Eight Week Workout Plan to Maximize Anabolic Hormones

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Anabolic hormones are essential to muscle growth and contribute to exceptional athletic performance. These hormones include human growth hormone, testosterone, estrogen and insulin. In order to maximize the release and production of these anabolic hormones, strength training must be emphasized. The following eight-week workout plan will ensure these hormones are maximized by focusing on strength training and strategically planning frequency and intensity of such exercises.

Exercise Plan

The following plan chronicles the necessary exercises to do over the course of eight weeks in order to maximize anabolic hormones. It includes information about frequency, intensity, and duration for each set of prescribed exercises. When it comes to exercise, variety is essential to prevent the muscles from becoming complacent and unchallenged due to predictable movements. It is important to rotate exercises and muscle groups used to prevent plateaus and encourage consistent growth and improvement. For this reason, the workout plan alternates every week to ensure the individual can continue to progress while encouraging increased release and production of anabolic hormones. Odd weeks will be weeks one, three, five, and seven while even weeks will be weeks two, four, six, and eight. After the first four weeks, intensity and duration will be increased for the same reason. It is important to note that rest is as critical as exercise when it comes to seeing muscular gains, so rest has been incorporated into each week to account for this.

Biceps and Triceps Frequency: 1x a week, Day 1 Sets: 3-5 Rest between exercises: 1 minute Rest between sets: 2 minutes **Weeks 1-4** Intensity: Moderate (75% 1RM) Duration: 20 minutes **Weeks 5-8** Intensity: High (85% 1RM) Duration: 30 minutes	Odd: - Overhead triceps extension - Biceps curl - Triceps kickback - Hammer curl Even: - Cross-body triceps extension - Concentration curl - Dips - Cross-body biceps curl
Quadriceps and Hamstrings Frequency: 1x a week, Day 2 Sets: 3-5 Rest between exercises: 1 minute Rest between sets: 2 minutes **Weeks 1-4** Intensity: Moderate (75% 1RM) Duration: 30 minutes **Weeks 5-8** Intensity: High (85% 1RM) Duration: 45 minutes	Odd: - Weighted squats - Kettlebell deadlifts - Lateral lunges - Swiss Ball hamstring curl Even: - Box jumps - Single-leg Romanian deadlifts - Reverse lunges - Single-leg glute bridge
Back and Chest Frequency: 1x a week, Day 4 Sets: 3-5 Rest between exercises: 1 minute Rest between sets: 2 minutes **Weeks 1-4** Intensity: Moderate (75% 1RM) Duration: 20 minutes **Weeks 5-8** Intensity: High (85% 1RM) Duration: 30 minutes	Odd: - Dumbbell rows - Push-ups - Dumbbell bench press - Dumbbell reverse fly's Even: - Wide dumbbell rows - Dumbbell chest fly's - Incline press - Dumbbell good morning

Shoulders Frequency: 1x a week, Day 5 Sets: 3-5 sets Rest between exercises: 1 minute Rest between sets: 2 minutes **Weeks 1-4** Intensity: Moderate (75% 1RM) Duration: 30 minutes **Weeks 5-8** Intensity: High (85% 1RM) Duration: 45 minutes	Odd: - Overhead shoulder press - Upright row - Lateral dumbbell raise - Clean and press Even: - Front dumbbell raise - Trap raise - Pike press - Dumbbell shrug
Cardio Frequency: 1x a week, Day 6 **Weeks 1-4** Intensity: Moderate Duration: 30 minutes **Weeks 5-8** Intensity: High Duration: 45 minutes	Odd (choose one): - Jog - Elliptical Even (choose one) - Cycle - Swim
Rest Frequency: 2x a week, Day 3 and 7	

Impact of Prescribed Exercises

Strength training is the only way to induce anabolic reactions within the body. Cardio induces catabolism, which releases catabolic hormones. This is why the prescribed exercise plan only includes one day of cardio. Focusing most of the exercise on strength training will

encourage the production and release of anabolic hormones, which can then contribute to improvements in strength and overall performance.

In order to stimulate anabolic hormones, exercises must be done at a moderate to high intensity at a high volume with shorter rest periods. This high level of exercise exhausts the muscles and results in greater damage. In turn, the body has to produce more human growth hormone and testosterone to efficiently and effectively repair the muscles used during exercise. This results in the desired muscle growth athletes wish to see over the course of time. At this heavy load, the athlete will likely perform a lower number of repetitions, but quantity is not the most important factor here. Fatiguing the muscles is what stimulates anabolic hormone release, therefore less repetitions with a do not inhibit anabolic hormone production. Ideally, the rest period between these heavy sets should fall somewhere between one and two minutes, so if needed the athlete can increase the rest time during the last part of the workout if they are fatiguing. These shorter rest periods coupled with repeated sets of higher intensity will result in greater overall levels of anabolic hormones released in the body.

The exercises included in this workout plan are designed to challenge specific large muscle groups and can be varied greatly by amount of weight, range of motion, and speed. By including a range of weight exercises, the intensity can be modified greatly be having an athlete use a higher weight. In Weeks 1-4, the athletes should use a weight that is about 75% of their 1 Rep Max. In Weeks 5-8, this is increased to 85% of their 1 Rep Max to encourage growth and continued progress. For exercises that are reliant on body weight, the intensity can be modified by slowing the motion down and encouraging a greater range of motion, such as a lower and slower dip or push-up.

Taking the necessary rest will help the body recover properly from such intense exercise bouts. Two full rest days should be taken each week to allow complete recovery and encourage repair of damaged muscle tissue from the days prior. Additionally, the frequency for training each muscle group is limited to once a week in order to allow the body to properly repair these large muscle groups. Overtraining these muscle groups would result in an inability for the body to actually recover and repair the damaged tissues, therefore it is crucial to rotate the muscle groups to prevent this from happening. By working out different muscle groups each day, the athlete can be confident that these muscles have enough time to recover and will not be torn down to the point they cannot recover.

Conclusion

By emphasizing strength training, athletes can maximize anabolic hormone production and release to promote increased muscle growth. It is essential to vary the exercises used to encourage continued progress. Factors other than amount of weight can be changed to create variety in a workout, including range of motion and speed. This eight-week workout plan accounts for this variety and focuses on large muscle groups to encourage increased hormone production of testosterone, human growth hormone, and other anabolic hormones.

References

Kenney, W. L., Wilmore, J. H., & Costill, D. L. (2019). Hormonal Control During Exercise. In Physiology of Sport and Exercise (Seventh ed., pp. 98–118). Human Kinetics.