

Concentric Super Overload Outline

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Introduction

What can I do to gain that extra inch on my quads? I can't seem to increase my bench press! Is there a way to increase the frequency of my workouts without actually over training my muscle groups?

I believe that concentric super-overload can address each of the previous questions in a very significant manner. It has served many an athlete, and will no doubt do the same thing for you.

Understand The Different Aspects of a Repetition

There are many different forms of muscular contraction. We have covered two in depth. One would be the eccentric portion of the repetition. This is where the weight is lowered, and the muscle worked is being stretched. As we have discovered, an emphasis on this aspect of training can enhance muscular hypertrophy, add sarcomeres in series, and there is significant evidence showing that it can actually stimulate hyperplasia(the splitting or creating of new muscle fibers) adding to your density.

The second phase discussed was the peak contraction of the muscle group. Which refers to a muscle contracting, or shortening as much as possible on any given exercise. I firmly believe that you will never reach your genetic potential if you do not stress a muscle group in this particular region.

What I have not discussed, directly at least is the concentric portion of a lift. Most take it for granted that this is just the basics. However, what one must understand is that this, like its previous relations can be trained in isolation. And when done so, will lead you to a entirely new reservoir of strength and muscularity!

Note: See Old School's Guide To Shocking Methods For Further and Incredible Detail on Eccentric Overload!

What Is Concentric Super Overload?

I'm glad you asked. But first lets discuss the basic premise of overload for the **hypertrophy** athlete, because I feel that it is a misunderstood subject. Overload in simple terms means to introduce a muscle group to a greater amount of work then it had faced previously. By doing so, you will stimulate several much needed adaptations.

Overload however does not necessarily mean the all too familiar statement.

If you get stronger you'll get bigger.

It is much more complex than this. Lifting a heavier weight will not always lead to enhanced hypertrophy. What we need to understand as bodybuilders is that there are many variations of strength. Maximum growth is dependent on overloading each of these areas, with a greater emphasis on some than others. Yes, your one to three repetition maximum can assist you in the growth process, but it is just one simplistic approach to our sport. There are literally countless ways to expose a muscle group to a greater work load, and or a new and significant stress applied in an optimal hypertrophy range. For example, you could add sets to your routine, decrease rest time, apply shocking methods which force the body to cope with stress past its last bout, or you can focus on overloading one aspect of your strength. The following shocking method is concerned with the latter two of these.

If we analyze a sport, we will see that each individual athlete is developed in certain areas more than others. For example, many powerlifters are weak in eccentric training, when "**relitively**" compared to bodybuilders. This is for obvious reasons. The bodybuilder must focus heavily on eccentric training in order to reach his full potential. Which means he will have to slow down the weight on the negative portion of a rep, and attempt to eliminate all momentum.

This is vital, there is no doubt about that. However, we can again break down each level of strength within a repetition. Today the focus will be centered around the concentric portion of a rep.

The goal will be to force your muscles to work concentrically past what they are normally accustomed to doing.

Super concentric overload accomplishes this, much the same way that forced negatives accomplish their goal. On a forced negative you eliminate the concentric portion of a repetition, this principle however will eliminate the eccentric phase of the lift.

Procedure

The goal is to eliminate the eccentric portion of the repetition. Lets say you were performing preacher barbell curls. You would curl the weight, and your partner would take the load off on the negative portion of the lift. Another way to perform these would be to use a machine that allows this. Many machines allow you to take the weight off with a foot pad, if so you can utilize this. Essentially all you will do is lift positively and completely eliminate the negative. The question is how and why to utilize this...lets check into it!

Super Concentric Overload

If you look at many powerlifters who neglect the negative portion of a rep they still will develop a solid muscle base. Not that of a bodybuilder of equal advancement, but still a solid base. As a hypertrophy athlete you will want to tap into all ways of muscular stimulation. Therefore the plan is to force your body to lift a weight concentrically more times than it is used to. Again, going back to the biceps curls, by eliminating the fatigue of the eccentric rep, you will find that you can get a tremendous amount more repetitions than you could before. If you could normally get 8 positive reps, you may be able to get 12, or even more! This equates to two extreme positives.

1. You can isolate and strengthen the concentric portion of a repetition. Again, one athlete may be strong concentrically, and "relatively(not directly)" weaker eccentrically, or vice versa for that matter. One way to increase a lift is to focus on the weaker point of it. This allows for that.

2. By forcing the body to endure a greater stress than it is used to, you will force favorable adaptations, not only in concentric strength but also in hypertrophy as well!

How To Utilize The Method

1. Keep the reps alive - Essentially this means that after a few sets with a weight, to not actually lower the weight, but deploy the super overload principle. If you are performing an exercise which on the first set allows you to get 12 reps, by the 3rd set you may have to lower the weight. Instead of doing this however, you will stick with the weight but eliminate the negative. I realize that this seems like the reverse order of what normally takes place(negative burnouts), but like all shocking methods, it is a tool that places a different stress on the body, thereby forcing new growth.

2. Utilize the shocking method Wholly - This means to literally use it for a whole section of a workout. Therefore if you perform 4 sets of barbell curls, you would incorporate this principle for each set. Look at it like this:

Normal Concentric Reps - (12, 10, 8, 6)

Using Concentric Overload Principle (15, 14, 12, 10) That's 15 more concentric reps than your body would have normally faced!

How To Completely Change Your Training Split For New Found Growth!

There is something to be said for high frequency training. Certainly it has its merits, but as we all know it can lead to over training. The question is, can you train more frequently, to shock your muscles into growth without over training? The answer is yes! You see, concentric isolation training is much easier to recover from. And many great athletes will incorporate it, in a periodization manner. Lets say you wanted to train your pecs more often. Currently you train your pecs so hard that you can only work them every 5-7 days. But your body needs a spurt of growth. You would try this out:

Monday: Concentric Chest Training Only

Thursday: Hardcore Concentric and Eccentric Training

rest 5 days and repeat

See the point? It allowed you a higher training frequency than before. You can use this many ways. But the point is, that you can expose your body to a higher degree of stimulus, and might I add, hormone release! You can also safely increase volume of a workout without over training this way. Many athletes use a higher frequency than this, and additionally a different type of periodization. For example:

Monday: Concentric Training for 10 sets

Wednesday: Hard Concentric and Eccentric Training for 10 sets

Sunday: Extreme, Insane, brutally Hardcore Training!

rest 5-7 days and repeat.

The point really is, that this can allow for a higher degree of stimulation that may suite your body extremely well!

Final Thoughts

In finality, I would advice you, as an athlete to divide and conquer. Don't be afraid to attack the body with different training methods, splits and centralized techniques. Additionally, begin to view your progression from a multi-dimensional point of view. Which includes several aspects of contraction(eccentric, concentric, peaked), and a tremendous amount of strength variations aside from this. Many of which will be discussed next month.

Speed Well, and Train Balls To The Wall!

Yours In Sport

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