

## October 2023

### 10/3/23: 10 Tips for Strength Training

Weightlifting- it's not just for athletes and bodybuilders. Everyone can benefit from strength training whether you're a marathon runner or barely active at all. I'm Clarissa Moon here to explain it all.

Weight training has many benefits for both mental and physical health. These include blood pressure, brain health, cholesterol, depression, thinking skills and more! Ready to get started? Good, me too! Here are 10 tips for us to keep in mind when we begin a weight training regimen.

1. Choose your equipment. There are many options of weights available, or you can just use your body weight!
2. Warm up. Cold muscles are prone to injury so be sure and warm up with a quick walk or some stretching.
3. Start light. This will lessen your chance of injury and prevent soreness.
4. Increase weight slowly- over 2-4 weeks. You should be able to do 10-15 reps with some difficulty.
5. Pay attention to pain. There's a difference between pain and discomfort so be sure and pay attention to what your body is telling you.
6. Lift slowly. It's tempting to use momentum but this can increase your risk for injury. Lifting slowly actually activates more muscle fibers in the targeted area, thus increasing the benefits of the exercise.
7. Build in rest. Shoot for 2-3 days week of lifting with at least one rest day in between.
8. Seek variety. Find different exercises to work different muscle groups.
9. Focus on one set. It's not all about quantity; quality is important too. Recent research suggests that one set done properly can be just as beneficial as 2-3 sets.
10. Breathe. Don't forget this one! Oxygen is your friend.

I hope you these 10 tips help you feel both inspired and practical as you turn over a new boulder, because anyone can lift a leaf! For more information visit [mayoclinic.org](https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/weight-training/) or [panola.agrilife.org](https://panola.agrilife.org). Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/weight-training/>

### 10/10/23: Flu Shot Time

It's fall, y'all! You know what that means? Cold and flu season is just around the corner as well. Make sure you're ready for it and protect yourself and your loved ones by getting the annual flu vaccine. I'm Clarissa Moon here with some reasons why.

It's recommended that everyone age 6 months and older gets the flu shot every year. For many people, the seasonal flu is a pretty mild illness. But for some, it can be serious or even deadly.

Those who are at higher risk for serious illness include young children and older adults, those with chronic health conditions, weakened immune systems, obesity, and certain ethnic groups.

It's important to know that even if you yourself aren't at a high risk for serious illness, you can potentially protect those vulnerable populations if you get vaccinated.

Keep in mind that once you do get vaccinated, it takes about two weeks for your body to develop protection. That's why it's a good idea to get poked sooner rather than later, preferably by the end of October.

NEW in 2023- the CDC now recommends that everyone 6 months and older get an updated COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination remains the best protection against COVID. This virus, like the flu, is always changing so that's why it's important to get protected each year. Last year, those who received the COVID vaccine saw greater protection against illness and hospitalization than those who did not get the injection.

If you still have reservations or want to learn more, talk with a health care provider or visit [health.gov](https://health.gov), or [panola.agrilife.org](https://panola.agrilife.org).

<https://health.gov/myhealthfinder/doctor-visits/vaccines-shots/protect-yourself-seasonal-flu>

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/p0912-COVID-19-Vaccine.html#:~:text=CDC%20Recommends%20Updated%20COVID%2D19%20Vaccine%20for%20Fall%2FWinter%20Virus%20Season,-CDC%20Recommends%20Updated&text=CDC%20recommends%20everyone%206%20months,illness%20this%20fall%20and%20winter.>

## **10/17/23: Maintain No Gain**

Fun fact- The average person gains a little weight in the six weeks between the Thanksgiving holiday and the New Year. Now, the average person only gains a pound or so. It may not seem like much, but it can add up over time. I'm Clarissa Moon with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. It may or may not surprise you to learn that most people don't ever lose this holiday weight. And if you had already been trying to shed a few pounds, putting on that holiday weight can really give you the blues. But, don't despair, gaining weight during the holidays is not inevitable! You can *enjoy* your holiday meals and still face that scale with confidence by the New Year. Learn how to enjoy your holidays the healthy way by attending "Maintain No Gain" this holiday season. This six-week course, valued at \$25, is free for a limited time! It will give you the tools you need to head into the holidays with health and confidence. To learn more and sign up, visit [panola.agrilife.org](https://panola.agrilife.org)

## **10/25/22: Trick or Treat Tips**

Too much Halloween candy got you spooked? Try these tips for your trick-or-treaters. I'm Clarissa Moon with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension here to tell you there's no need to be scared of Halloween candy as long as you make good decisions, unlike the characters in scary movies.

- 1) Fill up first. Have a healthy meal BEFORE going trick-or-treating in an effort to reduce their temptation to snack or overindulge on candy that night.
- 2) Bag the monster bag. Choose a smaller container or bucket for kids to carry their candy in so there won't be an excessive amount of room they think they need to fill up with candy. Encourage kids to take just one piece of candy per house and then you can maybe visit more houses and increase your odds of finding the house that hands out money!
- 3) Get moving. Get some exercise and walk instead of driving from house to house. Bring a flashlight and comfy shoes so that you can go all night long! You could also set a goal for how many houses to visit and divide up into teams if you have a big group.
- 4) Look before you eat. Check expiration dates and inspect all edibles before letting kids dive in. Don't let them eat anything questionable or with unknown ingredients, especially if they have food allergies.
- 5) Have a plan. This is a great time of year to talk with kids about moderation and smart eating choices. Plan in advance how much candy they can have at each house, keep and eat.

I hope you enjoyed these 5 tips for enjoying your treats! For more info, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or [panola.agrilife.org](http://panola.agrilife.org). Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/how-to-have-a-healthy-halloween>

### **10/31/23: Ode to Pumpkins**

Pumpkins are one of the most popular and recognizable symbols of fall. And for good reason! These plump plants have many uses besides looking pretty! I'm Clarissa Moon here with the scoop.

It may or may not surprise you to learn that all parts of the pumpkin can be used from the leaves to the stem to the flower. Guess which group of people used every bit of this plant to its full potential! If you guessed native Americans, you're right! From pumpkin leaves to buffalo eyeballs, they knew how to make the most of it.

Pumpkins and squashes could be baked or roasted, cut up and boiled, added to soups or stews, or made into porridge and pudding. Strips of pumpkin were dried and woven into mats and they would also dry the outer shells and use them as bowls and other containers.

Now let's not forget the nutritional value of our orange friends, too! Pumpkins are packed with Vitamin A, fiber and other essential nutrients. Pumpkin seeds are also good for you, offering a good bit of protein.

For more information on pumpkins and their uses, visit [food.unl.edu](http://food.unl.edu) or [panola.agrilife.org](http://panola.agrilife.org).

<https://food.unl.edu/free-resources/newsletters/food-fun-young-children/try-each-part-pumpkin-new-way>