

Add 2" in just one day: build a bigger chest and back today! Spur your most amazing transformation ever with M & F's lab-tested training program

David Sandler

In May of this year, we introduced you to a concept once thought impossible: adding 1 inch to your arms in one day. But our training and diet program worked; we know--we tested it in the strength lab at Florida International University, and thousands of MUSCLE & FITNESS readers tried it with the same results.

That got us thinking ... if it worked for arms, would the same principles hold true for other bodyparts? Could we take the program, rework it for your upper body and add an inch to it over the course of one day?

The short answer? Yes. In fact, when we applied the theory to bulking up the back and chest, we were able to add an average of 2 inches to our test subjects' upper-body circumference. Not bad for a day's work!

Now we present the program to you: Five hours, 60 sets and plenty of sweet muscle soreness. Are you up for the challenge?

RECIPE FOR SIZE

Before we hit the gym, we had to put together the right program. We wanted to hit chest and back with exercises that were simple and arrange them in such a way as to head off fatigue for as long as possible. To prevent exhaustion of support muscles (delts and triceps for chest, biceps for back) early on, the goal was to isolate the pecs and lats for the first hour with flye-type moves, introduce multijoint movements such as presses and rows for the next two hours and finish strong with big pushes and pulls. For lats, we did a move traditionally thought of as a rear-delt exercise, the bent-over lateral raise, because it also calls the lats and traps into play without tiring the biceps.

We also had to decide between free weights and machines. Most people don't have the time or inclination to hang out at a gym for five hours, so we built our main program around dumbbells and an adjustable bench. But to quell our own curiosity, we also tested an all-machine workout (made up of pec-deck flyes, reverse pec-deck flyes, flat- and incline-bench presses, seated cable rows and front pulldowns) and a combination dumbbell/machine workout.

In the end, we found the exercises essentially interchangeable, indicating it's the protocol more than the specificity of a particular move that's responsible for success. So feel free to switch out listed exercises for similar moves, if you so desire.

DOWN TO BUSINESS

To conduct our study, I and five other men, ages 23-36, headed to Fitness 21 health club in Weston, Florida. We set out to do 60 total sets: 30 chest and 30 back sets paired into supersets, performed in five hours. We broke off into three pairs, each pair doing a different workout: one dumbbell-based (as shown in the "2"-in-One-Day Plan"), one machine-based and one combo. We completed supersets at 20-minute intervals; rest time between each superset was limited to the time it took for our partner to do his set.

To produce extreme overload on the pectorals and back, we chose a repetition pattern of a three-second concentric motion and two-second eccentric, with a one-second pause in the fully contracted position.

The goal was to start out with a manageable weight for the first hour (about 60%-70% of our one-rep maxes for the lifts), slowly increase it over the next two hours and close out the final two hours with sets we were unable to complete on our own, thus finishing with spotter-assisted forced reps. Because grip strength becomes an issue when doing pulling movements over a five-hour period, wrist straps should be used from the very beginning, even though you're not lifting a ton of weight.

We took chest, back and arm measurements every hour, figuring both the triceps and biceps would get a pretty good workout along the way. After the first hour, most of us had blown up a full 1-1 1/2 inches across our chest-back measurement. By the end of hour two, all six of us had increased just over 2 inches. And our arms began to increase as well.

By the end of the third hour, fatigue set in and we had trouble completing sets at the starting weight. As we continued to push, the chest-back measurement remained the same, and the swollen feeling continued. By the end of the workout, our upper bodies ached. But our chests were stage-ready, and as a bonus, we'd also found a 3/4-inch gain across the board in our arms!

MEASURABLE RESULTS

Because of our previous experiment with the arm program, we weren't surprised at these in-workout increases. Indeed, the rubber truly hits the road for our purposes in the weeks after the workout, based on whether our growth was long lasting or only a fleeting occurrence.

To find out, we measured every other day for two weeks. For the first week, we didn't do any other workouts; in the second week, we resumed our normal training routines.

During the first week, we kept our pump with lingering delayed-onset muscle soreness, which isn't surprising. Two and even three weeks later, while the soreness subsided, four out of six of us had lost less than a half-inch across the chest and back (meaning we kept over 1 1/2 inches of our initial gain).

Meanwhile, all our arms shrunk to regular size within two days of the workout, actually lending additional support to the driving theories behind our program. Because our arms quickly went back to normal--unlike the lasting results we saw in our arm-specific program--while our chest and back maintained gains over a longer period, the importance of overloading the specific muscles you're targeting with a volume-heavy, intensity-building approach was clear.

As with the previous arm-focused workout, we saw size gains simply due to the damage sustained by the muscle tissue and the resulting recovery process. While the exact science behind the phenomenon of the increases lasting for weeks isn't totally clear yet, our hypothesis remains that, because we resumed our regular workouts, we never truly let the muscles relax and fully recover (thus maintaining the damage-related size increase). Of course, over the long run, if you continued to do this program on a regular basis, the intense muscle damage would catch up and eventually get the better of you. Thus, I suggest doing this program at a minimum of three-month intervals, perhaps even less often than that, and take a full week off from training afterward.

With that said, we hand this amazing program over to you. Grab your dumbbells, a bench and a partner, and have some new, larger shirts on hand--you're gonna need'em!

2-INCHES IN-ONE-DAY PLAN

ALL MOVES ARE PERFORMED WITH DUMBBELLS. TIME REFERS TO THE PART OF EACH HOUR THE LISTED EXERCISES ARE PERFORMED. FOR INSTANCE, "00" COULD BE 2 P.M., "20" WOULD BE 2:20 P.M. AND "40" WOULD BE 2:40 P.M.

	TIME*	EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
1	00	Flat-Bench Flye	3	10
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	3	10
	20	Flat-Bench Flye	2	12
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	2	12
	40	Flat-Bench Flye	1	6
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	1	6
2	00	Flat-Bench Flye	3	10
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	3	10
	20	Flat-Bench Press	2	12
		Bent-Over Row	2	12
	40	Incline Press	1	6
		One-Arm Row	1	6
3	00	Flat-Bench Press	3	10
		Bent-Over Row	3	10
	20	Incline Press	2	12
		One-Arm Row	2	12
	40	Flat-Bench Flye	1	6
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	1	6
4	00	Flat-Bench Press	3	10
		Bent-Over Row	3	10
	20	Incline Press	2	12
		One-Arm Row	2	12
	40	Flat-Bench Flye	1	6
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	1	6
5	00	Flat-Bench Press	3	10
		Bent-Over Row	3	10
	20	Incline Press	2	12
		One-Arm Row	2	12
	40	Flat-Bench Flye	1	6
		Bent-Over Lateral Raise	1	6

The authors would like to thank Fitness 21 and general manager Billy Beck for the use for their facility, and Ryan Koleyak, Sam Berry, Alex Miranda and Jaime Adams for their participation.

RELATED ARTICLE: Nutritional Support

THE SUBJECTS CONSUMED THE FOLLOWING SUPPLEMENTS FROM THE GNC PROPERFORMANCE LINE EACH HOUR OF THE PROGRAM:

* Mega MRP meal-replacement drink

* 1 serving CreaDrive mixed in water

* 1 serving Distance mixed in water

* ProCrunch bar(s)

The goal is to get aminos for tissue repair, carbs for maintaining glycogen (energy) levels and fluids for hydration. This can be accomplished with these products, similar supplements from another reputable supplement company or a selection of whole foods. The key is to eat early, eat often and fuel the building process.

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