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FITNESS[®]

January/February 2008 \$4.50

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EXERCISE UPDATE BY D.K. HOWE



SERIOUS TRAINING TIPS

Jumping rope is an essential part of many athletes' routines. It is a plyometric activity, a cardiovascular workout and it develops hand and foot coordination.

If you want to make jumping rope a part of your fitness regimen, consider the following tips from Debi Lander, MEd, director of fitness for Trintalk.com.

- **Get Equipped**—Jump ropes are made from a variety of materials and feature various handle grips. Choose a lightweight rope with foam nonslip grips. To determine the right rope length, step on the center of the rope and bring both handles up to your chest. The handles should reach your chest.

The best shoes for jumping rope are cross-trainers. Be sure your shoes have a reinforced toe and provide good cushioning for the ball of the foot.

- **Get Started**—To begin, lightly grip the handles near the end closest to the rope. Relax your shoulders with your elbows close to your body. Your knees should be bent slightly. Turn the rope from the wrist, keeping a smooth arc in the rope as it passes overhead. Maintain a long spine and keep your head straight. Jump low to keep the impact on your knees and ankles to a minimum.

- **Get Creative**—Once you've mastered basic jumping, get imaginative. Jump backwards or vary your foot patterns. Try bringing your knees up, scissoring your legs or jumping around the perimeter of the room. If you need a break, twirl the rope from side to side and keep your feet moving.

- **Get Motivated**—Turn on your favorite upbeat music or treat yourself to an instructional video. When you want to jump it up to the next level, try *Christi Taylor's Still Jumpin'* DVD (Bayview Films; \$17.99) for some high-energy fat burning.

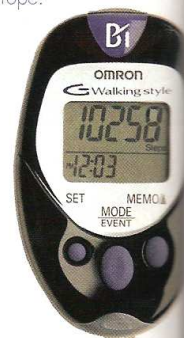
- **Train Smart**—The principles of exercise apply to jumping rope: warm up, gradually build your endurance and be consistent to see results. Work within your target heart rate, slowly cool down and stretch all of the muscles involved in the activity. It's also important to cross-train using low and non-impact activities to offset the impact of jumping rope.



Tower of POWER

The Total Gym®—touted by Chuck Norris and Christy Brinkley—now comes in a motorized version. Called the PowerTower®, this new model has a remote control in the cable-pulley handle that allows users to incrementally raise or lower the incline resistance. The Total Gym uses a person's body weight as resistance, determined by the level of incline, ranging from 3 degrees to 35 degrees. The unit weighs 210 lbs. and folds for storage.

For more information, visit www.efisportsmedicine.com.



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