

RESISTANCE TUBING WORKOUT

For those times when you just can't make it to the gym, resistance tubing offers an inexpensive and portable way to get a full-body strength-training workout at home or on the road.

As with all exercise, it is important to warm up for five to 10 minutes and gently stretch the muscles you will be working. For beginners, it is best to do one set of 12 to 15 repetitions of each exercise.

Intermediate exercisers (those that have been lifting weights for up to three months) can perform one to two sets of each exercise. More advanced strength trainers (those who have been lifting weights or using tubing for more than three months) should try to complete two or three sets of 12 to 15 repetitions. Stretch each muscle group after each set and at the end of the entire workout to improve flexibility.

Perform the following exercises for a quick full-body workout:

Seated row (lats)—Sit on the floor and grasp one handle. Wrap the tubing around a bedpost or some type of anchor close to the ground and grab the other handle. Sit back so that there is tension on the elastic when your arms are extended forward. Extend your legs in front of you with your knees slightly bent. Pull the handles so that your elbows form right angles as you squeeze your shoulder blades together.

Bring your elbows back as far as you can, keeping your spine neutral. Slowly let your arms extend back to the starting position and begin your second repetition. Be sure not to slouch.

Bench press (pecs)—Secure the center of the tubing at chest level and face away from the anchor, grabbing the handles in each hand. Begin with your thumbs at your armpits and step far enough away from the anchor that the tube is not gapping at this starting position. Fully extend your arms in front of your body. Slowly release to the starting position and repeat.

Military press (deltoids)—Stand on the center of the band with your feet shoulder-width apart. With your palms facing forward and hands by your shoulders, extend your arms straight up while keeping your back straight (do not arch your back) and abdominal muscles tight. Slowly lower and repeat.

Triceps extension (triceps)—Step on the tubing and pull one handle up behind your head. Bring your elbow up close to your ear and, beginning with your arm bent behind you, extend straight up until your arm is straight.

Tubing Safety Tips

Pulling on exercise tubing isn't exactly a risky activity. Still, to keep the tube from snapping into your face—and to give your muscles the best challenge—follow these important guidelines.

- Check for holes or worn spots in the tubing. Replace the tube if you see any tears.
- Do your workout on carpeting, wood floors or grass—anywhere but asphalt or cement. Abrasive surfaces can tear your tube.
- Wear comfortable, supportive athletic shoes, not sandals or dress shoes.
- Make sure the tubing is secured underfoot or on an anchor before you begin each exercise.
- Maintain good posture throughout each exercise: Keep your knees slightly bent, your abdominal muscles pulled in and your chest expanded.
- Perform the exercises in a slow and controlled manner, to work against resistance both when you pull on the tube and when you return to the starting position.

Excerpted from *Fitness for Travelers: The Ultimate Workout Guide for the Road*, by Suzanne Schlosberg (Houghton Mifflin, 2002), available at www.acefitness.org.

You may use your other arm to hold your elbow in close to your head. Slowly lower back to the starting position and switch arms.

Biceps curl (biceps)—Step on one end of the exercise band and grab the handle with the same hand. Be sure that there is some tension on the tubing when your arm is extended down by your side. With your palm facing forward, bend your elbow, bringing your hand up toward your shoulder. Keep your wrist straight and bend only at the elbow. Slowly release and repeat. If you are using light resistance, you

may be able to stand on the center of the tube and work both arms simultaneously.

Squats (quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes)—Stand on the tubing so that you are centered. Grab the handles with both hands and stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart. Hold the handles up by your shoulders and bend as if you are going to sit in a chair. Return to standing and repeat. Be sure to keep a flat back and contract your abdominal muscles.

Kneeling crunches (abdominals)—Anchor the tubing above your head and let the handles drop down. Kneel on the floor with the anchor behind you. Hold the handles with your hands up by your ears and elbows in. Bending from the waist, curl down, bringing your head toward your knees and keeping the handles locked by your ears. Slowly return to the starting position and repeat.

Additional Resources

Page, P. Ellenbecker, T.S. (2003). *The Scientific and Clinical Application of Elastic Resistance*. Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics.

About.com: www.exercise.about.com/cs/exerciseworkouts/l/blbandworkout.htm

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