

THE NO-GIMMICKS, NO-HYPE HEALTH AND FITNESS MAGAZINE

EXPERIENCE LIFE

Being Healthy Is a Revolutionary Act

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Is there a natural way I can increase my levels of human growth hormone and testosterone?



A. Great question — both are important for building muscle, reducing signs of aging and promoting overall health. And you can indeed increase your levels of both. “First, get lots of sleep. A full eight hours a night naturally increases your human growth hormone [HGH] levels,” says Bal Rajagopalan, MD, double-board-certified orthopedic surgeon and fitness expert who’s based in Beverly Hills, Calif. He also recommends lowering and off-setting stress by “chilling out” and “laughing a lot,” because stress hormones released from our

pituitary gland *decrease* HGH levels.

And testosterone? “Intense exercise such as interval training spikes your testosterone,” says Rajagopalan. “Plus, maintaining a lean, healthy body will keep your levels higher in general.” He also recommends snacking on nuts, since the monounsaturated fats are thought to stimulate testosterone production.

Start doing these things as early as possible, he adds: “Our levels of testosterone and HGH decrease dramatically by our 30s. If you nurture them early on, you’ll have an easier time maintaining both.”

Fitness Fix

Wake Up Your Butt

“Gluteal amnesia” (the inability to properly fire the muscles of your rear end) is a common condition that can lead to back, hip and knee pain. This program helps restore those lost neurological connections.

Your glutes have some big jobs to do, stabilizing your hips, controlling the positioning of your femurs and propelling you forward. But because of all the sitting we do, many of us have lost our brain-butt connection, a phenomenon known as sensory motor amnesia.

“If you don’t move in all available ranges of motion, your brain forgets your body can move in those ways, and the muscles associated with those movements become weak or inhibited,” explains Freddy X. Garcia, DC, MS, a Connecticut-based master practitioner of Z-Health, a rehabilitative methodology.

It’s not just sitting that causes the break in communication. “High heels and other immobilizing shoes can decrease the amount of information our feet send to our brains. There’s a very strong correlation between glute-activation patterns and feedback from our feet,” says Garcia. “When that communication is undermined, our lower back, hip flexors, quads and hamstrings may take over and do the glutes’ job. That

short-term compensation can lead to pain if not corrected.”

What sets Z-Health apart from other rehabilitative systems are drills that include a special focus on the governing system of the body, the nervous system. Because the nervous system adapts more quickly than the muscular system, this allows for speedier response to treatment, says Garcia.

Rather than just strengthening a particular set of muscles and stretching another (which may also be helpful), if you loop in movement information, visual information and balance information, you may experience a better result.

“By moving with focus and precision, you can clarify the map that your brain has of how you move, and instantly begin to take advantage of new ranges of motion,” says Garcia.

He recommends doing the following drill twice a day for three weeks to reengage your rear. Also, if you sit for extended periods of time, you’ll find this is a great way to slip in more movement.



Glute-Activating Combo

- Assume a tall, neutral-stance posture, using a sturdy chair or wall for balance.
- Move one leg behind you, curling your toes under, and let your heel fall to the outside.
- Position your foot to create a mild stretch on the outside of your ankle.
- While maintaining this position, do three to five short, gentle knee bends with the front leg to increase the stretch.
- Immediately after the last rep, extend your leg behind you and rotate your foot slightly outward.
- Maintaining your upright posture and extended leg, do clockwise and counterclockwise circles with your ankle for 30 to 60 seconds. Focus on precise form to activate muscular and neurological connections.