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TM 1

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THE 1

INTRODUCTION

Everything seems to be constantly changing in our world. From technology to the latest diet trends to the most popular workout fad at the time, it's hard to keep track and know better from best.

On the not-so-positive side, we are also living in a world where things best unseen or untold are plastering the news. Whether it's the latest crime or an early death due to disease, there are things we can do to better and protect ourselves.

Some may argue that being a female already puts women in a disadvantageous state. Whether it's with regard to careers, gender roles or even strength, we can argue until we're blue in the face, but where does that leave us?

We have to take what we're given and optimize it as best we can. While we may already view ourselves as mentally or emotionally strong, becoming physically strong can enhance our lives to unexplainable degrees. Why? Let's take a look:

Power- Ever go shopping somewhere and buy something heavy or just have too many bags to carry at once because of the weight? This will probably happen less and less until it's not happening at all once you gain strength through training. The next time a man asks you if he can carry that heavy item out to your car for you, you'll be saying "I got this!"

Respect- A woman who is very clearly physically strong will turn heads and demand respect. Walk into a room with a strong physique and you will silently demand attention. Strong women are rare. Strong men are everywhere. The reactions are nowhere near the same. Stand out without even speaking. Let your strength do the talking.

Better Health- Increases in muscle mass are closely related to a ton of health benefits. If we fall, we are less likely to get injured due to the muscle protecting our bones. Our metabolisms work harder at rest with the more muscle we have. As if just feeling and looking better wasn't enough!

Feeling Safer- I am sure every woman has experienced a time where they felt unsafe around a strange man. Whether it's walking to your car alone at night or just being at home by yourself, it happens. The stronger you become and the more aware you are of your strength, the safer you will feel. You will know you can hold your own if worse comes to worse.

Ladies, it's time we take what we have and make it even better. We may never be equal to or as strong as men, but that doesn't mean we can't try our hardest!

CHAPTER 1 – WOMEN LIFTING WEIGHTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Think of the word strength training and chances are most people are quick to first associate this sport with men.

Even now, in the 21st century, lifting weights has a stigma of being a man's sport. It's hard to imagine how women ever became a driving force in the world of slinging iron. Weightlifting has been an Olympic sport since 1896.

However, it wasn't until 1987 (just twenty-seven years ago) that women were allowed to compete in this Olympic sport. To date, the Olympic weight lifting sport has eight male weight classes and seven female. Talk about coming a long way!

In the late 1800's, females were viewed as weak and fragile. While there were a few women who tried to break into the world of being strong, it was viewed as unacceptable and the whole idea was shocking and frowned upon. Around the 1930's, medical professionals

and the general population alike believed exercise was detrimental to women's health and that women were instead to use their energy on taking care of the house and raising children.

It wasn't until the 1970's that women gained recognition and acceptance in the world of fitness. During an era of feminism unbridled, women were starting to really recognize their strength (both physical and internal).

As this strength became recognized, confidence increased. Although women were feeling good, society was still a bit hesitant to accept this new reality. In the 1980's women's bodybuilding was finally being accepted by the media and population alike, perhaps out of curiosity more than anything.

Although we are in the 21st century, there is still hesitation when it comes to women and weightlifting. Those who are against it argue that women aren't made to be strong and muscular. Although there are women who now dominate the world of bodybuilding, strongman and powerlifting, it would be incorrect to say that women do not face resistance.

Perhaps in another decade or so, a new article will be written about strength training for women in a much more positive and accepted light. So long as women band together, believe in themselves and others, and keep pushing for what they equally deserve, the tables will eventually turn.

CHAPTER 2 – AM I GOING TO LOOK LIKE A MAN?

Mention the word weight lifting to somebody and chances are the first thing they will associate with lifting is men. Despite the fact that weight lifting has also become a hobby, favorite and sport amongst women, there is still a taboo about it that screams “male sport!”

Picture the men you know who are weight lifters. Chances are some of them have some impressive muscles and physiques. It’s common nature to associate the fact that they lift with their physiques and muscle size. Because of this, women often fear the “byproduct” of weight lifting and choose to stick to the cardio section for fear of bulking up. Truth is, this isn’t correct logic at all.

Men are by physiologic nature built to gain muscle mass- their testosterone levels support this and their capabilities of maintaining lower levels of body fat. Women are made to procreate, therefore we store higher levels of body fat

and while we have testosterone in our body, it's at very low levels.

Think of the common complaint amongst women on birth control- weight gain, not muscle gain. This is partly due to the supplemental estrogen. Estrogen is not conducive to muscle growth and getting super lean. Some females who compete in sports that require a very lean physique will even go off of all hormonal birth controls in order to get optimally shredded.

Flip through a magazine of female bodybuilders and you may cringe. This is not the product of weight lifting- these ladies are the product of many illegal and dangerous substances, oftentimes including testosterone. There is no physiological way that women can look bulky or manly by lifting weights alone. In fact, lifting weights has a plethora of health benefits.

By lifting weights, you will in turn increase muscle mass. Increased muscle mass helps slow down osteoporosis as it can help increase bone density. When we strengthen our muscles, we decrease our risk of injuries or the severity of injuries that may happen (we've created a

stronghold around our bones and joints with muscle!). The more muscle you have, the more calories your body will burn at rest. Because muscle takes up less space than fat, you will also start to see your body tighten to give you that “toned” look women often refer to. No bulkiness involved.

You can listen to the fears that weight lifting for women is senseless and will make you look like a man. Or you can try it for yourself and rock that toned and strong body and prove to everyone that this is a misconception. Strength isn't gender specific- neither is weight lifting!

CHAPTER 3 – STEPS TO BEGIN STRENGTH TRAINING

You're reading this guide as a commitment to start lifting weights- awesome!! There was something that fueled you to make a change and introduce this into your life. Beginnings are great, but can be even better with some structure and planning. Let's talk about how to begin a strength training program.

First off, decide what your goal is. Do you want to get stronger? Do you want to reshape your physique? Do you need an outlet for stress relief? Do you want to protect your body from the aging process? Your goal may be one, some or none of these, but that's okay! As long as you know what you want to ultimately achieve, you can tailor your program around this.

Secondly, consider your options. If your goal is to get stronger and you know you'll be squatting or bench pressing a lot, you're going to need the equipment for this. On the other hand, if you just want to tighten your

physique, you may just need some dumbbells. Consider these options when evaluating your options to obtaining or having access to the proper equipment. Some goals can be easily reached at a home gym, others may require lots of equipment and work better at a fitness facility.

If you have any medical issues or concerns, please consult your doctor. Even a trainer will tell you this. Whether it's an old or preexisting injury or condition, be sure to consider and discuss this before starting a weight lifting regimen. The most frustrating thing when starting on a journey to health is finding out you reinjured a dormant injury and now are back to square one.

Lastly and absolutely most importantly, assess your mental readiness and ability to commit. Being half-heartedly committed to your goal isn't going to work. You have to know you can commit the time and win the mental battles. You have to set aside the time to get it done despite other things that may arise. You have to practice patience and understand that good things take time and this is no exception.

Whatever your reason for beginning a strength training journey, embrace it. Not only will you become physically stronger, but you will feel the change mentally as well. Our bodies are made to be sculpted and you have just taken the first step. Believe in yourself and you will be amazed at what you are capable of doing

CHAPTER 4 – PHILOSOPHY OF STRENGTH TRAINING

Everyone embarks on a fitness journey for their own personal reasons. Whether their initial motivation was external or internal isn't important- what matters is that they started.

As females, by nature, we tend to feel a competitive sense amongst each other. Instead of building each other up and encouraging each other, we make snide remarks about other women (oftentimes who we don't even know!) and try to outdo them.

In the world of weight lifting however, for optimal success and happiness, these things can't happen. As much as females have emerged and created a presence in the weight room, it is still by and large a "man's sport."

Because of this, it is absolutely crucial and necessary that we, as females, learn to stick together and be a constant support for each other in the world of weight lifting.

By changing the way we view each other, we can create an environment in which progress is always encouraged and happening and motivation abounds. There are some important things to remember, as a weight lifter, if you want to be true to yourself and your sport.

Be Honest with Yourself- Sometimes we get ahead of ourselves with regards to training too much or too hard, or we don't listen to our bodies. While lifting weights is such a positive and healthy thing to do for our bodies, there is such a thing as doing too much.

When we experience pain, persistent exhaustion, or find ourselves throwing around more weight than our bodies are ready for, it's time to take a step back. Sometimes honesty comes off quite brutal but it is necessary in this sport.

Perfect Form Before Adding Weight- Yes, hitting a PR feels *amazing!* That's no secret. But rushing to lift a certain amount of weight before your strength is increased enough is a recipe for disaster.

It is absolutely crucial to be confident and on point with your lifting form (for any lift!) before adding heavy amounts of weight. Practice patient and be sensible before trying a new weight.

Be Humble and Support Each Other- We are all talented at our own special things. For some women, try as they may, their strength may remain mediocre at best. Who cares! Just because you can deadlift three times as much as your fellow female weight lifter doesn't give you the right to be arrogant.

Humility is an awesome quality to have in life, and especially in the gym. We all have our own stories and our own origins. Support and uplift!!

To be most successful at anything you do, you must believe in it and believe in it to your core. By surrounding yourself with other women who love the sport as much as you do and always supporting and uplifting each other, you will be sure to prosper. After all, failure is rare when a group of strong, dedicated women band together!

CHAPTER 5 – CAN I TRAIN AT HOME? OR DO I HAVE TO TRAIN AT A GYM?

When it comes to working out and staying committed, you've got to find what makes you tick. For some folks, that's being in a gym around others who are pumped and eager to work hard. For others, it's in the privacy, peace and quiet of their own home.

If you're new to the workout scene and weighing your options, let's take a look at the pros and cons of both modalities.

Joining a Gym vs Working Out At Home:

EQUIPMENT

Gym Pro: If you're the type of person who loses interest quickly in a type of exercise or is always look for variety, a gym can be a great resource. If you find a fitness

facility with a variety of amenities, you may have found your perfect match. You can play racquetball, hit the pool, take an exercise class or lift some weights. If you like cardio, you can spend one week's worth of workouts on a treadmill, then change to a stairmill, and so on.

Home Pro: If you're a neat freak or know that you just need one or a few pieces of equipment, this may be your best bet.

Gym Con: Belonging to a gym means everyone is sharing everything. So if you were planning on a thirty-minute run but all the treadmills are taken, you'll have to adapt. This can be a real pain, especially if you work out during "rush hour." Also, gym equipment isn't always the cleanest. You may be more likely to get sick as you are exposed to lots of other peoples sweat and germs.

Home Con: You're basically stuck with what you have. You can go outside or to a playground to spice things up but at the end of the day, you have to make it work with what you have.

MONEY

Gym Pro: Investing in a gym membership often makes people feel more accountable. When others know you

belong to a facility, you may feel more motivated to show up. Plus, seeing that money come out of your bank account every month can give you that extra push.

Home Pro: By investing in equipment for your house, you can be sure it will be taken care of and last much longer than equipment at the gym that's being used all day long like a revolving door.

Gym Con: Prices can go up and oftentimes facilities will hit you with a yearly fee. Plus, cancelling can be a real pain not only time wise but also financially (cancellation fees, etc.).

Home Con: Guilt doesn't sink in as much about a treadmill at home that now serves as a coat rack because hey, who's going down in your basement anyhow?

There are many different things to consider when deciding what the best thing is for you when it comes to working out. If you are someone who needs motivation, being around a gym full of people may be best for you. If you would rather watch a TV show or sing out loud to your iPod tracks, maybe home is best for you to get your workout in.

Consider finances, time (traveling to a gym obviously takes time while working out at home is much more convenient), goals, equipment needs and motivation. Whatever you choose, stick to it and believe in yourself and your goals.

CHAPTER 6 – THE BASIC STRENGTH MOVEMENTS

Whether you're a newbie to the gym, a retired cardio bunny or a former athlete who lifted years ago, there are basics about strength training that cross all boundaries.

There are three major compound lifts that are essential to any training program and can be perfected with practice and patience. Let me introduce you to the bench press, squat and deadlift.

****For demonstrations of these exercises just type them into google and there will be highly detailed videos and demonstrations on exactly how to perform these exercises****

Also known as the three power lifts, the bench press, squat and deadlift are excellent compound movement exercise. Compound exercises are named as such because they incorporate nearly every muscle in your body to execute.

Doing exercises such as a seated bicep curl would be an example of an isolated exercise, opposite of compound, as it really only works the bicep muscle(s). Isolation exercises are just as important but we will touch on those later.

The deadlift is a great exercise that really works the back, glutes, hamstrings and quads. There are many variations of this lift, such as conventional or romanian. Depending on which you do, you will notice different muscle groups being engaged.

Squats work similar muscles to the deadlift. You can do squats with the bar on your back or holding the bar across the front of your shoulders. Either way, make sure you squat with great depth and maintain control and good posture.

The bench press is a great exercise for the upper body, working the chest, triceps and shoulders.

There are other exercises you should know when stepping foot onto a weight floor. Some of these exercises are:

Push Ups- You can do variations of these if you're not quite there with doing "real" pushups. Try kneeling pushups or doing them against a wall.

Sit Ups- Done properly, sit ups are awesome for your core (abs and obliques) and your lower back as well. Try them on the flat ground and on a decline bench.

Lunges- Work your quads, hamstrings and butt all in one with this exercise. Lunges can be done stationary (in place), walking, or even on a treadmill. Just be sure your knee never crosses over your toes when lunging to keep proper form in check.

Leg Press- This is an awesome exercise for many reasons, one being that you can work different muscle groups in your legs just by switching up your foot stance. For more hamstring work, put your feet high and wide and press on your heels. Put your feet low and narrow and suddenly you're working your glutes. Play around with variations.

Ask anyone what they believe to be the basic strength training exercises and chances are you'll get a variety of answers. After building your foundation do experiment and then stick with what works best for you. Always remember to warm up and cool down, and include stretches. Practice proper form and you'll see your maxes go up on a regular basis with these exercises!

CHAPTER 7 – LET’S GET LIFTING!

SAMPLE BEGINNER WORKOUTS

You've taken the first step by deciding you want to start lifting weights. Now it's time to figure out what type of lifting split you want to commit to.

Consider first how many days a week you can commit to. This will greatly help you determine the lifting split that will be most successful for you. Weight lifters often go by a split that has you doing a body part/parts one day, and then another body part the next, and so on until you've hit all body parts. Then, you repeat the process. This allows for sufficient time in between body parts for muscle recovery and repair.

A split would look something like this:

Day 1- Chest/Biceps

Day 2- Back/Triceps

Day 3- Interval/Abs

Day 4- Legs

Repeat

People also follow splits that focus on lower and upper body. These are more common amongst people who can only make it to the gym three days a week. These splits aren't as thorough and you aren't hitting the muscles as often each week, but it still works. This split would look like this:

Workout 1- Upper Body

Workout 2- Lower Body

Workout 3- Upper Body

Repeat

Let's take a look at the exercises you could do for each muscle group/group pairing if you were to follow the 4 day split mentioned above: ***For demonstrations and explanations of these exercises, simply do a google search or Youtube search and everything you need will be available in an instant**

Day 1- Chest/Biceps: Bench Press, Push Ups, Dumbbell Flyes/ Dumbbell Curls, Chin Ups, Preacher Curls

Day 2- Back/Triceps: Lat Pulldowns, Assisted Pull Ups, Seated Row/ Skullcrushers, Assisted Dips, Lying Tricep Extensions

Day 3- Interval/Abs: Treadmill or Stairmill Sprints/ Bicycle Crunch, Planks, Leg Raises

Day 4- Legs: Leg Extensions, Lying Hamstring Curls, Front or Back Squats, Calf Raise Machine, Lunges

You can always change up the muscle groups you pair together.

For example, you could switch to Chest/Triceps and Back/Biceps, or you can isolate muscle groups. Let's say you want to have a day where you focus on arms- pair Triceps/Biceps. Mixing up your workout on a regular basis is a great thing to do as it keeps your body from hitting a plateau.

Whatever way you choose to slice and dice your strength training, there are some rules that remain constant. First and foremost, assure you are using proper form. If you're

not sure how to perform an exercise, as someone who is certified. It is very easy to injure yourself if your form is not correct. Also, don't forget to listen to your body. If you are scheduled to lift a particular muscle group on a certain day but your body is yelling "ouch," or "rest,"

Do listen!

Commitment in the gym is just as important as commitment to reasonable rest. Tweak your routine as needed and start making some gains!

CHAPTER 8 – FUELING YOUR STRENGTH GAINS

Say the word carbs to a woman and you just might send her running and screaming. Media and the latest fads and celebrity trends have beaten the idea into our heads that carbs are evil. If you're starting out on a weight lifting routine, it is super important to understand how to eat correctly to enhance your gains and progress while staying lean and trim at the same time.

First off, let's understand what carbs are. Carbs are the body's main source of energy. Yes, the main source. If we do not eat carbs, our body uses protein instead in a process called ketosis.

Proteins are the building blocks of life and absolutely necessary, but are intended to be used for repair and maintenance. So, when you lift weights and subsequently

tear muscle fibers, protein comes into play and helps repair these tears. If protein is being eaten away because it's being used as an energy source, this purpose is defeated.

So if carbs are super important to body function, that means we need to eat them, right? Yes! Carbs may have a negative stigma to them thanks to media outlets but knowing how and when to eat this macronutrient is key. If you just can't give up your favorite sweet treats, that's okay- just learn when to eat them.

The post workout window is the time right after your workout in which your body is still at an increased metabolic rate and working extra hard. This is the best time to eat your "bad carbs," such as a processed or refined treat you don't want to sacrifice. It's also a perfect time to get a quick shot of protein to your muscles- try a protein shake. While there are a multitude of protein types available, the best for post workout is an isolate protein.

Whether you work out or not, eating veggies every day is also important. They contain tons of phytonutrients and have little to no calories. Try serving your vegetables with some extra virgin olive oil (healthy fat source) and some spices such as garlic and pepper. For whole protein sources, stick to lean cuts of meat such as boneless skinless chicken breast, pork tenderloin, or the leanest variety of ground turkey or beef.

Ideally what will work best for you will depend on your taste preferences and budget. Be mindful of the food choices you are making, read labels and be aware. Nothing in moderation will derail you. View your food as fuel for your workouts. Doing a leg workout on Pop Tarts alone will probably make you queasy. On the other hand, having a solid meal of proteins/carbs/fats (think oatmeal with peanut butter and protein powder) will rear its head during your workout.

Eat smart, work hard. Your body will thank you.

CHAPTER 9 – SHOULD I USE SUPPLEMENTS?

So far in our introductory guide to weights and strength training, you've made a commitment to hitting the weights and becoming a stronger, better you- congrats!

Besides being knowledgeable about training routines and diet, it's important to understand supplementation and when things are and aren't appropriate.

Being women, iron deficiencies are more likely to be present due to things such as our menstrual cycles and pregnancies. If your diet doesn't include enough iron, deficiency can also result. Deficiency symptoms include fatigue, headaches and weakness- all of which are unpleasant as is, but especially detrimental to getting a good workout. Because of this, it is important to take a multivitamin with iron or an iron pill itself.

The way our bodies build muscle is by lifting weights (which tear the muscle fibers) and then allowing our body adequate rest to repair said tears. It's the way the process works. But sometimes we need a little help in recovering in order to speed up the process. This is where branch chain amino acids (BCAA's) come in. BCAA's come in powder, pill or chewable form and are able to be taken really any time of day.

Be sure to drink lots of water before and after consuming these, though, as they tend to cause dehydration if you are not properly hydrated.

Protein is naturally part of our diet from the foods we eat—think chicken, eggs, etc., but sometimes we need this macronutrient fast and easily.

This is where protein powder comes into play. An isolate protein is best consumed right after a lift. You can buy tons of varieties of proteins (soy, whey, casein, etc.), brands of proteins and flavors of proteins.

Be sure to have your goal in mind before shopping for proteins to be sure you are buying the right kind that complements your goal(s).

In the world of weight lifting and supplements, you could spend weeks reading about and trying all the different kinds out there. You have fat burners, weight gainers, creatine, pre workouts, vasodilators, you name it.

Everybody needs different things. Think about where you are now and where you want to be, do some further research, and learn how smart supplementing can help enhance your physique and your training.

CONCLUSION – FACING THE FUTURE

Wow, We've reached the end of our introductory guide, You've committed to adding weightlifting into your routine- awesome! Whether you strength train just a few days a week or train in a way that allows you to lift nearly every day of the week, each person has their own level of commitment.

Depending on how long you've been weightlifting, you may be starting to reap the benefits of this sport.

Accumulation of muscle mass not only leads to a toner, tighter physique but turns your body into a fat-burning furnace. The more muscle mass you have, the higher your resting metabolic rate. This means that your body burns more calories doing absolutely nothing (just being alive!) than ever before. This rate will continue to increase as muscle mass accumulates.

As you get stronger and more confident in your strength training, you may want to consider taking it to another level. You may find yourself dropping other exercise-

related activities that you used to do in order to allow adequate rest and muscle repair and recovery. Amounts of time formerly spent doing steady-state cardio may be replaced by high intensity interval training (think sprints or intense bursts of exercise).

Not only does HIIT training take less time than steady-state cardio, it produces quicker results. Because you perform this exercise at such a high intensity, your body burns calories for a longer time after your workout than if you were just to do steady state (read: walking on a treadmill, doing the elliptical, etc.), fairly-easy-to-breathe workout.

For some, goal-setting is the number one way to stay motivated. Just as runners pick races and marathons to train for and compete in, weightlifters can do the same. A popular sport in the world of strength training is powerlifting.

Powerlifting competitions consist of three main lifts: the bench press, the deadlift, and the squat. Competitors compete in their respective weight classes and get three

attempts at each lift, ideally increasing weights of each lift with each attempt. In a true full power powerlift meet, you will perform all three lifts (for a total of nine attempts).

The key to succeeding at these meets is to have impeccable form and do each lift at a weight you can conquer. If you are interested in looking into entering some competitions, google powerlift meets in your area. There are many different organizations, some geographic-specific, which host meets year-round. Most meets don't have a prerequisite to register aside from joining their specific organization.

There are also Strongman competitions (yes, these are for ladies, too) that test strength. This type of competition involves event such as tire flipping, stone-carrying, log pressing, and overhead pressing. These types of events are much more fast-paced than powerlifting but are also structured so you compete in your respective weight class.

Whether you choose to compete in an event that tests your strength or just stick to a rigid strength training routine, commitment is key.

The time you put in lifting weights will reap benefits far beyond just stepping out of the doors of a gym. Your body will thank you for years to come. I've really enjoyed this introduction to starting a strength training program. Wish you all the best with it!

Now get lifting!

BONUS ADVANCED TACTICS, PRINCIPLES & SUPPLEMENTATION

You've been strength training for at least a year and your commitment level is infallible- way to go!

Your physique has gained muscle and looks tighter and more toned than it did before you started lifting weights. You may now find that while you are still loving the gym, you may be hitting plateaus when it comes to your training and progress.

This is natural and there are tactics and approaches you can take to make sure your now-advanced-strength-training routine continues to reap awesome results.

One of the best ways to ensure your training makes the most sense is to decide what your next step is for physique-related goals.

You may want to get stronger or to gain more muscle. You may want to be able to squat more or just want to tighten your hamstrings a bit more. Whether your goals are strength or aesthetic-related, workouts can be tailored to achieve them. Below are two ways you can switch up your workouts to cater to your more advanced training style:

Workout at a higher intensity- While doing cardio is often tied to losing weight and not to gaining muscle, it just depends on the way you approach it. By replacing any and all cardio you do with HIIT (high-intensity interval training), you can not only greatly decrease the time spent doing cardio but also optimize your progress and gains.

HIIT cardio is best done at a maximum of 2-3 times per week. HIIT can be performed on an elliptical/arc trainer, treadmill, stairmill, or outside. Start with a 1-3 minute warmup and then set the machine to a pace that allows you to all out sprint for 20-30 seconds. Knock the speed down to a very slow setting and catch your breath.

Repeat this cycle as many times as you can, up to 10 times.

Superset- Supersetting is when you perform one set of an exercise and then immediately perform a set of another exercise, then rest, and repeat.

You can choose two exercises that are for the same muscle groups, for complementary muscle groups, or for entirely different muscle groups. You can also superset a lift with a cardio exercise (think jumping jacks, jump rope, etc.)

The idea behind this type of training, other than the fact that you are saving time, is increased intensity, variety, and overloading the muscles. For example, you could do a superset of biceps and triceps: tricep extensions followed by bicep curls (both with the rope cable attachment) for three sets (six sets total if broken down by muscle group).

When your training reaches the advanced level, you may notice soreness that lasts longer than usual. This is normal when you incorporate new training styles or exercises. Supplementing is one way you can ensure

faster recovery (in conjunction with proper rest time and sleep). While there are literally hundreds of supplements on the market, there are a few that are very popular and widely-used amongst weightlifters alike.

One of these supplements is BCAA's, also known as branch chain amino acids or just amino acids. BCAA's come in powder, pill or chewable form and aid in the recovery of muscles.

They come in variety of flavors and are best consumed post-workout. While BCAA's are often an ingredient in other supplements such as protein powder(s), the dosage isn't near as high as if you were to buy the straight BCAA supplement itself.

No matter what you choose to change, supplement with or try for a first time in the world of strength training, awareness is so important. Realizing the level you have reached as a weight lifter and the adaptations that may be necessary as a result will ensure you to continue smashing goals and always improving.

Good luck and thanks for reading