

# CHAIN YOURSELF TO TRICEPS

BY MARTY TULEY

**Q:** Any suggestions on triceps? They have been a sticking point for me for years. I would appreciate any help you can provide.

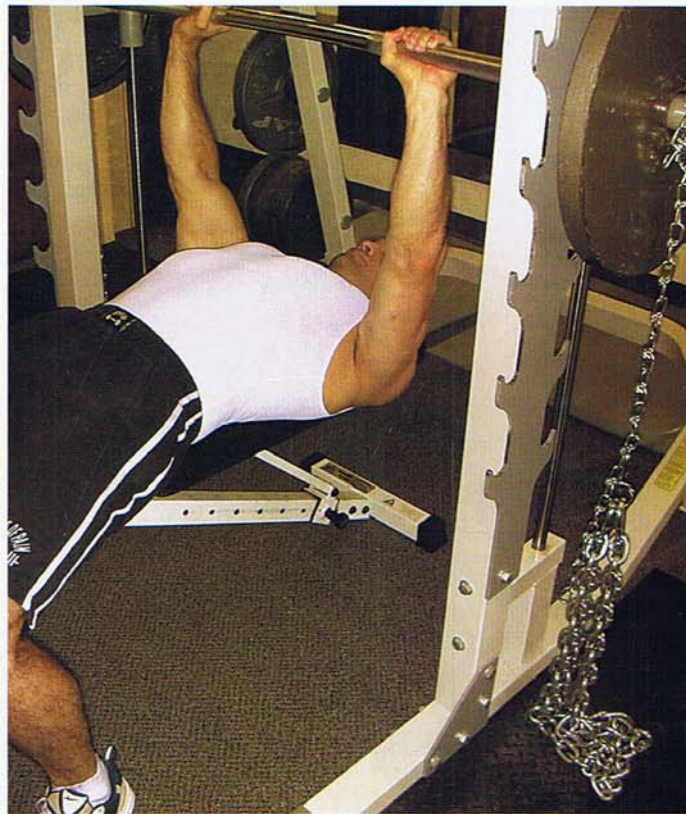
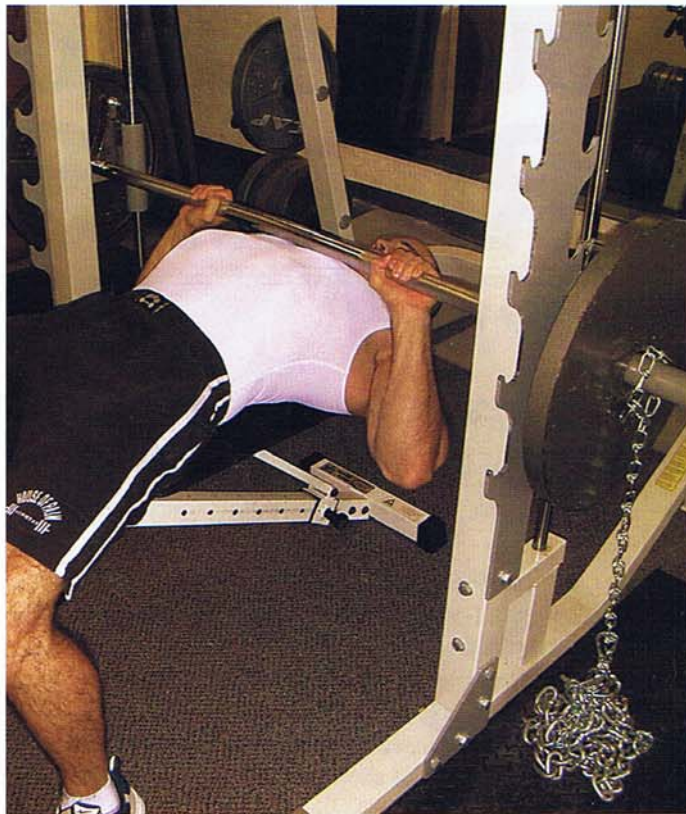
**MR. GOYA:** Two words: variable resistance. Despite all our technological advances in exercise, and the massive array of programs and equipment now offered, a simple tool that has been around for centuries is still the most effective means in the application of variable resistance. Come along and let me show you how to, *chain* your way to bigger more powerful triceps.

Why chains? Chains allow you to maximize the workload applied to a targeted muscle by continuing to add resistance throughout the concentric aspect of the exercise. In other words, the closer you get to the completion of the repetition, the more resistance is applied. Training with chains accomplishes this by allowing the amount of resistance to increase over the full range motion of an exercise. As the motion nears completion, more and more chain is drawn from the floor, thereby creating more resistance.

Utilizing chains for resistance training is nothing new. In fact, early strongmen were renowned for its application and use in both training and strength displays. For the last twenty or so years, its application in training has been, seemingly, limited to power lifting and Olympic lifting. However, the accolades of chain training, sung by Louie Simmons, a virtual power lifting legend and guru in his own right, have begun mainstreaming its application.

Before you can start training with chains, you'll need to make a trip to your local hardware store. Large chain isn't cheap, but it is certainly worth the investment. Besides, there's no danger of it "wearing out", which means you can plan on having it as part of your weight room for a long, long time. You'll need two, four-foot links of 3/8" or 1/2" chain and two, two-foot links of a 1/8" chain. You'll also need six metal clips. Use two of the chain clips to create a loop in the chain, just large enough to slide onto your Olympic bar. Use the remaining four clips to attach the heavy chain to the end of your light chain. This will result in the majority of the heavy chain being on the floor at the bottom portion of the close-grip, bench press. This way, as you begin and continue through the concentric motion of the exercise, more and more resistance is applied as the chain moves from the floor.

I am a big proponent of the technique of pre-exhaustion with muscle training. I believe chain training can prove particularly



beneficial when used in conjunction with pre-exhaustion. Pre-exhaustion involves the use of an isolation movement, such as the standard triceps pushdown, followed by a compound movement such as the close-grip bench press. By beginning your exercise program with a singular, isolation movement, you can exhaust a particular, targeted muscle. The compound nature of the second exercise incorporates the use of other accessory muscles. These accessory muscles then assist the primary muscle targeted in completion of the exercise, not unlike having your training partner help with a few extra repetitions, commonly referred to as forced reps.

So what's the program? Start your triceps workout with plain ol' standard, straight bar, cable pushdowns. Pay particular attention to your form and keep the movement extremely strict. Don't fall prey to your ego on this exercise. Stay almost completely upright. Use a long, full range of motion. Resist bending or leaning your torso forward in an effort to gain leverage and lift more weight. I see guys in the gym butchering this exercise. They look like they're in a life or death struggle, wrestling with the machine. I can't tell if it's a triceps pushdown, pulldown, row or a monkey &\*%ing a football. Perform three sets of twelve to fifteen repetitions. Now find your club's smith machine and get those chains out.

Place a flat bench under the smith machine, and load the machine with only enough weight to allow you six to eight, controlled repetitions of close-grip, bench presses. Remember, you're going to be using the additional weight of chains so the weight used may be a little less than what you've previously lifted. Get your chains out and slide the loop of each six-foot section over the bar at each end. Do three sets of six to eight repetitions. These should be tough, struggling reps. If you're stopping at eight reps, but could have done ten, you need more weight. Challenge yourself and use a spotter.

Finish off this triceps massacre with body weight dips. Perform three sets of ten to twelve repetitions, pausing at the top of each repetition accentuating the peak contraction.

### TRICEPS WORKOUT

Straight Bar Triceps Pushdowns	3 x 12-15
Close Grip Smith Machine Bench Presses	3 x 6-8 (w/chains)
Body Weight Dips	3 x 10 (add weight if necessary)

Your triceps make up approximately two-thirds of your total upper arm mass. So for a complete upper arm in both appearance and performance, you need big, strong triceps. Leave for your next workout a little earlier than normal and visit your local hardware store. It's time to start chaining yourself to triceps.

### TOUCHDOWN TO FITNESS

**Q:** I am seventeen years old and will be playing my final season of high school football this fall. I have been hitting the weights hard, and have gained about fifteen pounds since the end of last season. I am currently 5'10" tall and 190 pounds. My problem is that there's no way I can maintain the same program during the season. What kind of program should I follow and what, if anything, should I be eating differently?

**MR. GOYA:** I've been there, pal, and I did it all wrong. I didn't have anybody to ask, and all I knew was to just dig in, bite your lip, and keep doing it. I worked out four days a week, hitting each body part twice, at 5:00 am in the morning, all through both my junior and senior years

## BREAKFAST

- 3 whole eggs with 3 egg whites – scrambled with a little cheese
- 2 servings (1 cup), old-fashioned oatmeal
- 1 small glass of cranberry juice
- 1 small glass of skim milk

## LUNCH

**DON'T EAT SCHOOL LUNCHES!** I am not even going to go into it, but suffice it to say, nutritionally... they're a joke. If you're serious about your physique, your sports, and your performance, start getting up in the morning and packing a lunch. Here's what you pack:

- 1 large, turkey (1/4lb) sandwich with lettuce, tomato on wheat bread.
- A large salad made of raw vegetables such as; sliced tomatoes, broccoli, spinach and cucumbers. Use an equal mixture of balsamic vinegar and olive oil for your dressing.
- 1 large, baked potato – Buy a 5lb bag of potatoes. Prepare and cook the entire bag the same night. Doing so ensures you'll have potatoes for weeks. Once cooked they don't even have to be warmed up, which makes them perfect for school lunches, here's the recipe.
  - Wash and scrub 5 lbs of potatoes.
  - Slice them, long ways, about 1/2 through.
  - Pry them open and sprinkle in parsley, oregano and pepper.
  - Close them up, rub them with some olive oil and wrap them in aluminum foil.
  - Cook them in the oven at 450 degrees for one hour.

## DINNER

- 1 serving lean red meat, chicken or turkey
- a "pile" of green vegetables of your choice, just watch the sauces and butter
- 2 servings brown rice, sweet potato, or baked potato

## LATE NIGHT SNACK

- 1 serving whey protein
- handful of mixed nuts

of high school football. It was brutal and it was stupid. I learned the hard way. You have the opportunity to do it right. Here's the plan:

First, remember almost all modern weight training programs are fundamentally based on the principles and knowledge gained from the last thirty or so years of modern bodybuilding. What's wrong with that? Well, nothing terribly, except bodybuilding is about just that - "bodybuilding" - making your muscles larger. Large muscles and performance athletics is not necessarily the same thing, and success in one doesn't ensure success in the other. Therefore, if you want to be a great football player, you don't train like a great bodybuilder and vice versa. However, you can and should blend elements and attributes of both forms of training.

You need a program designed to make your muscles bigger and stronger, but at the same time improving your basic coordination, balance, agility, and overall athleticism. However, that's the off-season training goal and what you're asking about is during the season itself.

First rule is no weight training during football practice "two-a-days". Take this time off completely from weight training. The stress of hard cardio conditioning, twice a day during one of the hottest months of the year, is all you should be asking of your body. However, your nutritional needs during this time period, and the season, are significant.

Water should be high on your list. Really high. Consume at least one gallon of water a day. Get an old gallon milk jug, fill it up, put it in the refrigerator, and carry it with you everywhere you go. Remember, water comprises 90% of body tissue. Want to keep your hard-earned muscle working properly? Drink water.

Second, your ratios of calories during the football season should be something like this: 25% protein, 50% complex carbohydrates, and 25% fat. This is almost the exact opposite of what your ratios would look like during the off-season. During that time, your focus is on building muscle, now your focus is on maintaining it. Here's a *sample*, daily eating plan during the football season.

I don't know your dimensions since you didn't tell me how much you weigh or how tall you are; but there's simple, easy, and effective means of determining if you're eating too much or too little. First, weigh yourself. Duh. Pick a day and a time of each week. At that same day and same time of each week, weigh yourself. Depending on your goals, either eat more or eat less. It really is that simple.

Third, if you can afford it, there are a few supplements that can be real helpful. However, never use supplements in the place of sound, solid eating. In my opinion, supplements are the icing on the cake, but first you have to have a good cake. If you're training hard and eating right add the following supplements.

**Desiccated Liver** – It's a forgotten supplement that has fallen out of favor with today's market. It doesn't sound as "cool" as Creatine. So be it, but desiccated liver is a supplement loaded with protein, vitamins and minerals. Take 4-6 with each meal.

**Multi-Vitamin** – 1 good multi-vitamin a day is a simple, effective way to ensure you're getting the essentials in good supply.

**Vitamin C** – Vitamin C is the "big boy" of vitamins, utilized in the body in more ways than almost any other. Take 4,000 - 6,000mg a day during football season and 1,500 - 3,000mg a day in the off-season.

**Whey Protein** – Use whey protein as your late night snack, right before bed. My favorite? Molecular Nutrition's Whey Fruity. Try the grape. [www.molecularnutrition.net](http://www.molecularnutrition.net).

Fourth, you should be hitting the weights twice a week, and twice a week only, during the football season. Your only objective with your weight training, during football season, is maintenance. Don't worry about necessarily getting any stronger. It may happen, but certainly don't make it your objective.

Do your workouts on Tuesday and Saturday of each week during football season. Tuesday is your heavy training day and will have to be done in the morning early so as not to conflict with your practice that afternoon. Saturday is your maintenance day. More than likely, you're watching film Saturday morning, and maybe hitting the Jacuzzi to massage your sore muscles from the game the night before so weight train in the early afternoon.

### Tuesday

- 5-7 minute cardio warm-up

- 1 set, lateral raises for 15-20 repetitions
  - 1 set, bent over lateral raises for 15-20 repetitions
  - 1 set, front raises for 15-20 repetitions
  - 1 set, triceps pushdowns for 15-20 repetitions
  - Bench Press 1x12, 1x8, and 2x5 with 75% of your pre-season max\*.
  - Deadlift 1x12, 1x8 and 2x5 with 75% of your pre-season max.
  - Box Squats (squatting to a box that limits your total range to 80%) for 1x12, 1x8 and 2x5 with 85% of your pre-season, full, squat max.
  - Crunches 3x20
- \* You can calculate your one rep max, using the following formula:

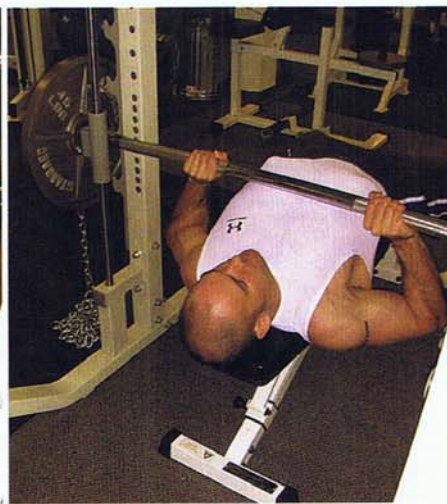
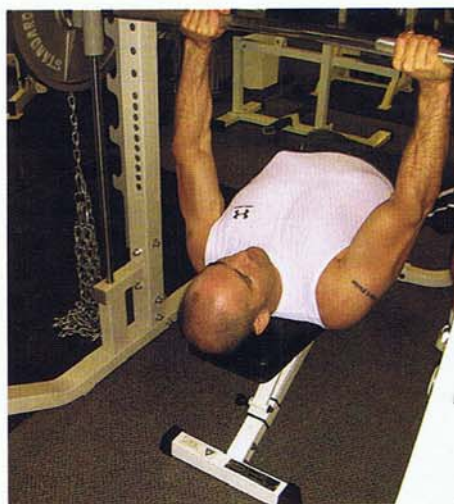
REPS	%1RM
1	100
2	95
3	90
4	88
5	86
6	83
7	80
8	78
9	76
10	75
11	72
12	70

Find the number of reps to concentric failure that you can perform with a certain weight. In other words, if you can only do eight reps with a certain weight and could not possibly do another full rep, this is your point of failure. Find the percentage associated with that number of repetitions from the table above.

Now, divide the weight that you can do by that percentage using decimals (83 percent equals .83) and that will give you an approximation of your one repetition maximum. For example, if you can perform 10 reps with 175 lbs. in the bench press, this means that 175 lbs. is 75% (0.75) of your one repetition maximum. So, you would take 175 divided by .75 and that would equal 233 lbs. That's your estimated one rep max.

### Saturday

- 5-7 minute cardio warm-up
- Triceps Pushdowns 2x15



- Bench Press 2x10 with 55% of your pre-season max
- Front Lat Pulldowns 2x15
- Hyper Extensions 2x15
- Squats to Parallel 2x10 with 50% of your pre-season max
- Lying Leg Curls 2x15
- Crunches 3x20

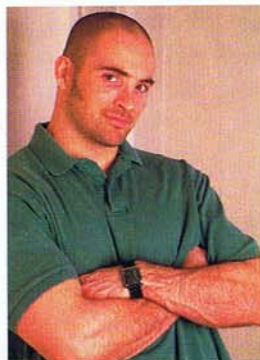
A lot of high school coaches don't include weight training as a regularly scheduled part of football season practice. The reality is, despite the mountain of evidence supporting the application of resistance training with sport performance and the multitude of successful athletic programs that incorporate weight lifting, a lot of coaches are still unsure of how to structure and implement effective weight training programs. A simple lack of understanding and knowledge often means high school weight training programs are relegated to the summer and/or school gym classes.

If your high school and/or coach isn't offering you a balanced and consistent program, then do it yourself. No excuses. Will it be harder? Absolutely. You may be as I was, all alone, banging the iron early in

the morning with no company but a "boom" box. I spent many a cold, mid-western morning sneaking in the backdoor of my high school with the cooks. I wanted it! Do you? Every morning my alarm went off at 5:00 am. I then drove to the back of the high school and waited for the cooks to arrive. And all the while, I would remind myself that there would be better athletes than me. That was the reality. There would be bigger, stronger, and faster guys. BUT, there would be no one who would work harder than me. No one would eat the way I ate, train the way I trained. I could do nothing about genetics, but I could control everything else. And so can you!

Football and weights are awesome. There are few things I'd rather spend my time doing. But remember, they are not a means to an end. I have a career and a lifestyle that affords me the time and schedule to continue pumping iron because I got an education. Stay in school, go to college and continue pumping iron.

Good luck and enjoy. High school football was one of the best times of my life. Work hard, play hard, and have fun! It won't get any better. ■



**MARTY TULEY** is the author of *Get Off Your Ass!* In book stores Spring of 2005. In addition to being a published author he's a competitive, natural bodybuilder, personal trainer and health club owner who has been active in the health and fitness industry for over 15 years. Regardless whether he's working with a professional athlete or housewife, he spouts the same exercise message... "It's not about the magic pill or routine. It's still about dedication, consistency and plain ol' HARD work. Get used to it!" Email your questions for Marty to [marty@bodyofscience.com](mailto:marty@bodyofscience.com)