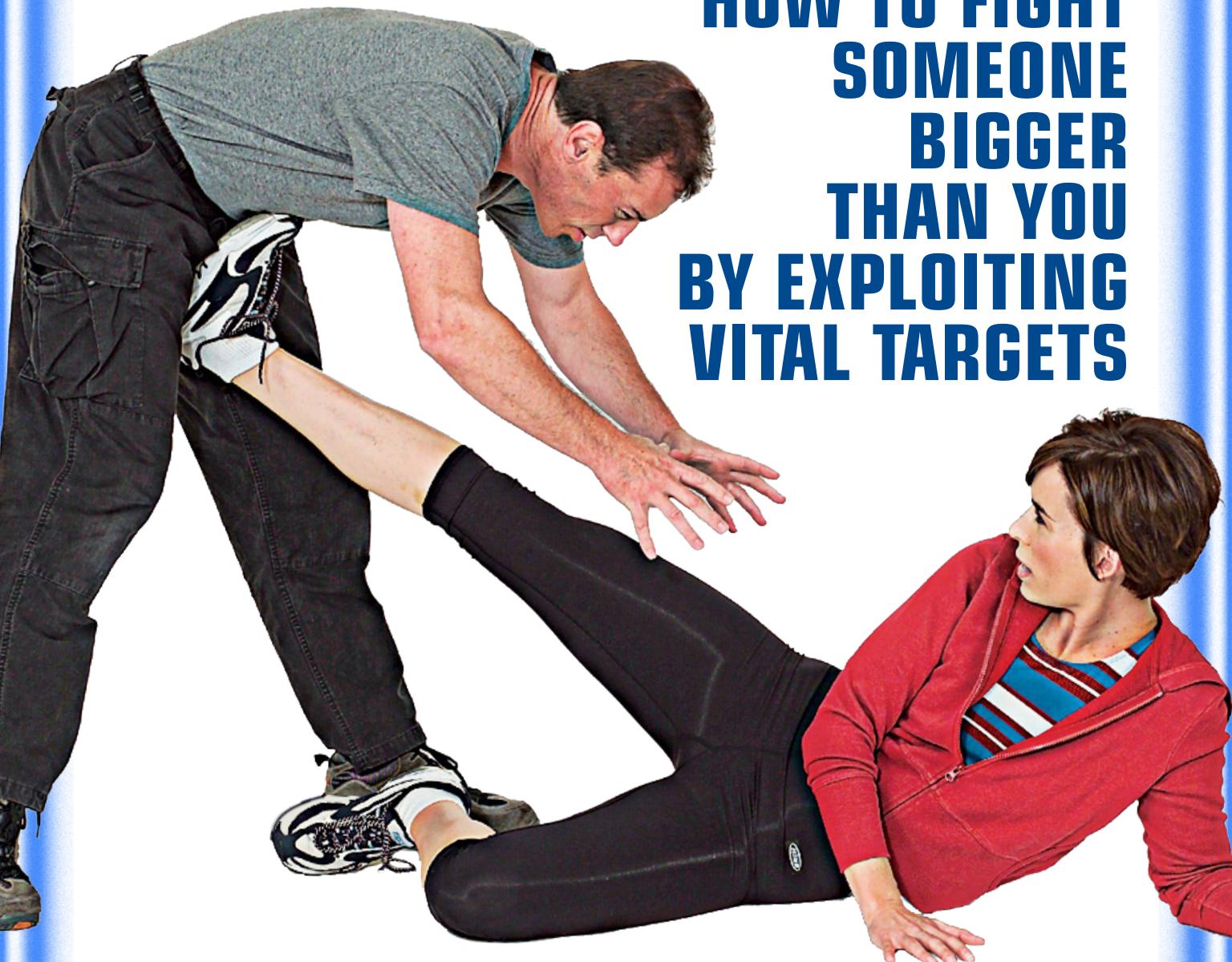


SELF-DEFENSE MOVES FOR WOMEN

HOW TO FIGHT
SOMEONE
BIGGER
THAN YOU
BY EXPLOITING
VITAL TARGETS



BY MEREDITH GOLD • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK HUSTEAD MAKEUP AND HAIR BY DEHX • MODELS: MEREDITH GOLD AND MICHAEL BELZER

You are faced with an assailant who is bigger and clearly stronger than you are. You try to verbally de-escalate the conflict, but there is no question that he intends to harm you. You know that you can't beat him in a match of strength, yet you have no means of escape.

What would you do?

Common "wisdom" suggests that you — a smaller woman — don't really have a fighting chance, right? Wrong! Remember, it's not the size of the woman in the fight; it's the size of the fight in the woman! In a situation like this, you must discard those antiquated notions of what women can't do and start focusing on what's right in front of you: vital targets.

Vital targets are the areas of your assailant's anatomy that are most vulnerable and susceptible to overwhelming pain and injury: eyes, nose, throat, groin and knees. Exploiting these sensitive areas is the best way to ensure that you have a fighting chance against a larger assailant. Why mess around with less devastating targets when striking one of these just might save your life?

The beauty of vital targets is that it doesn't matter

if a guy is built like Mr. Universe — his eyes, nose, throat, groin and knees are just as fragile as those of someone half his size. If you can effectively attack any of these vital targets while defending yourself, you'll be amazed at how quickly the "playing field" gets evened out.

To use vital targets effectively, you must do the following:

1. Identify the areas ahead of time and understand the probable effect of attacking them.
2. Know which self-defense techniques or tools will be most effective.
3. Strike with 100 percent commitment and continue to fight until there is no longer a threat.

Fighting spirit and a willingness to remain committed to the battle are both crucial if a woman is to prevail against a larger assailant. When you strike vital targets, hit hard and make each blow count. Don't hold back! These techniques are most devastating when applied at full strength. Dig deep to harness your strong attitude and practice your solid strikes and techniques as realistically as possible to make yourself a force to be reckoned with!

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TARGET: Eyes

TOOLS: Fingers

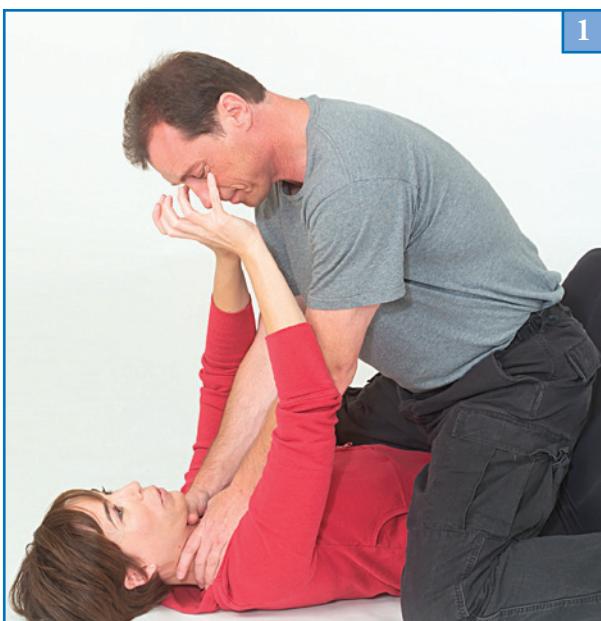
EFFECT: Temporary blindness
and intense pain

There are few areas on the body more sensitive than the eyes. Remember how distracting and painful it was the last time you got an eyelash or grain of dirt in your eye? Now multiply that by 100 to get an idea of what your assailant will be feeling when you thrust your fingers into his eyes. If you are able to connect, a solid eye strike can be devastating. However, even if you don't make contact with his eye, just the action of having fingers coming toward his eyes will very likely cause your assailant to flinch and pull away, allowing you to either escape or strike him with an even more damaging blow.

TIPS: Effective from both standing and ground positions, the eye strike is perhaps the most useful and versatile technique around. Anyone can use it — from a child to a grandma! To protect your fingers during this strike, keep them bunched together like a beak, use your thumb as the weapon or open your hand like a claw and scratch downward from the eyebrows. Stay away from the two-finger Three Stooges eye poke — it's not very strong and you are more likely to hurt your fingers this way.



To protect your fingers during an eye strike, bunch them together like a beak (1), open your hand like a claw (2) or attack with your thumb (3).



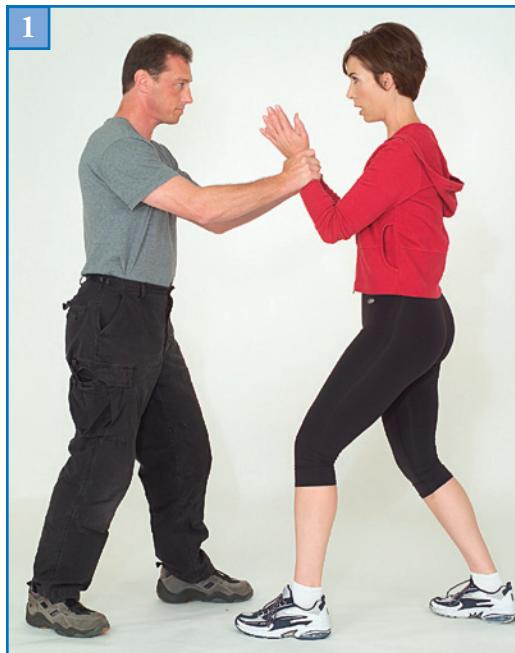
TARGET: Groin

TOOLS: Open palm or hammer fist, knee or foot

EFFECT: Intense to incapacitating pain

Even a glancing blow to the groin can stun an attacker. However, if the move is not devastating, you will likely need to be ready to follow up with more strikes. A powerful strike to the groin has stopped many assaults instantly. Common reactions to hard contact include doubling over, dropping to one or both knees, coughing/gasping for air and vomiting. These reactions will provide the opportunity for you to escape. That being said, it's important to remember that most men have been protecting their "family jewels" since they were little boys, so the target is not always readily available at first.

TIPS: An excellent way to ensure that you can reach this debilitating target is to distract the assailant with another technique before you go for the groin. Police defensive-tactics instructor Missy O'Linn suggests that women become "eye, nose and throat specialists" first, then follow up with the groin attack. Striking the groin with your knee is the most effective tool, but it's important to step in close



to get up and under the testicles for maximum effect. If you are grabbed from behind and your arms are pinned at your sides, bend your knees slightly and drop your weight, move your hips out of the way to reveal his groin, then reach back with an open palm or hammerfist and grab or strike the testicles. If he is standing above you or kneeling while you are on the ground, you also can kick toward his groin with your feet.



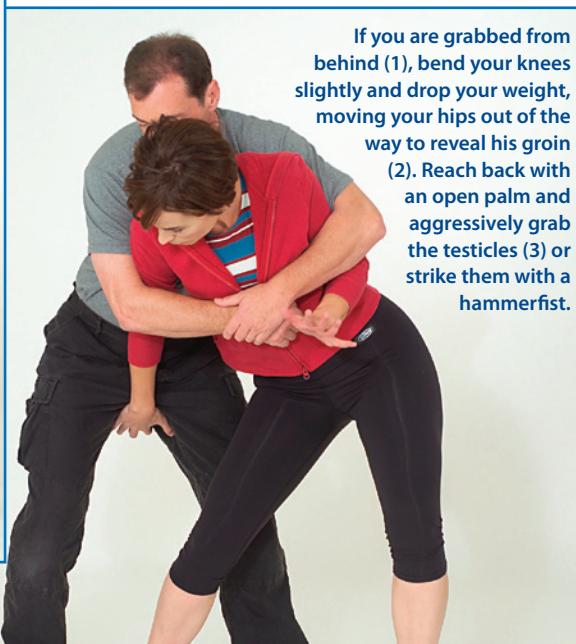
In a situation in which an assailant has grabbed your wrists (1), close the space between you and the assailant and drive your knee up into his groin (2). As he doubles over and instinctively clutches at the impacted area (3), use your freed hands to guide his head downward as you drive your knee upward into his nose (4) for a powerful strike combination.



2

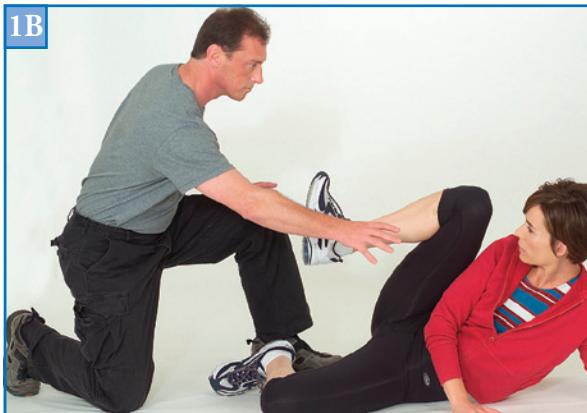


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If you are grabbed from behind (1), bend your knees slightly and drop your weight, moving your hips out of the way to reveal his groin (2). Reach back with an open palm and aggressively grab the testicles (3) or strike them with a hammerfist.



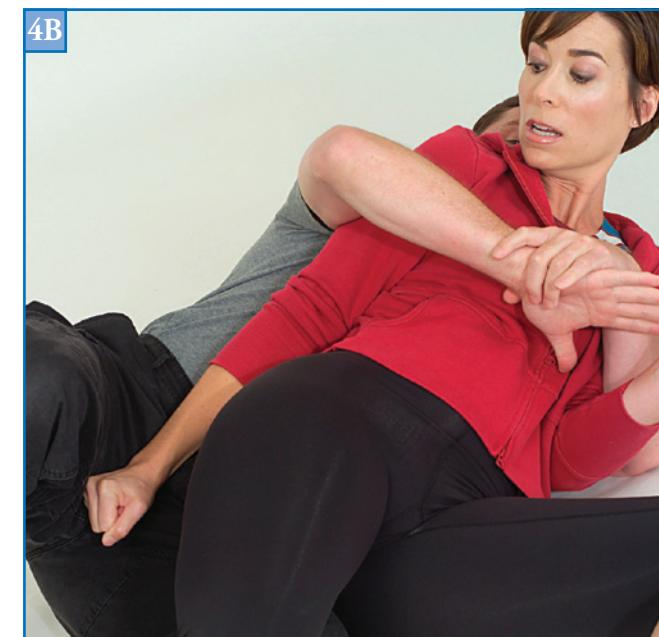
1B



2A



Groin kicks from the ground can be executed when the attacker is above you (1A, 2A) or approaching from ground level (1B, 2B).



TARGET: Groin and nose (combo)

TOOLS: Palm/fist, elbow and foot

EFFECT: Bleeding, intense pain, stunning

TIPS: All these targets and techniques can be mixed for added impact and pain infliction. The object is to slow down the assailant using his inherently vulnerable points and create a window of opportunity to get away.

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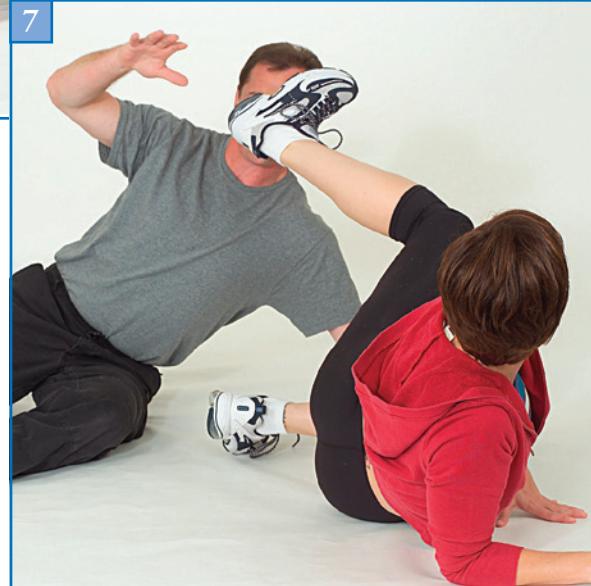


If an attacker has you pinned on your stomach (1), you can position your leg (2) to get the attacker off of you (3) by using the natural strength of your hips as a pivot point. With your freed hand (4), grab (4A) or strike (4B) his groin. If you execute a hammer strike (4B), do it full force with a closed fist. If you grab (4A), squeeze and twist — do as much damage as you can quickly. While he is distracted by the pain of the groin attack, you can prep (5) and execute (5A) an elbow strike to his nose and follow up with a knee to the groin (6). From that point, you can continue your body movement into a kicking position and deliver a final blow to his nose (7). As he falls back with pain in two extremely sensitive areas, you can make your escape. ☠

5A



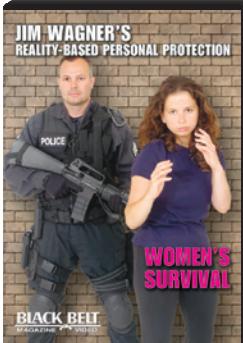
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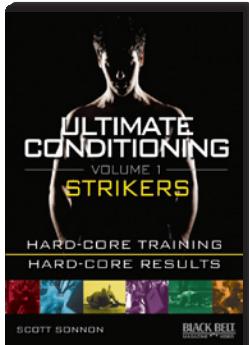


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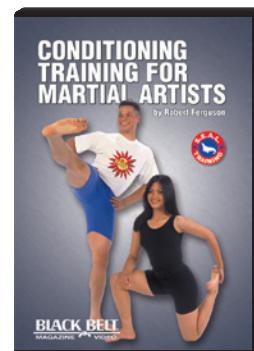
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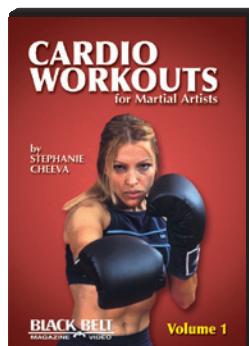


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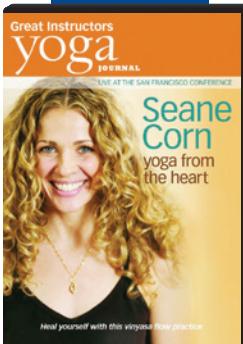
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