

## HAVE YOU TRIED THIS YET? Drop Sets

### *A New Method to Challenging Your Muscles...*

Are you feeling like you haven't been able to maximize your workout lately? Do you feel like your muscles aren't getting the "pump" or you're not able to take yourself to the level of fatigue that you had when you first started working out? Well here's a method that may help change that.

Drops sets (also known as "stripping sets") is the method that will help challenge your muscles and raise the intensity of your workout. The general concept to drop sets is that you continue to do more reps after dropping the weight that is being lifted. To implement this concept in your weight training program you will first start with a weight that you would choose for your max of 6–12 reps. You'll perform one set in this range of reps, and then with minimal rest (0-10 sec) you would lower the weight and perform equal to or slightly more or less reps than you just performed. The decrease of weight will be anywhere from 10–50%, depending on the goal that you're trying to attain in the lift. You can drop your weight for 2–4 sets by a certain percentage each time. It is recommended that a drop set is performed only once per body part during a workout and is something that is typically done at the end of your routine to prevent early exhaustion.

### *Why do Drop Sets Work?*

As you begin to lift a weight that is typically your max for a certain amount of reps you begin to get fatigued on the last few. At this point, only a select amount of fibers have been recruited to overcome the poundage you have chosen. When lowering the weight, you then will begin to activate other "reserve" fibers that have not been recruited yet to overcome the previous weight. Challenging more fibers will add to the effectiveness of strengthening that muscle group. As recommended above, you don't want to over train your fibers by doing more than one set per muscle group. By performing more than one drop set, you can actually take your fibers to a point where they can begin to become weekend and eventually lose strength.

### *Common Ways to Performing Drop Sets...*

There are many ways to perform drop sets. One common example of this method would be putting a stack of lighter plates on each side of a barbell while doing a bench press or bicep curl. After performing the desired amount of reps you would then take a plate off of each side and then do the exercise again. For this example, it is helpful to have a partner or two to take the weights off and to spot you. Another easy way to perform drop sets is on a machine that has a stack of weights. In this case you can quickly drop the weight by pulling the pin to place it at a lighter weight. Using dumbbells also can make for an interesting way to putting this method into practice. After completing one set, you can pick up the next lighter weight on the rack and continue with another set. This technique is sometimes called "running the rack". There are many different ways of performing this concept of drop sets. Whether doing different percentage of weights or using different weight equipment, you can get quite creative. In any case, be sure to ask our Nimkee Fitness personal trainers for new ideas on how to add these different concepts into your strength training routine.

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