

LA FITNESS

PERSONAL TRAINING

An Informative Newsletter

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By John Platero

The "Magic Lunge"

It seems that 1998 is the year of the "buns". Every time I turn on the television there is some other infomercial touting the latest contraption that can (in less than three minutes) firm and tone your glutes. When talking to most trainers (especially female trainers) the lunge seems to be the exercise of choice. So let's examine the lunge.

There is the walking lunge, the stationary lunge, the side lunge, the dynamic lunge, the barbell lunge, the dumbbell lunge, the backward lunge, the Smith machine lunge, the forward lunge and the step lunge. Which is best?

If you think about it, the lunge is nothing more than a one-legged squat. Your other leg is just helping out for balance. Then why do so many people "feel it" in their other leg? Well, we know the rectus femoris is a two-joint muscle. It not only crosses the knee but the hip as well. The majority of activities we do as humans are in a seated position: driving, sitting at a desk or watching TV. So, when we put our clients in this extreme hip extension, the rectus femoris starts "talking" to them. But we all know the real "work" is done by the front leg.

Since we are standing on one leg, then stabilizing the pelvis is going to be more challenging. Instead of two struts (your legs) spread apart with a wide base, the majority of the weight is now being supported by one strut, over a very narrow base of support.

The same goes for the foot and ankle. Is your client able to stabilize their foot and ankle or are they wobbling all over the place?

Is it better to destroy their hip and ankle joint in order to firm up their glutes?

Here are some things to consider:

The walking lunge:

Before you add weight to the exercise and have your client's walking around the gym, make sure they can:

- stabilize their pelvis each and every rep. Their

pelvis should not dip on either side as they lower or raise themselves.

- make sure that the knee tracks over the appropriate toe for each and every rep.

- is the ROM for the knee excessive?

- watch the foot and ankle. Can they control this motion?

Remember any time you walk there will be some momentum moving forward. Every time your knee bends, there is a certain amount of shear force occurring as the femur rolls forward on the tibia. These are the natural mechanics of your knee. However, when you increase the load, the shear force will increase as well. Not to mention the extra stress on the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

Why are you walking with a load? What is the purpose?

If you have to walk, concentrate on all the motion going up and down or vertical instead of forward.

The same concerns apply to a barbell lunge.

The barbell lunge:

If you are lunging forward with a barbell on your shoulders, the only thing stopping the bar from cutting your neck off is your cervical spine!

I was at a physical therapy clinic at the Veteran's Memorial hospital and the physician told me that most of the spinal cord injuries occur in the cervical portion of the spine. But hey, at least they'll have tight buns.

If you're going to have clients perform any kind of lunging with a load and there is any kind of forward motion, you better have a specific reason for doing so; otherwise just use their own body weight. If you have to use a barbell, make sure the motion is vertical.

Remember, the force is not going through the heel but through the ankle. Your tibia does not sit over your heel but over your ankle, so cue the ankle! If you need weight, then try dumbbells instead.

The dumbbell lunge:

The mechanics of the lunge are the same, but now the load is off of the spine. The limiting factor will be the amount of weight a client can hold in their hands. Straps might be a solution. If the dumbbells aren't too big, sometimes it's feasible to rest the dumbbells on the client's side. Be careful though, this isn't very comfortable for a lot of people.

The step Lunge:

It seems all trainers know the 90' rule when squatting: *You should never let your knee move in front of your toe or let your knee go down any further than 90'.*

But then I see the same trainers have their clients lunge on a step so they can go further than 90' in an effort to increase their range of motion (ROM).

Any time you go below 90' with a load, you increase the possibility of wearing out cartilage, bone, or the joint itself. Using the floor will prevent you from going into hyper-flexion which could help save your knee. But hey, they might need knee surgery, but at least they'll have a tight rear end!

The side Lunge:

I can see many reasons for performing this exercise, all of them sport specific: football, tennis, baseball, racquetball, basketball, volleyball, etc, etc.

All the mechanics are the same. The knee is a hinge joint, it only bends one way. You must be extra careful with momentum out to the side. Lunging violently with a load to the side will incur a ton of shear force to the joint and a ton of stress on the medial and lateral ligaments of the knee, not to mention all the stress on the ankle.

When you lunge to the side in sports (with maybe the exception of football) you rarely have a load on your back. Be careful with this lunge when it is loaded.

You might want to construct a small platform at a 45' angle. Place it against the wall and have your client lunge onto this small platform. This will decrease the amount of shear force, as well as the stress to the ligaments.

The dynamic Lunge:

You definitely have type II fibers in your glutes and legs. Therefore, it might be beneficial to train explosively, especially for sports. This is where that 45' platform will really come in handy. All the same

rules apply to stabilizing the pelvis, foot, ankle and ROM at the knee. Be aware of the amount of weight as well. You'd better have a good reason for loading this type of lunge.

The backward lunge:

When alternating from leg to leg, the backward lunge sometimes works better than moving forward. Most people are a little leery of "throwing" their leg backwards. They can't see where they're stepping, so they move slower and place the foot instead of bounding. This works out great, but why are you alternating? This brings me to the last but not least.

The stationary lunge:

If the goal is to work glutes, then the stationary lunge is my first choice. Every time you alternate legs, one leg is resting. Well, as Tom Purvis taught me, "if your set takes 2 minutes, then one leg rested for half the time (or one minute)". Transfer that into 2 days a week, 8 times a month, 12 months a year and you end up resting half the year. Why not just concentrate on the one leg? You have slow twitch fibers in your glutes as well. Remember your glute "fires" every time your heel strikes the ground in gait. Work one side hard, then let it rest.

Compare it to alternating dumbbell curls. The only time I do alternating dumbbell curls is when I'm warming up, or trying to isolate with a heavy weight and need to rest the bicep in between each rep.

If you have to add weight, think about a Smith machine.

The Smith machine lunge:

This is also a stationary lunge. It works best when you're not alternating legs. Remember, you still have a load on your spine. Control is key here. Balancing the weight is not such an issue anymore and the weight being used is not limited by the strength of your grip. The machine will also prevent that unwanted forward momentum.

For anyone with a problem stabilizing their pelvis in a stationary lunge while using dumbbells, the Smith machine is a perfect solution.

Don't forget to demonstrate the safety collars to your client.

In conclusion, the lunge is a phenomenal exercise. It works the quads just as well as the glutes. It might, however, be an advanced exercise. As you've just read, there are many variables, many things to

consider and many things to monitor.

What is the goal, what can your client control and Lunges are not magic. They are what they are.

Respect the body and it will respect you.

HEAD TRAINER PROGRAM

Our Personal Training Program is growing. In order to keep it running smoothly we have decided to institute a Head Trainer in locations where there is a large amount of trainers. These trainers are people that are familiar with the policies and procedures of LA FITNESS, have set an example as a professional and have never had a problem with their documentation or billing.

Their job is to help this program run efficiently. They will help monitor the appointment book for intros, appearance and professionalism, advertising and marketing at the club level, parking privileges, the use of phones and sales desks, rogue trainers who don't pay rent and act as a liaison between the GM and the trainers of their location. They will be there to help you with any problems with a certain trainer, sales person, MSD or GM. They can also be a guiding hand for the new trainers who aren't familiar with our system, or how to use the appointment book and guest register, etc. etc.. They can help coordinate marketing ideas, maintenance of broken equipment or the usage of desk or office space.

If you have any problems with the Head Trainer, then you can call me directly. My pager is 800-800-7759.

Please cooperate with them. The program will appreciate it.

Below are a list of Head Trainers and their locations:

Anaheim - Jerry Litteral
Chino - Brock Hall
Laguna Niguel - Ted Conley
Marina Del Rey - Terry Xughes
Miracle Mile - Mark Coggins
Pasadena - Emmett Fahringer
Sherman Oaks - Gordon McCallum
Van Nuys - Kevin Forrest
Warner Center - Charles Webb
Westwood - Jim Brasher

There will be a Head Trainers' meeting at the Westwood location on Sunday, February 15 th at 5:00 pm. For directions, please call 310-209-5002.

IMPROVEMENTS

what limitations does your client have?

These are the five complaints filtering up to the owners through the VP's:

- Trainers are not allowed to use LA FITNESS phones or sales desks. Stop doing this. Get your own pager or cell phone.
- Trainers' appearance. Please look sharp! Remember, you signed an agreement stating that LA FITNESS can make you wear a uniform. Do you want to all wear polos?
- Trainers are not replacing their equipment after they use it. Take pride in your workplace. Racking weights can be a method of approaching and acquiring new clients.
- If you do an intro, please train first and then sell them. Don't sit them down, sell them for 20 minutes and then show them 3 machines! A trainer did that in Cerritos, and the woman cancelled her \$400 membership that day. They were promised a free introductory session; make sure they get one. Service them and then "soft sell" them. Anyone would want to drive the car first, before they bought it.
- Your agreement only pertains to you. You cannot assign your agreement, nor hire employees.

Please help out with these complaints!

OPPORTUNITIES

Attention Westwood Trainers:

After a year of planning, LA FITNESS is ready to launch their own in-house commercial advertising program. Here's how the program works:

We have installed a digital storecaster in your location. With this equipment, we can record and program to play every hour on the hour, a 30 second "Club Radio" commercial. Your audio commercial will play approximately 474 times a month!

The commercials can be produced for you at American Impact Radio & Video with the voice, music and special offer of your choosing. The cost is \$250. However, I have a friend that can do your commercial for less. Call Bernie Tavis at 310-394-4258 and tell him John Platero sent you.

The cost for air time in a single location is \$150 per month. You are in complete control and can cancel at any time. If you are interested, call Chad Abramo at 714-509-2567.

POST REHAB FITNESS SPECIALIST

We had our first class on the cervical and thoracic spine. Twenty two trainers attended the class. It was excellent group with a lot of intelligent questions. The combination of the group and the teacher (who is excellent) made this an awesome class. I learned a ton. I'm so glad I have a month to study the material in order to make it my own. We went over the anatomy and mechanics in depth, dysfunctions and pathologies of those regions along with stretches and exercises to help rehabilitate particular injuries such as whiplash, disc bulges, rib injuries, etc.

If you are interested in this certification, you can still attend the last four seminars and qualify for the full course. But you are only allowed to miss one of the five days. So, if you didn't attend the first class, than you've already missed your quota. Also, you must pay for all five days to get the certification. If you're not interested in the certification, but would like to attend a specific day, the cost is \$159. The next class will cover the shoulder and elbow on Saturday, February 28, 1998, 8 am - 6 pm in Westwood.

Would you like to be on television?

We had a casting about two weeks ago, and I heard it was all very professional. However, because of some kind of schedule problem, the infomercial was scrapped. The company really complimented me on everyone who attended. They will be calling us again.

If you are you interested in modeling, hosting or participating in fitness infomercials please send an 8 x 10 picture and a bio to:

Future Fit
4052 La Salle #1
Culver City, Ca.
90034

IMPROVEMENTS

Do not use the LA FITNESS name or logo on any of your flyers without the prior written approval from LA FITNESS. Also, the statement "**Independent Contractor not affiliated with LA FITNESS**" should be on all of your flyers, cards, price sheets or advertisements. If you need stickers, let me know

CLUB POLICIES

If you want to change your EFT, you must do so a

month in advance. It was in the agreement you signed.

Go to the front desk and get an EFT form, fill it out and fax it to me at 310- 287-0801 or Chad Abramo at 714-509-2507 if you want to make any changes.

- Please show your card to the front desk at least once a day.

- In the event of an accident where someone is injured, please go to the front desk and ask for an "incident report". Fill it out, make a copy for yourself, fax a copy to me at 888-287-0801 and give the other to the front desk. This way, you're covered.

- If you have not received a "trainers card", or you have moved, call 800-600-2540, ext 561 and ask for Jim Irwin. Give him your correct address, so you can be sent a card.

- This is a reminder; you will be charged a 10% late fee plus a \$10 bank charge if your rent comes back to us. We will also deny you entry to the club until you pay the balance. If your rent is \$300 it will cost you \$340 to get back in to the club. THERE WILL BE NO MORE EXCEPTIONS.

ACHIEVMENTS

Emmett Fahringer was featured in an article in the Pasadena Weekly as a "Top Trainer".
Congratulations Emmett!

UPCOMING EVENTS

FUTURE FIT

PERSONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

Sat. and Sun. 8:30 am - 6:00 pm,
February 21 -22 LA FITNESS - La Mirada
714-994-57-87 (for directions)
\$159 1-800-778-6060 to register

POST REHAB FITNESS SPECIALIST

Sat. 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
February 28 - Westwood
310-209-5002 (for directions)
\$159

Please send any suggestions, comments, complaints, praises, accomplishments, articles or information you might find useful to the newsletter* or training program to:

John Platero

4052 La Salle #1
Culver City, CA
90034
or fax me at 310-287-0801

* I would like to thank Rachel Rose for helping me
edit this newsletter.