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Medical Clinics of North America

Volume 69, Issue 1, January 1985, Pages 109-122

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https://doi.org/10.1016/S0025-7125(16)31060-4

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Symposium on Medical Aspects of Exercise

Resistive Training and Selected Effects

Michael H. Stone, Ph.D.,* and G. Dennis Wilson, Ed.D.†

Resistive training is a term generally used to describe a wide variety of muscular strength and power-building methods and modes. (It also includes the competitive events of body building, powerlifting, and weight-lifting.) Although often used interchangeably with "weight-training," the two words are not synonymous. Resistive training not only includes the lifting of weights but also the use of resistance provided through hydraulics, elastic bands, springs, and isometrics. Weight-training technically refers to the lifting of weights or weight stacks (as present on some machines).

Resistive training is one of the fastest growing physical activities in the United States² and is widely used to enhance various aspects of "physical fitness" as well as part of the training for many sports. The purpose of this article is to describe briefly forms of resistive training and to discuss some of the physiologic and performance adaptation to resistive training.

RESISTIVE TRAINING

TRAINING MODE

Isometrics

The term *isometrics* means "same length." This type of muscular contraction produces a gain in tension but no changes in muscle length. Technically, the muscle-lever system performs no work. Strength gains from isometrics are joint-angle specific. ^{25, 29, 56} In order to effect strength gains throughout the range of motion, many joint angles must be trained. Some studies have found isometrics to enhance the speed of muscle contraction and motor performance^{13, 14, 25, 59} while others have shown no effect^{60, 96} or a reduced effect on velocity of movement. ⁹¹

Medical Clinics of North America-Vol. 69, No. 1, January 1985

109

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