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SPECIAL ISSUE
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JOE WEIDER'S

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chest

Usually, for maximum weight-training results, you need to do fewer reps with heavier weights. But when it comes to toning your chest muscles, trainer John Platero, owner of Future Fit, a personal-training company in Culver City, Calif., suggests you use less weight and do more repetitions on some exercises to control range of motion and work all the muscle fibers while protecting the shoulder joint. This month's workout builds moderate strength and muscular endurance.

Women tend to have longer arms in relation to their torsos, says Platero. When the arm is outstretched, it's in its weakest position and if you lower a weight that's too heavy, gravity, rather than your muscles, controls the motion and can shear the shoulder joint. Platero doesn't recommend doing flat-bench flys, a popular chest-strengthening exercise, since that can also place unnecessary strain on the shoulder. Instead, he suggests that women use the cable fly, which allows the pectoralis major to do what it's best qualified to do — pull the arms toward the midline of the body.

The incline Smith bench press, the first exercise in this sequence, lets you use the most weight you can handle, since your body is supported by the bench and your shoulder is less vulnerable in a press than in a fly. The lying cable fly, the second move, reduces the amount of weight to isolate the muscles and prevent shoulder joint strain. Finally, the standing one-arm fly balances the strength in your chest and takes your muscles to fatigue.

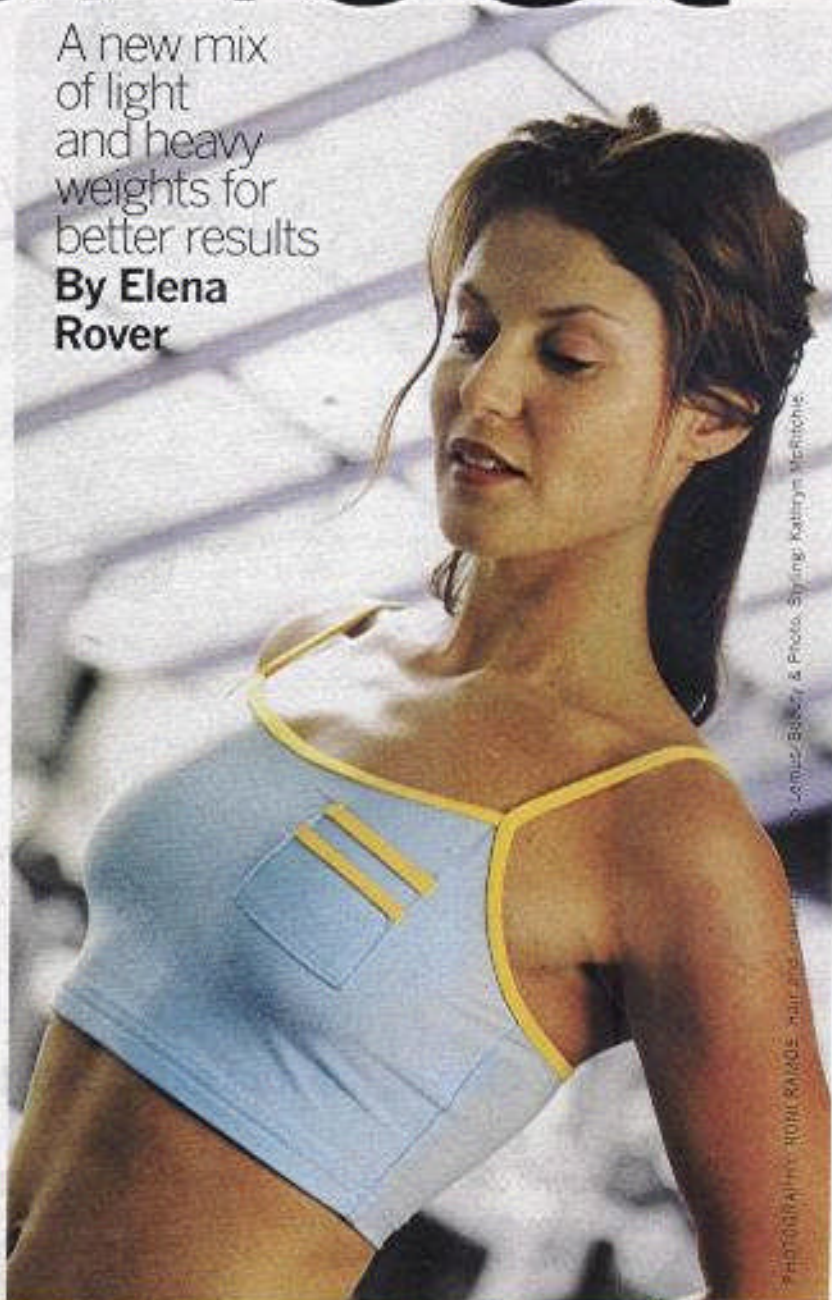
Elena Rover is the editorial director at ReadersDigest Health.com.



Most women want to work on just toning their pectoral muscles, but if your goal is to gain size, trainer John Platero says to increase the weight and lower the reps. And if you're new to chest work, Platero says, "Pick one exercise and just work with that until you're strong enough to add another."

A new mix of light and heavy weights for better results

By Elena Rover

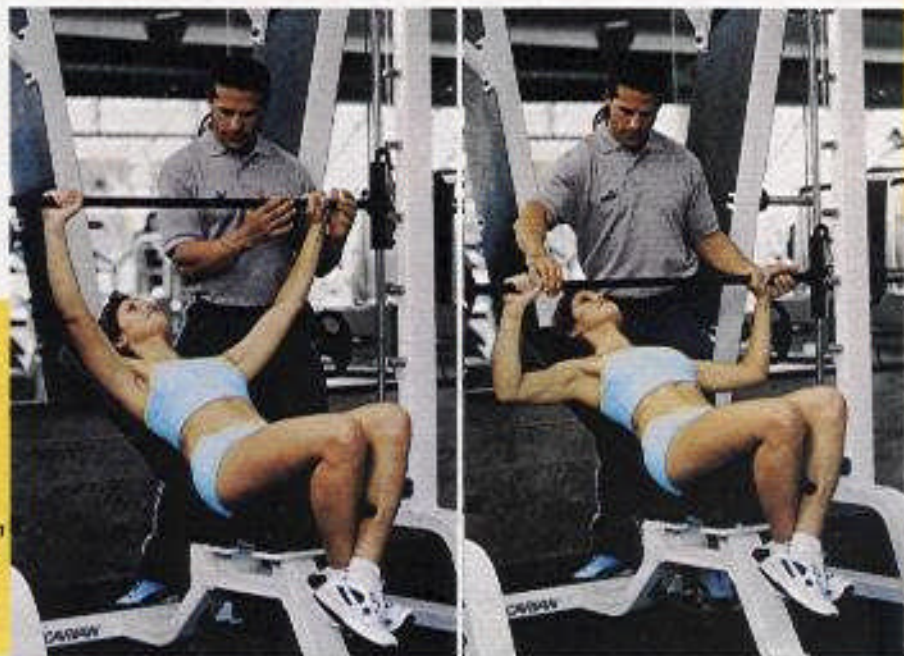


READER MODEL Adriana Trujillo-Belideau, 25, weight trains for 40 minutes and performs 30 minutes of running, elliptical or interval training four times a week. "Working out keeps me in touch with my body," says the student and personal trainer. "It feels good to be proactive and take charge of my body."

1

[FINE TUNING]

Slightly squeeze the shoulder blades together as you straighten your arms to focus the workload on the chest.



[INCLINE SMITH BENCH PRESS] Strengthens chest, front shoulder, some middle shoulder and triceps.

- Set bench, angled to 30 degrees or less, inside a Smith machine.
- Begin with ankles crossed and knees bent.
- Grasping bar, unlock it and extend your arms so the bar is just above armpits.
- Taking two counts, bend elbows out to the sides, keeping wrists directly over your elbows.
- Stop when your elbows are in line with your shoulders.
- Take 2 counts to return to starting position and repeat.

2

[FINE TUNING]

If you're having trouble maintaining your body position, try looping the handles around your forearms instead of gripping them.



[LYING CABLE FLY] Strengthens primarily the chest.

- Attach a soft handle to each side of a low cable pulley machine.
- Lie on the floor in the center, knees bent, feet flat on the floor, abs tight and chest lifted.
- Grasp a handle in each hand and hold with arms open, slight bend to elbows.
- Rotate your hands so the thumbs point up.
- Keeping a slight arc in your elbow, use your chest muscles to bring your arms up and across, toward the center of your chest.
- Lower slowly.



MUSCLE MECHANICS

The chest muscle is the pectoralis major ①, a large, fan-shaped muscle with multiple origins. One portion attaches to the middle and inner sections of your collarbone. The other section attaches to your sternum (breastbone) and upper six ribs. Both parts insert near the top of the upper arm bone. When your arm moves forward, the serratus anterior ② (on each side of your ribcage) and pectoralis minor ③ (a small muscle deep beneath the pectoralis major) help stabilize your shoulder blades.

Model's top and shorts by Giv' Star; socks by Thorlo; shoes by Puma. Trainer's shirt by Puma; pants by adidas; socks by Thorlo; shoes by Nike. See Buyer's Guide for retailer information.

TRAINER'S TIPS

- Since this is an intense workout, don't do more than two chest workouts a week.
- Vary the angle of the bench to shift the emphasis of the movement to different parts of the chest.
- Balance this chest workout with back exercises that focus on the rhomboids, lats and trapezius muscles.
- Take your time. Use at least 45-60 seconds to complete each rep.

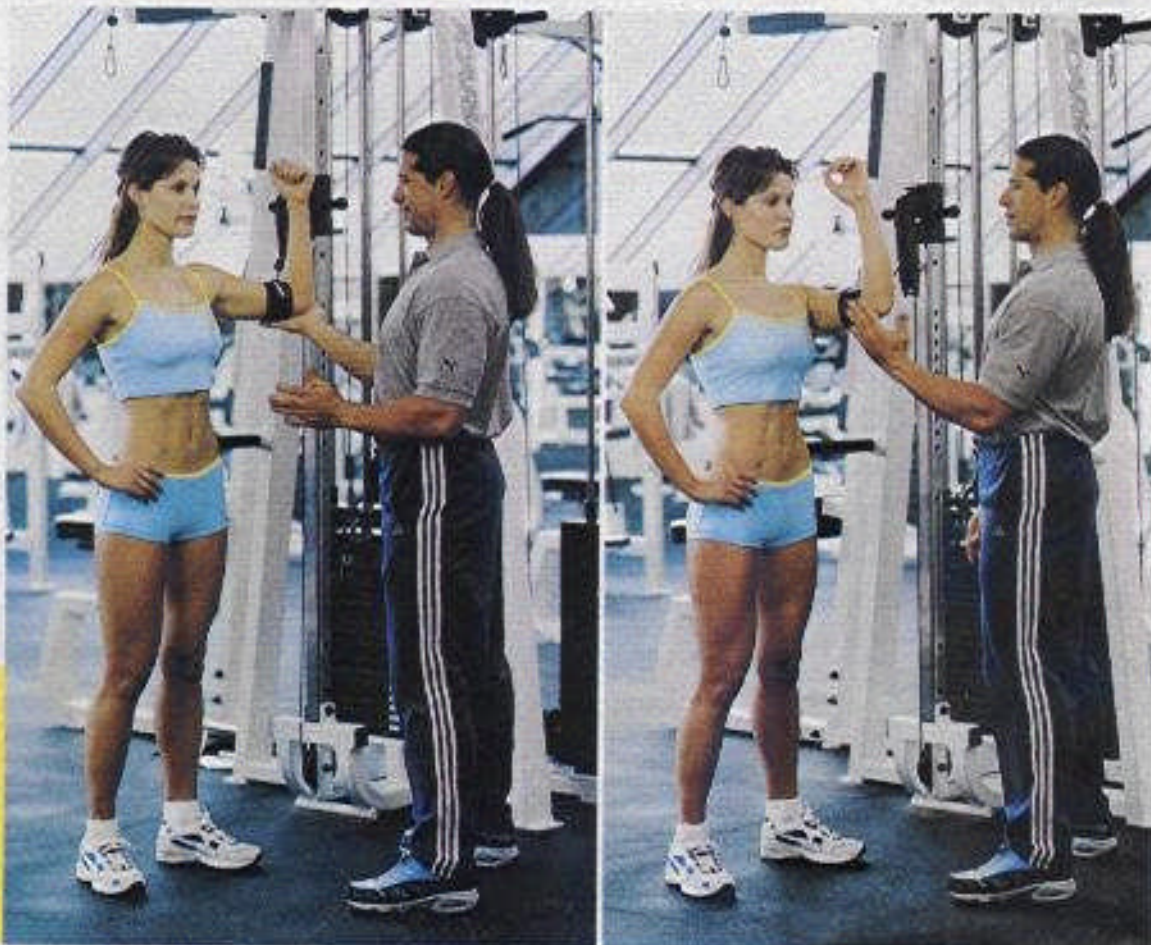


Incline benches like this one, called the Fitness Flat to Incline Bench, are available through the York Barbell Co. (800) 358-9675 or www.yorkbarbell.com.

3

[FINE TUNING]

On the return, slightly squeeze shoulder blades together to reduce the stress on the shoulder joint.



[STANDING ONE-ARM FLY] Strengthens chest and front shoulders.

- Stand with your left side to a high cable machine with cuff or soft handle attached to the high pulley machine.
- Separate feet hip-width apart with your right hand on your right hip.
- Using your abs to keep your spine in a neutral position, hold your left arm up, bent at a 90-degree angle so elbows are in line with the shoulder.
- Contract pectoral muscles to bring left arm in toward middle of the body. Release slowly and repeat.

WORKOUT SCHEDULE

EXERCISE	INCLINE SMITH BENCH PRESS	LYING CABLE FLY	STANDING ONE-ARM FLY
WEIGHT RANGE	30-60 POUNDS	10-20 POUNDS	10-20 POUNDS
REPS	8-10	15	15
SETS	2-4	3	3