truth? Better yet, which approach works for me?

When I drink water before or after my meals, I don't feel heavy or bloated and I maintain better physical form with less work. If I drink water with my meals, especially if I do so on a splurging day - look out.

Don't believe me, then go ahead and pound a couple large glasses of water with pizza, pasta or pancakes and notice how bloated you feel. Eat the same food, but only take sips of water, coffee or tea, and I'll bet you feel much better.

## **How often should I do the exercises?**

I recommend that you do the *Magnificent Seven* every day. Do the other exercises in accordance with your lifestyle. Even if you're a busy executive, you should still be able to find 15 minutes per day for training. If you don't train each day, make sure you do the exercises at least three times a week.

## **What exercises should I begin with and how many repetitions should I do?**

In the beginning, do one set of each of the basic exercises. When this gets easy for you, you can play around a bit with the order. You can choose three or four of your favorites and do 2-4 sets of each. The number of repetitions depends upon your abilities. I have given general guidelines. For example, I might say, "Do 25 repetitions." Well, maybe you can't do 25 at first. This is fine. Just do what you can and stay consistent. With a consistent program, you'll make great progress.

**How can I speed up the fat loss process? Should I train the rest of my body? If so, how?**



I'd get busy doing Hindu squats and pushups as shown in my book, *Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness and Combat Sports*. You can also mix calisthenics with road work and rope skipping. For example, run 400 meters, do 25 pushups, run 200 meters, do 25 situps, and so on. Training this way will work wonders.

#### **What program do you follow?**

I do different exercises almost every day. There are more than 50 exercises in this book. If you're competent at all of them, or even half, you can play around with the order and number and have a lot of fun. One of my clients never does the same program two times in a row and he's in fantastic shape. Do the *Magnificent Seven*, then later on in the day, pick and choose the exercises that will benefit you the most. I use the Power Wheel several times a week. It does me a great deal of good. But I also get great results from bridging, v-ups, coffin situps, circular leg lifts, pommel horse situps and many other exercises.

#### **I have lower back pain and can't do situps or leg lifts. What do you recommend?**

First, see a physician to make sure you don't have any conditions preventing you from training. If he gives you the green light, work on getting yourself stronger in your back. For most people, this can be done by working on the Magnificent Seven each day. After that, go to wall walking, then to bridging. Bridging is an amazing exercise and it has healed many, many people of back problems. When you finish bridging, take some time to do some forward stretching, touching your hands to your toes. This will give you a stretch in both directions.

#### **What do you think of the European approach to the number of meals per day?**

If you're referring to the eat-only-two-meals-per-day lifestyle of many Europeans, I'd say it is a valid approach. There are some who think you need to eat five or six small meals per day to speed up your metabolism. This approach works as well. The main thing is finding what works for YOU. This is done by having a goal, taking action and keeping score. If five meals per day doesn't work, go to two and see what you think.

#### **What do you think of diet sodas?**

Ironically, sometimes you will find that foods with no calories are preventing your fat loss. Diet sodas, for example, are nothing but chemicals and sodium. Although they are calorie-free, when you are trying to reduce, they can really interfere with your progress. They cause your body to retain water and make it feel bloated and puffy. Not only that, but the only thin people you see drinking diet sodas are the models on television. Whenever I have a client who is struggling to lose weight, I ask him if he drinks diet sodas. If he does, I tell him to give it up. Every time the diet sodas are thrown out, my clients lose weight. If you really want to reduce, eliminate the calorie-free diet sodas.

### **Should I take multi-vitamin and mineral supplements?**

I sure do. Especially liquid minerals and anti-oxidants like Vitamin C. If you are one of the few remaining people who think that vitamins and minerals just give you expensive urine, you would be wise to study modern research on the matter.

Is it a good idea to drink fresh squeezed fruit and vegetable juices when you need to lose weight?

Two answers: Yes and no.

First, I'll talk about the 'no' reasons. When you are trying to reduce your weight, you don't want to give your body sudden jolts of sugar. Doing so causes an increase in insulin levels and when your body is secreting

more insulin than it needs, greater amounts of fat will be deposited on your body.

You don't want this. You want a slower absorption of fruit and vegetable sugars into your bloodstream. You can accomplish this by eating the whole fruit or vegetable. The fiber in fruit and vegetables is your guard against instant insulin surges.

Now for the 'yes' answer. Some people will disregard everything I just told you and do what they call a "juice fast." During a juice fast no solid food is eaten. You drink a glass of freshly squeezed fruit or vegetable juice, three to five times a day. In addition to the fruit and vegetable juices, you drink at least a half-gallon of pure water.

The juice fast will help you lose weight quickly and you will feel quite refreshed and invigorated while doing it. Because you are not eating, your body will be resting and it can get to work on melting off your excess fat.

**Why don't I recommend juice fasting? I do on occasion. But only for people I think can handle it.**

For those of you who want to try a juice fast, please observe the following precautions:

- a. Don't drink too much citrus juice. It can cause your body to cleanse itself of toxins too quickly.
- b. Don't stay on it for longer than three days.
- c. Don't break the fast with junk food. Your first meal after a juice fast should be a salad or some fresh fruit.

**What about fasting on water? Do you recommend it?**

Some people can really benefit from this type of fast, which is usually called a "water fast." Many people like to set aside one day a week for fasting, and this helps them maintain

their weight. I don't recommend a water fast that is longer than 36 hours, unless you are being supervised.

On a 24-36-hour water fast, observe the following precautions:

- a. You are only abstaining from food and juice - not from water. Drink about a gallon of water per day.
- b. If you feel sick, break the fast immediately.
- c. When you break this fast, don't do it with junk food. Eat a raw salad and wait at least one hour before eating again.

#### **What about coffee and tea?**

Coffee can increase your mental alertness, and according to some studies, it speeds up your metabolism. I gave it up for almost ten years because it made me jittery. Now I guess I like to feel jittery a bit more often. It's your decision. As far as tea, the decaffeinated herbal kinds are great.

**I know someone who ate nothing but fruit to lose weight. What do you think of this for weight loss?**

From personal experience I know that it works, but I don't recommend it because it isn't a balanced approach.

#### **How can I figure out what works for me and what doesn't?**

Through daily self-analysis in a journal. Keep track of what you eat and how much. And keep track of your daily workouts. Make notations about how you feel and ask yourself how you can make yourself better. When you look back over your journal, you will be able to easily figure out what is working and what isn't.

## One Simple Exercise Can Change Your Life

One of the keys to flattening your midsection involves a simple exercise that you can truly do almost anytime and anywhere. You can do it while lying on a couch watching television. You can do it when you are stuck in your car during a traffic jam (don't do it while driving). You can do it while sitting at your desk at work or while taking a bath. All that is required is a focused mind, some deep breathing and concentrated muscle squeezing.

Sound too good to be true? It isn't.

I've been involved in fitness for more than twenty years and I can unequivocally say that this one simple abdominal exercise will do far more for your waistline than any other program you have ever followed. But this exercise will do more than melt excess inches off your body. By using this one-exercise you will also benefit in the following ways:

**You will:**

- ...increase your energy level.
- ...increase the strength in your lower back.
- ...increase the strength in your chest, throat and neck.
- ...improve the functioning of your internal organs.
- ...greatly improve your digestion and elimination.
- ...sleep better at night.
- ...wake up in the morning feeling refreshed.
- ...have improved circulation.
- ...have greater sexual energy and stamina.

Today, more and more people are already following a regular exercise program. Many of these people are in good cardiovascular condition, but they still don't have a desirable midsection. Others have muscles from head to toe, but unfortunately, still have a paunch.

There are many reasons for this. One is because these people are still eating too much unnatural food. Another reason is because their midsection isn't being trained at all. With this program, all that will change.

You won't have any more excuses because, in this book I will teach you far more than the one waist slimming exercise. You'll learn six other exercises you can do while standing and 40 other abdominal exercises, from every angle and position, that you can use to build a lean, powerful and punch-proof midsection.

If lean, strong and punch-proof is what you want - then Combat Abs is for you.