



# CHEK POINTS

## for Strength Coaches

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### Circuit Training For Fat Loss

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**W**hy is it that so many committed exercisers just can't shake those last 10 pounds? There are several possible answers. One scenario is the overuse of aerobic exercise. Due to evolutionary demands, our bodies have become very efficient at adapting to any activity for the purpose of sparing energy. This occurs to an even greater degree in the female according to Australian researcher Robbie Parker. He showed that when women and men walk the same distance, a woman may use as much as 40% less calories.<sup>1</sup> This is due to the fact that a woman's body is genetically programmed to keep enough energy stores on board to nourish a fetus, even in times of limited dietary intake; which was a reality a few thousand years ago!

Each time you perform the same exercise, particularly a cardio type exercise, you are becoming more fuel-efficient, burning less and less fat per mile or, getting more miles to the gallon so to speak. This is the opposite of what you want. To keep that unwanted fat off your body, you need to be *fuel inefficient*. You can achieve this by eating more frequent meals which will keep your metabolic rate elevated and your enzyme profile optimal for fat burning!

One of the simplest and most effective ways to keep the body from adapting to any exercise stimulus is to not over-expose yourself to it. This simply means, do not use the same piece of cardio equipment two times in a row. If you have been mixing cardio equipment and still haven't achieved the shape you desire, chances are good your body has plateaued. This commonly happens when anyone stays on any program too long. It doesn't matter if you are using circuit training, machines or free weight training, your body will adapt to the stress of any given training stimulus and it usually does so within as little as four weeks on any given program.

If you have reached a plateau with your training, I have the solution for you. The "Fat Blaster Circuit" will give your body the shock it needs to up-regulate your metabolism. I was first introduced to the concept of the "lactate circuit" in 1995 by Charles Poliquin. To increase the athletes' metabolism and *shock* the system into responding, Poliquin designed mini-circuits of five exercises that utilized short rest periods. This resulted in the production of large amounts of lactic acid which led to an elevation in heart rate due to the body attempting to clear the metabolites from the muscles. Because rest periods between the circuits are short, there is a progressive cardiovascular demand resulting in a cardiovascular training effect from a resistance training workout. The result is increased cardiovascular fitness and muscle mass development, while reducing the need for pure cardio training!

The Fat Blaster Circuit consists of five exercises performed back-to-back and should utilize compound (multiple joint) movements to use as many muscles as possible. For best results, alternate movement patterns so that antagonistic muscle groups will be worked, or alternate upper and lower body exercises.

Each exercise circuit should be separated by 90 seconds of rest for the first two to three weeks of training or until four circuits can be completed while maintaining optimum form. Once you are able

to complete four circuits with good form, you may reduce the rest period to sixty seconds, again challenging the body. This fat burning circuit, or lactate training, can be separated by cardio training on alternate days if desired. It is recommended that a rest day be taken once every three days to prevent over-training. Additionally, as I eluded to earlier, when performing 2-3 meltdown sessions a week, you will need less cardio training and more rest. It is critical to remember *that exercise breaks the muscles down and they get stronger at rest!* The idea is to "train - not drain!"

You will find that when performing the Fat Blaster circuits, your body temperature will rise very quickly and it is likely that you will sweat a lot. This is the response that triggers an increase in metabolic rate and leads to on-going calorie consumption hours after your training session has ended. This type of training can be extremely fun and I am confident you and your clients will enjoy it!

### THE FAT BLASTER CIRCUIT

Before you actually begin your training session, it is important to warm-up correctly. The best way to warm-up is to perform each of the exercises in the workout at a reduced intensity. I recommend that you perform your warm-up set at a perceived 60% of training intensity, or what you may consider easy. You will know your body is ready for exercise when you begin to sweat. After your warm-up, take a short rest of approximately 60 seconds and begin your workout.

EXERCISE	REST	INTENSITY	REPS	TEMPO	SETS
Squat Push-Press	1:30	-2 reps	10	Mod	3-4
Push-up	↓	-2 reps	10	Slow	3-4
Box Step-up	↓	-2 reps	10 ea.	Mod	3-4
Forward Ball Roll	↓	-2 reps	10	Hold 3	3-4
Alternating Superman	→ ↑	-2 reps	10 ea.	Hold 3	3-4

**NOTE:** After completing the first exercise, go immediately to the next. After completing the circuit of five exercises in the order shown, rest for 1:30 min. If after working up to four circuits you feel like you could do more, cut the rest down to 1:00 min. Although you perform ten repetitions of each exercise, you should chose a weight or adjust the lever arm against your body by positioning on the Swiss ball such that on your first set you feel as though you could comfortably complete two additional reps. If you go harder than that, your form will deteriorate before you complete the workout! A moderate tempo is a 1-2 up and 1-2 down count. A slow tempo is a 1-2-3 up and 1-2-3 down count. Where the tempo calls for a hold, hold for a count of three between the concentric and eccentric portion of the motion or between sides. Begin with three circuits only. Progress to four as able.

### REFERENCES:

1. Parker, R. "Resistance Training and Fat Loss in Pre-Menopausal Women". FILEX Convention. Sydney, Australia, July 1998.
2. Chek, P. Equal But Not The Same, correspondence course and videocassette series. San Diego, CA: A C.H.E.K Institute Publication and Production, 1998.

**For more information on the exercises mentioned above,**  
see Paul Chek's Equal But Not the Same Correspondence Course.

**To expand your exercise selection,**  
see Paul Chek's Swiss Ball and Medicine Ball videos -  
Gym Instructor Series - High Performance Core Conditioning

Paul Chek is an internationally recognized lecturer and consultant in the fields of corrective and performance exercise. For more information on the C.H.E.K Institute or to receive a free catalog call **800.552.8789** or int'l 760.632.6360 Also, visit us on the web at: **www.chekinstitute.com**.