



Motivate from within

It's the new year and many people have vowed to make a habit of exercise. But as the novelty of a fresh start wears off, motivation lags. However, new research indicates that a conditioned cue (such as your alarm clock) plus an intrinsic, or inner, reward should get you going.

To help support your intrinsic motivation, formulate a positive affirmation. New research from the University of Freiburg's Department of Sport Science in Germany found that when people believed they would benefit from the activity they were doing, they enjoyed it more, it improved their mood, and it reduced their overall level of anxiety.

Try one of these mood-altering affirmations to boost motivation:

- *With this workout, I move one step closer to my goal.*
- *I love to train [insert bodypart], and with each rep, I get stronger.*
- *Today, I will test my limits and prove my inner and outer strength.*
- *In only one short hour, I will feel lighter, happier and more energized.*

Save Your Mitochondria

Anyone who has taken a biology class probably remembers a little about mitochondria — the powerhouses of the body. These organelles reside within your cells and convert carbohydrates and fatty acids into ATP (energy) to power your activities and bodily functions. The majority of mitochondria are found in your muscle tissue, and in true use-it-or-lose-it fashion, if you are sedentary, your mitochondrial popula-

tion and function decreases, leading to cellular aging, the onset of age-related diseases and muscle wasting. Regular exercise helps increase and replicate our mitochondria, improving endurance, energy and metabolic efficiency.

That said, there are a couple of ways to optimize your mitochondrial health and beat Father Time while you're at it:

▶ Do two to three high-intensity interval training workouts per week. HIIT has been

MOVE OF THE MONTH

It's time to turn the push-up on its head — literally. "This Pilates pike push-up helps strengthen the upper body and core while stretching the spine and lengthening the backs of your legs," says Liz Hilliard, creator and co-owner of Hilliard Studio Method in Charlotte, North Carolina (hilliardstudio.com).

HOW-TO

Get into plank position with your head, hips and heels in line. Lift your hips toward the sky and walk your hands toward your feet. When your torso is nearly vertical, place your hands wider than your shoulders and come up onto your toes, shifting your weight more into your hands, and focus on your toes to keep your head neutral. From here, bend your elbows and slowly lower your head toward the floor, as far as you can, then press back up to the start. Do three sets of eight to 10 reps.



shown in several studies to promote the growth and function of mitochondria.

▶ Foam-roll regularly. Massaging your muscles releases PGC-1 α , a protein that fuels mitochondrial growth.

▶ Get plenty of sleep. Sleep deprivation triggers inflammation, which can damage mitochondria and render them less efficient.*

* For more on the benefits of sleep, turn to Page 82!

Photos by Peter Lueders / Model: Tawny Macias / Pants: Skins / Top: Wear It to Heart