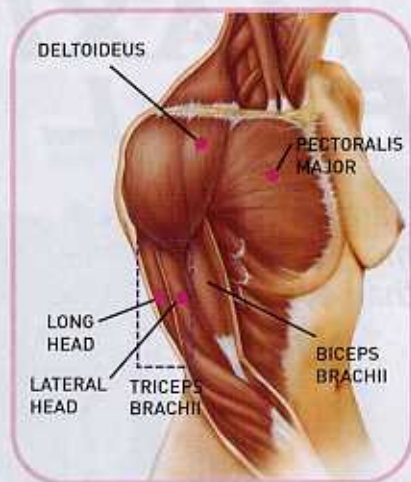


These
10 moves
guarantee
killer
biceps!



Expert trainer Mike Davies of The Fitness Factory sees it all the time: gals cranking out the same ol' three sets of three exercises for biceps, usually performed on the same day as back training, almost as an afterthought. It's no wonder those biceps aren't growing as they should: they're not getting the individual attention they deserve!

"It's better to devote one day a week to working the biceps specifically or to combine them with triceps for a complete arm workout," recommends Davies, who trains many top pros including Julie Palmer, Jen Hendershott and Adela Garcia. "The biceps get a lot of work on other days as a secondary mover for the shoulders and back, so why go after them when they're already fatigued?"

Another key component to building your biceps is variety. "You can't do the same thing every time you walk into the gym," Davies explains. "You have to trick your body to get it to change." He recommends targeting the biceps with three to four sets of four to six different exercises with lots of surprises along the way. For example, he suggests starting out with barbell curls at a lighter weight and higher reps for the first couple of sets, then dropping down to six reps at a heavier weight and finishing up with 15 reps at a moderate weight. He then rounds out the workout with more shaping and sculpting exercises like

Your Right to **BARE ARMS**

Give your biceps the attention they
deserve and watch them grow!

BY PEGGY HALL | PHOTOGRAPHY ALEX ARDENTI

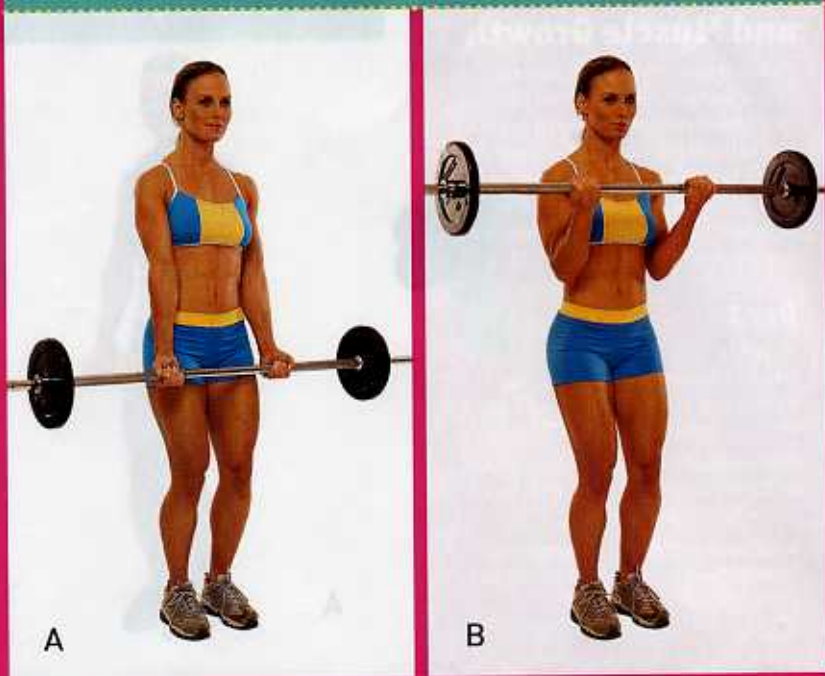
lying cable curls, reverse grip pullups and – watch out for this one – his medicine ball burnout to wrap up the session. (See sidebar for complete details.)

California-based physical therapist, athletic trainer and strength and conditioning specialist David Ishii agrees that the mighty biceps deserves special attention. "In order to achieve maximum development, you need to target all three flexors: the brachii, brachialis and brachioradialis," explains Ishii. "These are the muscles that flex the elbow and rotate the forearm and are used with all activities of lifting and carrying." The biceps brachii with two heads is the largest of the group and makes up that nice full belly in the upper arm. The brachialis lies deep along the biceps brachii – along the lower humerus – and helps to flex the elbow joint. The brachioradialis is a long, thin muscle that lies along the thumb-side part of the forearm. According to Ishii, you need to work the biceps at different angles to effectively hit all three muscles.

Here, fitness pro Allison Ethier demonstrates five tried-and-true moves that incorporate various grips and angles for maximum development. "I train my biceps once a week," she says, "usually lifting in the 12 to 15 rep range as I like the look of my arms and am just trying to maintain their shape." Allison moves through a full range of motion, contracts hard at the top of the exercise and resists against the negative portion to really work the muscle. "I like looking back on the progress I've made over the years," she says. "I used to be able to barely lift five pounds and now 15 pounds for curls is no problem."

Allison's advice for those of us who would like to bare arms? "Don't hesitate to lift heavy weights for fear you'll look bulky. You can gain a bit of muscle and still have the lean and toned slightly 'cut' look. Losing excess body fat is essential for showing off all your hard work in the gym."

* barbell curl



Hold a barbell with an underhand grip, shoulder-width apart. Stand with your knees slightly bent and firm your abdomen. Keep your elbows tucked into your waist as you curl the bar up toward your shoulders. Slowly lower back with control. Use a relaxed grip, letting the biceps do the work.

* single-arm hammer curl



Hold a dumbbell in each hand, palms facing your sides. Stand with knees slightly bent. Alternate lifting one weight at a time to your shoulders, keeping your thumbs facing up through the whole movement.

Eating for Strength and Muscle Growth

Davies makes no mistake about it: "Muscles cannot grow without glycogen." He recommends eating every two to three hours, taking in enough carbs to fuel your workout and feed your muscles. "Be consistent and persistent with nutrition and you will see results."

Day 1

Meal 1

Protein pancake made with 4 egg whites, 1 whole egg, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oatmeal and 1 scoop protein powder

Pre-workout: One scoop protein powder with water (add creatine and glutamine if desired), $\frac{1}{2}$ large grapefruit

Post-workout: Protein shake with milk (add creatine and glutamine if desired) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oatmeal

Meal 2

4 oz chicken, 1 whole-wheat tortilla, salsa, shredded lettuce (add low-fat mayo and low-fat cheddar cheese if desired)

Meal 3

1 cup cottage cheese and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit

Meal 4

4 oz chicken breast, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown rice, 1 cup steamed broccoli

Meal 5

Protein shake with 1 cup low-fat milk, 1 cup strawberries

Day 2

Meal 1

Veggie omelette made with 4 egg whites and 1 whole egg, chopped peppers and onions; 1 slice whole-wheat toast with 1 tbsp peanut butter

Pre-workout: Protein shake with water (add glutamine and creatine if desired), 1 small banana

Post-workout: One scoop protein powder with 1 cup low-fat milk (add glutamine and creatine if desired); 1 small bagel

Meal 2

4 oz grilled chicken breast, large green salad, 1 tbsp flaxseed oil, 1 medium apple

Meal 3

Turkey sandwich with 4 oz white meat, 2 slices whole-wheat bread, lettuce, tomato, mustard (add low-fat mayo and low-fat cheese if desired)

Meal 4

4 oz top round steak, 1 cup steamed vegetables, and 3 oz potato or sweet potato

Meal 5

$\frac{1}{2}$ low fat yogurt, 1 cup blueberries, 1 scoop protein shake with water

* reverse dumbbell curl



A



B

Take a pair of dumbbells with an overhand grip (knuckles facing up). Stand with your knees slightly bent. Slowly curl the weight toward your shoulders, pausing for a moment before lowering with resistance.

* incline dumbbell curl



A




B

Lie back on an incline bench set to about 60 degrees. Grasp a light dumbbell in each hand, palms facing out. Curl one dumbbell at a time toward your shoulder without leaning from side to side. Because your elbows are not stabilized against your body in this exercise, be sure to avoid any swinging. Use a lighter weight than you would for traditional dumbbell curls. Incline curls help the biceps develop a long and lean look due to the nice stretch the muscle gets at the end of each repetition.

* concentration curl



Sit on a bench and hold a dumbbell with an underhand grip. Place your working elbow on your inner thigh. Curl the weight up, aiming your little finger toward your shoulder. Squeeze at the top of the contraction. Slowly lower and repeat for reps before switching arms. Try going heavier on this exercise to get a great pump and nice roundness to the biceps brachii. 

Trainers' Top Tips for Building Buff Biceps

Be creative. "You need to shock the muscle in order for it to grow," says Ishii. "Dumbbells, bars, cable systems and machines should all be used. Experiment with different grips, positions and levels of resistance."

Concentrate on form. Use a weight that you can control. Swinging the weight or jerking the torso will cheat you out of strength gains and may even cause injuries.

Work the negative. As you lower the weight, you're performing an eccentric contraction, which requires more raw power than the concentric (lifting or positive) contraction. Resisting against the negative leads to more muscle breakdown and subsequent rebuilding.

Allow for recovery. Let your biceps rest at least one minute between sets so you can put forth maximum effort in each exercise. Give your body plenty of time to recover between training sessions as well. Davies recommends working the biceps specifically no more than once a week.

5 More Great Exercises for the Biceps

* Following the experts' advice to include variety in your training, do this workout every other week alternating with the workout demonstrated by Allison.



reverse grip pull-ups

Great for building overall mass and shape. Take an underhand grip on a pull-up bar (or at an assisted machine) and pull your chest up toward the bar. Lower with control and repeat for reps.



preacher curls

Isolates the elbow to really bring a nice pump to the biceps brachii. Stand or sit behind the preacher curl station and keep the back of your upper arms pressed into the pad. Use a light to moderate weight to avoid straining your arms when they're fully extended.



lying cable curls

This is an effective change of angle to shock the muscle. Use a straight bar attachment to the bottom of a cable machine. Lie on the floor with your feet pressed against the frame of the machine. Using an underhand grip, slowly curl the bar toward your shoulders, keeping your upper arms pressing into the floor.



high pulley curls

One of the all-time best shaping exercises. Use a lighter weight and concentrate on form. Stand between the two pulleys and grab the high handles with an underhand grip. Curl your hands toward your head and then extend your arms, resisting against the negative.



medicine ball curls

Squeeze a medicine ball to engage an isometric hold and then execute several quick precise curls right up under your chin for a burnout set of 50 reps. This is ideal for developing muscle endurance (which fitness competitors need for strength holds and push-ups in their contest routines).