

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 714

**4 Overlooked Exercises That
Will Make You Fitter,
Healthier, & More Resilient**

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SHAWN STEVENSON: All Welcome to the Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning into me today. What if there were exercises that can get you fitter, healthier, and more resilient faster? What if there were exercises that are often overlooked that are easy to implement, that sometimes you could do anywhere that can help to transform your body? That's what we're diving into on this episode today. Some of these exercises are going to have some familiarity. Some of them are going to seem kind of brand new, and also even the ones that we might know about, you're going to find how to utilize them in more efficient and effective ways.

Number one on our list of the four most overlooked exercises that can get you fitter, healthier, and more resilient, faster. Number one is jumping rope. This exercise provides some invaluable benefits that you need to know about right now, backed by a plethora of peer-reviewed studies, jumping rope can improve your metabolic health, balance, coordination, and explosive power like few things can. It's noted from a muscle perspective to target everything from your grip muscles to your core, to the muscles of your glutes, hamstrings, quads, and calves and more. But if you look a little deeper, you'll find some of the most remarkable benefits from jumping rope is the impact that it has on your bone density.

For instance, a study published in the Journal of Bone and Mineral Metabolism detailed how jumping rope can improve the bone density of swimmers. Now, swimmers are at a seemingly competitive disadvantage when it comes to building bone density because they don't have that gravitational weight on their bones and they're spending a lot of time in the pool. So to counteract that, these researchers were trying to find ways to build bone mineral density and finding that jump rope shot right to the top.

Now, why does this really matter? Well, our bones are critical for our longevity. Our bones are literally the framework that our body is built on. Now this goes far beyond what we might be taught in our conventional biology and human anatomy and physiology classes. What I wasn't taught in my university classes was that our bones are a reservoir for many different anti-aging compounds. Yes, a reservoir for minerals and the like, but also for things like stem cells. In particular, the bones around our pelvis, our spine is incredibly important, obviously just for our stability and our longevity. We want to have robust, healthy bones. All right, we want to have a nice robust skeleton. Shout out to Skeletor.

right, now what about outside of the pool? What are some of the benefits seen in peer-review data? Well, an additional study included a meta-analysis. This is multiple studies published in the journal Sports Medicine, revealed that jumping rope can significantly improve bone

mineral density in at-risk groups for bone degeneration like pre-menopausal women. This is something that we can add to the mix to help to stave off degeneration that can help us to have more longevity and functionality as we move on later in life. And this form of activity is remarkably safe because we might think like, "Well, I don't know about jumping and jumping rope and things like that." Well, our body really does function on this premise of use it or lose it. That's really the big problem. If we're going from not ever doing these motions to doing several rounds and several days of this type of training without easing into it, that can be the problem. But a meta-analysis of multiple studies again, looking at participants, 50 years and over, including 13 different training groups, found that jump training, including jump rope training, is safe and effective for older adults. And in particular, effective at building and maintaining bone health and muscular power.

Now, what else makes jumping rope so remarkable? Well, jumping rope is potentially a faster way to change your body composition than conventional "cardio." A study cited in the Journal of Physical Therapy and Science randomly assigned overweight young adults into one of two exercise training groups. One group did jump rope training while the other group did training on a stationary bike. Both groups had improvements in their fitness at the end of the study period, but the researchers found that cardiovascular capacity was improved more in the jump rope exercise group than the stationary cycling group. And body mass index was lower in the jump rope exercise group than the stationary bike group.

Now let's look at another vital capacity of being able to move throughout our days to develop spatial awareness, to be able to effectively and efficiently move throughout our lives and be able to work and to play and to do the things that we want to do, long term. And this is balance and coordination. Many people now realize that as people move into older age brackets, there is a heightened tendency towards falls and subsequent breaking of bones. And this in and of itself, number one, to be more resilient in the face of that. Number two, to reduce the risk of falling in the first place. And number three, dramatically increasing the ability to recover if an injury should occur.

This speaks to the importance of proactively building and working on our balance and coordination and associated muscles involved. Now we've already touched on some of the data in increasing bone density and fitness regarding jump rope. But we're going to move this all the way back to earlier in our lives and setting the foundation for having better coordination and balance throughout our lives.

And we're going to look at a very interesting study published in the Journal of Sports Science and Medicine. And it took kids who were soccer athletes and split them into two groups. One group did jump rope training at the beginning of their training session. The other group, the control group, executed soccer specific drills at the beginning of their training session. All of

the athletes were tested in a circuit training course to monitor their motor ability, aka their ability to perform rapidly in a course with different physical tasks, such as somersaults and passages above, below obstacles, et cetera, and to assess unilateral dynamic balance.

After eight weeks of training the group of athletes that implemented jump rope training were able to decrease their time in the obstacle course by nearly 10% while there was no improvement in performance in the soccer drills only group. The researchers stated, "Our findings demonstrate that jump rope training within regular soccer training enhanced general motor coordination and balance in soccer players. Therefore, the inclusion of jump rope training within regular soccer training sessions should be encouraged to improve children's motor skills."

So regardless of the sport, regardless of the lifestyle-related activities that we want to do, jumping rope can make us better. All right, now this doesn't mean that we don't practice the thing that we're into, but adding this exercise, this form of exercise in, can dramatically improve our physical fitness.

Now one of the most incredible things about jump rope training is that it really activates and enhances our fast-twitch muscle fibers. So, these are the fibers related to power and to explosiveness. And unfortunately, a lot of people think that with age we just have this degradation of strength. Of muscle loss. But what we really see in advanced aging and aging populations is a loss of power. That is the big difference. And again, it really works on that use it or lose it basis. If we want to keep it, we need to train it and being able to activate those fast-twitch fibers, jumping rope is really, really good at that.

So, in addition to all of this good stuff, some of the other benefits found in jump rope training are that it's relatively inexpensive. You can get yourself a pretty inexpensive jump rope. You can just order one online or at your local department store or sporting goods store. There are fancy pants jump ropes for sure. Some of them probably play music or something like that. I don't know, but you can get really advanced with a jump rope, but generally they're going to be pretty inexpensive. So, it's a very low barrier of entry. They're compact, so they're easy to store and carry and travel with. And there's tons of creative opportunities with jumping rope.

So, this includes basic jumping, just jumping in place. So, kind of a slow and steady pace, so you can jump quickly. We can do skipping. So, this is something we might relate more to like training in boxing where they're kind of skipping rope. Then we've got like high knees that we can do we can jump side to side we can even bring in two ropes I don't know if you ever seen double Dutch or done double Dutch, but this is coming from... Where I come from double Dutch was done out in the streets utilizing everything from extension cords to phone cords and the like. Even if we didn't have a jump rope, the girls in the neighborhood would use these

different cords from the house and it was a vibe. And so, we've got that, we've got, with the jump rope we can jump side to side, move around.

Again, there's like endless possibilities here in how we're using the rope. We can do double unders. This is where we swing the rope under ourselves twice per jump. And all of these are learnable skills as well. And again, most importantly, it's are we taking advantage? This is something that is a low barrier of entry. It is inexpensive and being that it's so compact, it's a great tool that we can travel with and be able to get in some really valuable exercise no matter where we're at. And by the way, when I was doing my jump rope training this week, and this is something that I like to add either at the beginning or end of my workout kind of bookend my workouts. One of the things that I've been implementing prior to my workouts and experimenting with so if you're wanting to really get the most out of your workout to bring your best to it to really fuel your performance whether it's in exercise, in training or you're training for a specific sport my favorite thing to do right now pre-workout is to utilize Ketone-IQ.

Numerous studies including a study published by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology aka the FASEB journal found that exogenous ketones can be up to 28% more efficient in generating energy than glucose alone. Plus, other studies have found up to a 15% increase mean power output after recovery utilizing ketones. So, there's these little ketone shots I keep them in my refrigerator all the time. I even had one before the show today because of all the benefits related to cognitive function and it's one of the few things that I noticed immediately like day one. Now for some people might be a couple of days and again this is always going to be based on our own unique metabolism but for me, I noticed that improved performance and most notably an increase in my stamina and my recovery afterwards was just kind of like the sustained really cool energy that I had to share more about and get people educated about.

And so, if you want to check out Ketone-IQ, go to hvmn.com/model. That's hvmn.com/model, and they're going to hook you up with 30% off your first subscription order, taken off automatically. Now moving on in our list of four overlooked exercises that will make you fitter, healthier and more resilient faster. This one is related to a lot of iconic moments in training, in film, thinking back to the iconic movie, Rocky. All right Rocky Balboa and that Montage. This took Montages to another level. And when he ran up those stairs with the city behind him, iconic.

Those stairs hold something really special when it comes to fitness. Many of the same muscles that power your body through squats and lunges are used to propel you upstairs. Quads, calves, glutes, and core to name a few but what makes going up a flight of stairs so unique and uniquely challenging is that stairs force you to work against gravity in the most remarkable

way. Because stairs are much steeper than most hills you'll ever encounter, and because of the alternating single-leg presses you have to execute to drive yourself upwards, climbing stairs tends to accelerate your heart rate faster than other forms of movement and makes you breathe faster to take in more oxygen. The combination of swift changes to your heart rate and breathing that happens when you encounter stairs is one of the reasons that climbing stairs for exercise is one of the fastest ways to improve your VO2 max.

Now, your VO2 max refers to how much oxygen your body can absorb and use during physical exertion. And it's one of the best measurable markers of cardiovascular fitness. A randomized control trial published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, took a group of inactive young women who were otherwise healthy and split them into two groups. One group was designated to a stair climbing program while the other group functioned as a control group who didn't change their exercise habits. In the stairs group, the stair climbing was progressively increased from just one ascent up the stairs a day in week one to five ascents a day in weeks seven and eight. Training took place five days a week on a public access staircase, which this ascent up the stairs for the participants took about two minutes to complete. Subjects agreed not to change their diet or lifestyle over the experimental period in any other ways.

After compiling the data at the end of the study period, the stair climbing group had increased their VO2 max by over 17% compared to the control group. Now, on paper, this appears to be a very small amount of exercise that shouldn't invoke such a significant amount of an improvement in cardiovascular fitness so quickly. At minimum, the stair climbing group did just two minutes of exercise in a day, and at maximum they only did up to 10 minutes of actual work. They only did up to 10 minutes of exercise.

Now again, this is an incredible improvement in the ability to exert physical energy, physical force, our cardiovascular fitness in such a short amount of time. And again, it was just a short amount of input as far as exercise is concerned, there's something really special about doing exercise on stairs. Now, regardless... This is the key, regardless of what physical fitness level you're at, if you don't regularly train on stairs, and even if you do, you will find yourself, winded going up a flight of stairs. And then you're telling yourself probably like, "Man, I really got to work on my cardio." While I was prepared for this episode, true story, we had a team of people coming over to do an inspection on our house. And so, they had to go up to our second level, and they were standing in our bathroom talking to us a little bit, and the head guy that was talking, he was in the middle of like maybe a second or third sentence, and he's just like, "I'm sorry, I'm pretty out of shape." All right? So, he had to pause what he was doing to apologize because he was having a hard time talking, just going up from the first level to the second level.

If he's going up the stairs, he might find himself a little bit winded, because again, this ascent, being able to understand that there is this gradient that's more steep going upstairs than just about any hill you're going to encounter. And that's what really is kind of kicking in the increase in heart rate and our breathing rate. And if you choose to take advantage of the stairs in your environment, you can make some cardiovascular advances really quickly. Now to top off the benefits of stair climbing, to take this to another level, research that was presented at the European Society of Cardiology determine that our ability to climb stairs is one of the things that is directly correlated with longevity. So, the researchers found that how quickly a person can walk up four flights of stairs for example, may be a strong indicator of their heart health. And other longevity metrics were analyzed and shared as well. Basically, the capacity or ability to go up and down stairs being indicative of reducing the risk of death from all causes. So again, pretty incredible.

Now, how can we use this for maximum benefit. How can we be efficient with this? Well, one of the cool things about doing exercises with stairs is that there's a ton of different ways to do this. One way is just a basic single stair, moderate pace, just going up stairs. And another version of this is maybe going into a little bit of a jog up the stairs. Then from there we can even do stair sprints. This is something that I was doing regularly when I was training with my coach in football, we would do stair sprints. Sprinting upstairs requires and builds a lot of explosive power, and this is facts. Also, from there, we can go to the double stair moderate pace. Again, just taking step by step but going by twos. Double stair jog, double stair sprints. Now, doing stair sprints is something that I just did. I just took my family on vacation. They had a long staircase at this particular resort, and I was like, "Oh, advantage. This was a great opportunity." And being able to pay attention to our environment, to utilize our environment, to have fun, to evoke fitness, to challenge ourselves. And I was doing my sets going up and down that staircase and several people were showing me love and just like, "I should join you." I'm like, "Come on. I'm right here. We can go. Let's do it." And it also invites in the community as well. Having these open spaces, natural settings, whatever the case might be, or it could be indoors or outdoors as we're going to talk about.

But if you have access to a staircase, or one of the things that I've taken my family to do many times at a track here at a college campus is some of those big staircases at some of the different universities, bleachers, and things like that. But again, with all these things, of course, you want to have a level of intelligence and safety and being able to develop these skill sets. You don't want to... If you're not accustomed to running upstairs, let alone walking upstairs, then of course take your time, get accustomed to it. But this is one of those things that humans have been doing for a long time. One of the features of living in St. Louis, we would go regularly on a field trip to a place called Cahokia Mounds. So, these were Native American sites where this particular place at Cahokia Mounds, there was this long set of stairs leading up to the top

of the mound. And being able to recognize like, whoa, for a long time in human history we've been making staircases and using them to travel. Using them to get from one place to another.

And so, that capacity to do that is intertwined with our genes. It's intertwined with our DNA. Now, what are some of the things we can do with the stairs? We can do stair hops. So, we're jumping from one step to the next, maybe two steps at a time, maybe more. We could do sidestepping, so we can go up the stairs sideways. We can do pace changes again, where we're sprinting or slowing down, where we're literally just going slow and kind of lunging our way up each stair. We can even go down the staircase stepping backwards, being able to hold onto a banister, for example, and step down. There's so many different creative things that we can do with a staircase to uplevel our fitness. But the most important thing is, are we doing this? Because this is often overlooked, but it's incredibly valuable. Now, addition obviously, there are many different stationary stair climbing and stair stepping machines that many fitness enthusiasts are passionate about. And if you want to get in some reps in that kind of more of a uniform fashion, you can absolutely give them a try. But if you want to get those real free-range steps in, there are generally staircases all over the place if you're paying attention.

Now, I was thinking about this. There is a stair pathway in my neighborhood that I've seen people exercise on a time or two and myself included. And it's a nice... Maybe it's about, we'll just say 40 steps and just going up and down that staircase 40, 50 steps something like that. And in addition, I was thinking back in my neighborhood when we didn't really have kind of like peaks and valleys and things like that, very flat area in Missouri inner city. There was, again, there was a local school track stadium where they had stairs. And also, the two family flat that we lived in, we lived upstairs and there was literally this nice set of stairs just going up to my apartment, straight shot. And I never thought about it through the lens of exercise. And so, it's just about being creative, paying attention to what's in your environment, and utilizing those for fun and for fitness.

Now, there are even renowned races around the world that you could sign up for that take place on staircases. For example, the Empire State Building Run-Up, which involves ascending as fast as you can up multiple flights of stairs. So again, vast options here in utilizing stairs for training, for improving our fitness and improving our resilience, our adaptability to different conditions in a world where we definitely need it. Now, if you're wondering what I might be doing during workout or intra-workout, so I talked about my favorite thing pre-workout, but intra-workout what you're usually going to find me sipping on or what I have in my bottle is electrolytes from LMNT. This is a sugar-free electrolyte supplement that has hundreds of thousands of data points. Just about every professional form of sports. We have entire teams that are utilizing LMNT now because it's just so freaking effective.

Without added artificial colors and flavors and the like. It's just high-quality salts. And with that said, researchers at McGill University have found that, in particular, just something like sodium has the ability to switch on and off certain neurotransmitters that control our cognitive function and your brain is controlling. So, all of this stuff that's happening with our bodies in this training, our brain has to be on point. Our brain and nervous system and electrolytes are key minerals that carry an electric charge that allow ourselves to talk to each other. This is pretty freaking important. This is one of the things that gets pulled from our bodies via sweat. We're losing electrolytes and to be able to replenish these things in a form that is safe, smart, effective, and again, all these data points to find the optimal ratios of sodium salts, potassium salts, and the like. That's what you find with LMNT. Go to drink L-M-N-T.com/model, and not only you're going to get the very best electrolytes in the world, they're going to send you a free gift with every purchase. So definitely pop over there, check them out, L-M-N-T.com/model. Again, free gift with every purchase. It's another thing on a consistent basis. Pretty much every day I'm utilizing LMNT, and my family does the same.

Now, moving on to number three on our list of the four most overlooked exercises that will make you fitter, healthier and more resilient. Number three is something called offset training. Now, this is also known as unilateral exercises. And these are strength training movements that require one limb or one side of your body to work essentially independently or at different levels of resistance than the other side of your body. Now, if you think about things that we do in real life. If you think about the things that we carry in real everyday life, carrying groceries, luggage, sports equipment, beach gear, carrying kids, it's almost never balanced evenly. That's just not how life comes at us. And offset exercises have a specific impact on core strength, balance, coordination, and your psychology like no other exercises have. You may have actually heard the term stabilizer muscles before. Well, a meta-analysis of over 70 studies published in the journal, *Physiotherapy Canada*, examined the research regarding stabilizer muscles detailing these unique muscle activations that provide joint stability in thousands of potential movement combinations, motor control and overall improvement of function when we train them.

This is what offset training targets like nothing else can. It's able to wake up sleepy, underused muscles to improve your physique, reduce your risk of injuries, and improve your performance and longevity. Now, let's talk about what offset exercises can look like and how to utilize them. Now, different exercises are obviously going to target different muscle groups. And one of my favorite offset exercises is a single hand farmers walk, or offset farmers walk. So, this is picking up a heavy implement a dumbbell or a kettlebell or a person and carrying them just on one side one hand over a certain amount of distance. Maybe that's 20 yards, maybe it's 50 yards, whatever the case might be. But carrying something heavy. And when you grab that weight on one side, we'll just say I'm picking up a 50-pound kettlebell with my right hand. My left side is going to be highly activated to keep me upright and stabilize me. So, the muscles of my

obliques, my core muscles, my erector spinae on my other side, all these muscles on my opposite side of the body are going to be active to keep me erect, to keep me up tall. Shoutout to Keeping Erect.

Now, just keep in mind with that, we can also add in a offset carry. So, I'm carrying maybe a 50-pound kettlebell in one hand and maybe a 20-pound kettlebell in the other hand. And my body is going to kick into high gear, my nervous system, my muscles to sort this out and keep my body balanced. And obviously I want to switch hands and do the opposite for an equal amount of time. But it's going to challenge your muscles and your nervous system like few things can when you have these offset weights. Another one of these is an offset waiter's carry like a waiter at a restaurant. For example, we're going to take a dumbbell or kettlebell and press it overhead while holding another kettlebell or dumbbell in my opposite hand down on my side. So, I'm going to walk a certain distance and then I'm going to alternate. I'm going to bring the one that was lifted up down to my side and press the other one up overhead and do the same distance.

Another version of offset exercises that I love is an offset dumbbell or a kettlebell squat. This is one of my favorite exercises because of its impact on obviously the lower body, but in particular your core stability. This is great for your lower back muscles, your transverse abdominis, your obliques, all that stuff. So basically, I'm going to take the kettlebell or dumbbell and I'm going to hold it up close to my chest and shoulder area. And I like to hold my other hand, my opposite hand that's not holding a weight out in front of me, and I'm going to perform a squat like that. So, I've got, maybe we'll just say a 30 or 40-pound kettlebell on this side. But whatever level is that I do this stuff with my youngest son as well. He's 11 years old and so maybe he's holding a 10-pound weight in one hand, again tucked in with his chest and up close to his shoulder and arm out in front of him. The opposite arm is out in front of him that's weight-free and just performing a squat like that. Maintaining good form because what would happen if all these stabilizer muscles didn't kick into gear, is that that weight would tip us over when we try to squat or when we try to stand up. And you're going to find your body knows what to do to stabilize you, but you want to make sure that you're keeping in that pocket, keeping good form.

And again, this is one of my favorite exercises. It's a great rehab exercise as well. If you've experienced some kind of an injury to your core, a lower back or things like that it's very rejuvenative to those muscles. Now, the person that first introduced me to offset training is a world-renowned strength conditioning coach named, John Wolf. And John when he took me through some of these different training protocols, this was at the gym at Onnit Headquarters in Austin, Texas and I flew down there for some media and things like that, but I got to train with John and it was incredible. This was maybe eight years ago, and it stuck with me till this day. And also, the tools that he introduced me to I'd never used something like a steel club

before. And a steel club, it basically looks like a baseball bat that might be like 20 pounds or 25 pounds or 15 pounds or whatever the case might be. And these steel clubs have been utilized for centuries in training by different warrior guilds. And so, holding the club in both of my hands, just one club and going into a squat while simultaneously dropping the club lightly onto my shoulder and then standing up and bringing it back in front of me.

And if you're watching the video version of this episode, we're going to put up some of these different exercises so you can actually see what they look like. So, I highly encourage you to pop over to the YouTube channel, it's the Model Health Show on YouTube. Make sure that you are subscribed to the channel. And if you're watching on YouTube, hit the subscribe button. What are you doing? So, steel clubs and also training with steel maces. The steel mace is a long rod portion with a heavy ball at the end. Again, this is immediately invoking offset training just by using a tool like that because the weight is unevenly distributed. And by the way, you can get these tools at onnit.com/model. They've got 10% off all of their fitness equipment. And I've just been picking up a piece here or there. Probably on average, I'll maybe get two to three pieces of equipment each year. And over the years now I've got this whole amazing collection of these tools that my family uses all the time.

Not every day, but almost every day of the week, one of my family members are using the tools from Onnit. So huge fan of their steel clubs, their steel maces, their primal kettlebells. Actually, we just did an offset hike. Now, what do I mean by that? My sons and I went for a hike together over the weekend and my oldest son went and grabbed one of the primal kettlebells. So, this is the howler monkey. So, it's got this cool howler monkey face on it. It's 18 pounds and he grabbed it for us to take with us on the hike. And basically, we were taking turns carrying this bad boy and it was a hike, very, very steep climbs going downhill as well, different terrains. And him, my 22-year-old son, myself and my 11-year-old son all had our times carrying it. And again, it's going to activate those other stabilizer muscles. And my youngest son, he carried it during the hardest portion of the hike. He wanted to. We called it Thunderbolt Lane because it reminds us of our old house that we lived in back in Missouri and we live on the street called Thunderbolt Lane. It's a very steep hill to get to our place.

And so, it just reminded us of that going up this really steep climb. And he did it. He was actually... 'Cause I was in the lead at that moment. He was like, "Dad, you got to hurry up," 'cause he just had his rhythm going and he got to the top and was able to offload it to us. And it's just cool things that we can do together as a family to challenge each other. And families that train together, remain together. So that's another cool way that we can utilize offset training. Another thing that I learned from John Wolf at Onnit... Again, it's onnit.com/model for these different pieces of equipment. Another thing that I learned from him was offset barbell training. So, a standard barbell is 45 pounds and putting a weight plate on one side of the barbell and doing different exercises with that. You think that you're fit, but fitness is really

specific to certain things that we're trained to do. When you try to pick up a barbell with even a 10-pound plate on one side, it's going to really humble you like, "Whoa, I can't. It's very difficult to control this."

And so, doing deadlifts like that. Being able to do overhead presses like that. So many cool things that we can do with offset training and wake up muscles that we hardly ever, if ever are using. And again, it keeps us more adaptable and resistant to injuries in the real world because very rarely are we interacting with even weights. Now, some other ideas for offset training that I absolutely love are offset lunges. So, holding a kettlebell or barbell up to again my chest, upper chest, shoulder area and performing lunges with a weight on one side.

Doing Bulgarian split squats. Bulgarian split squats have been around a long time, but they're hot right now. They're hot on the streets, one of the very best exercises for our lower body, but also these various stabilizer muscles. So, this is where you're essentially putting one foot behind you up onto a surface that's a little bit higher than the ground that you're standing on and performing a split squat or a modified type of lunge in a way, and really focusing on that front leg, driving you upwards. Then we have pistol squats, for example. This is where we're going into that single leg squat with the opposite leg that you're squatting with going out in front of you. And you can do variations of this where you are doing a chair pistol squat, where you're just putting one leg out in front of you and standing up with one leg and then sitting back in the chair, there's assisted things that you could do. You could hold onto a band or a TRX or something like that and be able to do single leg pistol squats.

We've also got single leg RDLs, which is another exercise that's incredible for reestablishing health and functionality to your core area. That intersection with your hips and your lower back. So, RDLs are Romanian deadlifts, and we can also do things like single arm chest presses. So, grabbing your dumbbells. So maybe you're doing a set, grabbing a couple 50s, or if you're like me, a couple 100s, but you're grabbing a couple of dumbbells and you lay back on the bench, you can hold one at your side. Hold one next to your chest and kind of the bottom position of the press and press with one side. Now, I'm not doing 100s with the single arm, okay. I'm not saying that. All right? So I don't want to put that out any gossip out there on the streets that I'm doing that, but, so maybe I'm using some 50s or 60s because that's going to be a little bit more easy for me to manage because again, as I'm pressing one side, like it's taken a lot of effort by so many parts of my body to keep me stable. And I might not realize it, but it's happening. And so, I might complete maybe, eight to 10 reps on one side.

Then I put the dumbbell I've lifted in the resting position and press with the other side. Or maybe I do alternating push one up the right, bring it down, left, bring it down, right, bring it down. Or there are so many other ways I can go about this. I could use different weights. And one hand in the other and press at the same time. I can hold one up in position in press position

while pressing the other side. There's so many cool ways to go about it. And same thing with the opposite motion of pressing pulling. We can do a wide variety of single arm rows and pull downs, different variations of that as well, utilizing everything from cables to dumbbells and the like. So highly, highly encourage you to implement some offset training into your exercise routine. And this is something again, you can add as a little bit of a supplement or a little bit of a side dish to your training.

But adding in some offset training a couple times a week is going to make you fitter, healthier, and more resilient. Now we're at our final, one of our four overlooked exercises that will make you fitter, healthier and more resilient. Number four is pushing and pulling heavy objects over longer distances. Things like cart and sled pushing are all the rage right now and for good reason, pushing or pulling sleds, weighted sleds or carts, things like that, this is something that humans have been doing for thousands of years. Again, humans have been pushing and pulling objects over long distances for thousands of years. Whether it's a wheelbarrow or a travois or any other invention, our ancestors would push or drag food that was hunted or collected, supplies for building things, and even people who were injured or incapable of keeping up over long distances. And so, for example, the Native Americans had a travois that was created that they could drag things over long distances, basically creating a surface to lay food or people on and be able to drag that.

And again, humans have been doing this for a very, very long time. So, this is one of those things that our genes are looking for at this particular input to push or pull things over distance. Now, a 2019 study published in the Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science and Sports examined the effectiveness of loaded and unloaded sled pushing for sprint training in 50 high school athletes. The researchers divided the athletes into four groups, one group without resistance, and three groups with varying levels of resistance on the sled: light, moderate, or heavy amounts of weight. All participants performed two sled push sessions twice a week for eight weeks. The researchers determined that pushing a sled with any amount of load is superior to doing non-resistance sled pushing. All participants who had weighted resistance in their sled push training had significant improvements in their sprint times up to 20 meters.

So, in particular, their first part of the sprint, they had significant improvements by doing sled pushing. In addition, they found that pushing heavy loads in particular, produced the greatest gains in their sprint performance. Now, depending on what type of sled pushing or pulling you're doing, it can train everything from your quads and hamstrings and glutes, calves, abs, back, shoulder and more. It really is a total body exercise, depending on how you're using the sled or the cart or whatever you might be using to push or pull.

Let's talk about some different training techniques and methods. And by the way, if you're like, "Where can I find a cart or a sled to push?" Many gyms now have these, these are things that you could find and have delivered to your home. Different spectrum of price ranges as well as, again, it's an investment in your family's fitness and creativity and just having an area to do it. Maybe it's a backyard, maybe it's out on your block. If you have a safe street that's not too busy that you can push on or maybe a sidewalk and/or... I've seen people again, in a safe way, you can get creative and build things. You can build things, put wheels on just about... I remember when I was a kid I had a wagon, these wagons are still out here on the streets. Even putting a load into a wagon and just pulling that behind you. Holding onto it and just pulling that around can add some resistance.

Now, in addition, I've seen people go from just pulling a wagon to pulling or pushing cars. So, putting a car at neutral. Now I'm not advocating this, but in a safe condition, this is something that people can get creative and be able to have some resistance to be able to push or pull. Hooking a rope, for example, to the car and being able to literally pull cars. And I've seen this and myself personally, I've pushed a car or two in my time. Alright, so with that being said, what are some different ways that we can utilize this form of training? Well, there's the basics of pushing a cart or a sled that invokes the benefits that we already talked about. Is really incredible improvement and explosive power. That's what we're seeing with sprint training, for example, is this increased capacity or development of your fast twitch muscle fibers. But you can also do this at a slow pace. For example, just pushing a cart with a heavy load on it and you can vary the weights.

There are certain carts or sleds that you can put weight plates onto, take 'em off. There are certain sleds, for example, that you... It has resistance build into it and you just flip a switch or change a notch and it can add or take away weight as well. And you can just do this like a heavy push. You're not necessarily sprinting, but you're kind of doing a moderate pace walk and pushing against that force. Also, you can do sprints utilizing a sled or a cart. So that's what these athletes were doing in the study that I mentioned. Basically, going up against and really trying to drive quickly, drive their legs quickly, pushing against that resistance. In addition, you could change the way that you're positioned with the cart or sled. For example, with a sled, you can have your arms extended and push against it, or you can have it at shoulder distance. So, you've got your shoulders up next to the handles and you're pushing it that way as well.

And funny enough, this is something that we were doing at football practice pushing against objects at different ways, arms extended or arms that are closer to us. And now again, this is becoming all the rage when people are utilizing sleds and different carts and variations to be able to do pushing exercises to improve physical fitness. And the same thing holds true with really incredible advantages by taking that weighted implement cart, sled, whatever the case might be, something that can move. It just doesn't even necessarily mean that it has to have

wheels on it, depending on the surface that you're using. Think about back in the day with the sleds over a snow surface, for example, people didn't always have dogs. They didn't always have animals. Sometimes we were the animals, being able to push or pull our sled that has our family's gear on it. So, depending on the surface is going to decide what type of bottom that particular weighted implement is going to have.

So, somebody might have, or a gym might have a artificial turf surface that they don't need. And this... I've done this at Mark Bell's Gym, Super Training Gym, shout out to the Super Training Gym in North Cal, and they have a long patch of turf. And the bottom of their sled was kind of this smooth flat surface, but it was hard, man, it was challenging workout. So, the same thing holds true with our physical fitness advantage with pulling that implement backwards. And you could do this a number of ways with a grip attachment. Where you can have handles like a TRX is attached to the load or a rope for example. And being able to pull a load backwards by the way, is great for improving the circulation and function of your knees, ankles, achilles tendons, and so much more. It's really therapeutic because we're most often going out against resistance in a forward motion. So, what if we start to do these things backwards and utilizing these different muscle fibers, movement patterns, driving circulation in a different way. So, it's pretty, pretty great to be able to utilize this as a resource.

So, pulling the cart or sled backwards with a rope or some handles, for example. You can use the handles that's attached to the sled and just walk backwards while you're facing the implement and walking backwards or rope holding the rope, you can stand in place and pull the rope backwards or you can walk backwards with that as well. You can put a harness on. So, around your hips where you are either walking forwards or backwards, you can turn around and walk backwards. That's what we did at Mark Bell's Gym. We push the implement down and then harness on, walk backwards. And in addition to that, instead of just pushing the sled forward, we can use a rope for example, and turn around, put the rope over our shoulder and walk forward like that. Like I mentioned, holding a wagon in your back hand, you could do that same thing with a sled or a cart, holding onto a grip or some kind of an implement and just walking with it next to you at your side and pulling it forward.

You can also do side stepping exercises. So, I'll put a grip attachment on my sled, for example, in my left hand and step out away from it so that it's the resistance is activated and then I'll kind of squat down and do some side steps. So that's another way that you can utilize cart pushing and pulling. And there's so many other creative ways to go about this, but this is one of those things that your genes expect you to do stuff like this. And we can find creative ways to take advantage of movement patterns like this. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. And most importantly is putting these things into action. Just pick one of these things that jumped out to you today that really is just like, "I got to try that," put it into action, do it tomorrow, add it in. And that's what it's really all about. Because it's one thing to learn about

all these incredible signs. It's another thing to know it experientially because you put it into place in your life.

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