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OCTOBER 2007

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What's the best way to prepare for a pull-up fitness test?

As part of their fitness tests, many special-operations personnel — in law enforcement and the military — are required to perform pull-ups with additional weight to simulate the weight of tactical gear. The key thing to remember is that training is specific. So, if a test involves performing pull-ups with 25 pounds of additional weight, then preparation should include performing pull-ups with 25 pounds of additional weight. A lat pulldown is similar to a pull-up; but, the best way to get better at doing pull-ups with weight is by doing pull-ups with weight.

It's also important to prepare by performing the specific exercises/activities in the same manner that they're to be done in a fitness test. If individuals aren't

allowed to "kip" or swing their body during pull-ups, for instance, then they shouldn't prepare by performing the exercise with a kip or swing.

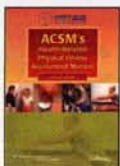
What if someone is unable to perform any pull-ups with the required weight? In this case, individuals should start by doing pull-ups with their bodyweight, and gradually and systematically add resistance.

Remember the

ancient, alliterative and oft-used Five-P Rule of the military: Proper preparation prevents poor performance. **FM**



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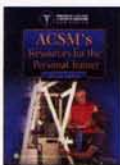


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What are negative-accentuated repetitions?

Negative-accentuated repetitions are those that emphasize the eccentric, or negative phase. When performing negative-accentuated repetitions, the resistance is raised with both limbs, and then lowered with one limb.

Here's an example using the leg extension: Raise the resistance with both legs and pause briefly. Move the left leg away from the roller pad and hold the resistance momentarily with the right leg. Lower the resistance slowly and steadily with the right leg. Raise the resistance with both legs and follow the preceding instructions, but lower the resistance with the left leg. Repeat the procedure for the desired number of repetitions.

The negative phase of each repetition should be about six to eight seconds. As a starting point, use about 70 percent of the resistance that's normally handled in the traditional fashion. So, a person who last used 100 pounds on an exercise should begin with 70 pounds for negative-accentuated repetitions. For most individuals, appropriate repetition ranges are about

15 to 20 for the hips, 10 to 15 for the legs and six to 12 for the torso. (Note that these are the total repetitions for both limbs, not the total repetitions for each limb.)

It's important to maintain a stable position when performing negative-accentuated repetitions. In particular, avoid twisting or turning the torso. **FM**

Are fortified sodas healthy?

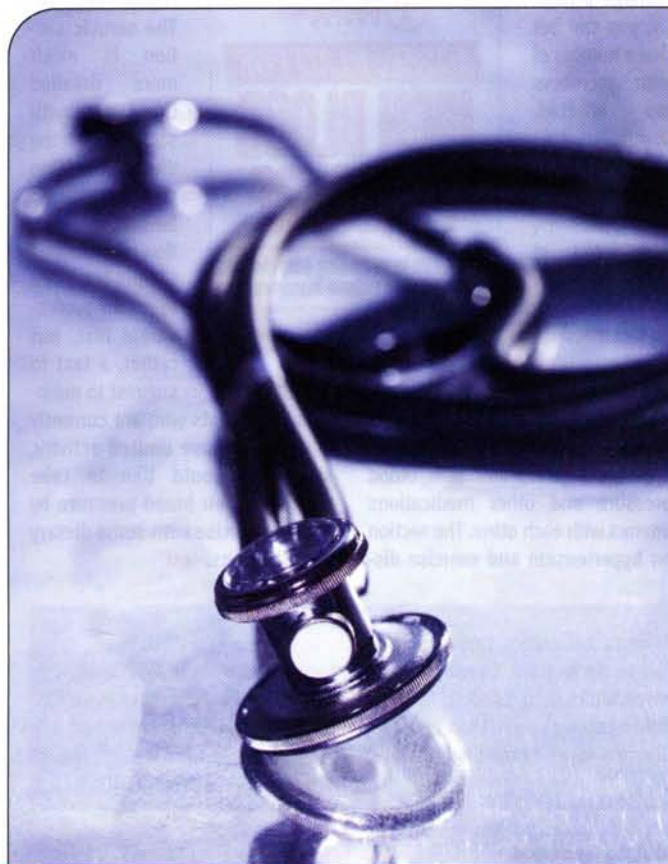
Recently, people have pointed a finger at soda as being a major factor in the obesity epidemic. In addition, soda sales have dwindled as consumers gobble up bottled water, teas, juices and sport drinks. In response to the consumer outcry — and with the hope of reversing the recent trend of declining sales — several companies have introduced soda that is fortified with vitamins (such as Vitamins B3, B6, B12 and E) and minerals (such as chromium, magnesium and zinc).

While fortified soda is healthier than regular soda, that doesn't mean it's healthy (or, in the words of one company's chief executive, a "health and wellness brand.") Promoting soda as

"sparkling" rather than "carbonated" may be a good public relations ploy, but, as they say, "A horse by any other name is still a horse." So don't be fooled: Candy that's fortified with vitamins and minerals is still candy. And soda — liquid candy — that's fortified with vitamins and minerals is still soda. **FM**



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