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M.M.C.: A BODYBUILDING SECRET!

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Before I get into the topic for this article, let's take a look at what M.M.C can do for you: -

Improving M.M.C. can ...

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Before I get into the topic for this article, let's take a look at what M.M.C can do for you:

- Improving M.M.C. can increase the number of muscle fibers recruited while performing a certain exercise.
- Improving M.M.C. helps in almost completely isolating a primary target muscle groups in most exercises.
- All in all, it helps you make the most out of every workout and progress like never before.

So, what is M.M.C.?

M.M.C. stands for 'Mind-Muscle Connection'.

If you didn't already know, your brain is responsible for coordinating all muscular movement in the body via the release of certain neurotransmitters. This takes place in the 'neuromuscular junction'- where the mind meets the body. *"How does it help me make better gains," you might ask.* The more you improve this 'conversation' between your mind and your muscle, the better you will recruit muscle fibers while performing an exercise. Every muscle group is made up of several muscle heads and various muscle fibers. Having the right Mind-Muscle Connection can help you recruit a maximum number of muscle fibers and the more muscle fibers you recruit the more muscle growth you will notice over time. Period.

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Getting “In the Zone”

Ever seen an athlete or competitive sportsperson sit on the sidelines before a training session or match, eyes closed, head down, headphones plugged in and trying to ‘get in the zone’? What they’re essentially doing is clearing their minds of everything unnecessary for performing well at the task at hand, which is the training session or match.

We all know the importance of mental focus while writing our science projects or while presenting at a meeting. But few people make use of the benefits of mental focus during a workout. This is why I call this a ‘secret’. The title wasn’t just click-bait, or at least, I didn’t intend it to be.

Simply staying off your phone and not letting your mind drift off onto a trending news headline or Instagram Post will help you stay focused at the gym.

How much does it really help?

Studies have shown that the benefits of Mind Muscle Connection reduce with the lesser experience you have, which is quite obvious. Feeling a proper mind muscle connection requires mature toned muscles which develops only after a decent amount of time training. As a complete newbie, you might not need to focus much on M.M.C., as long as you execute the exercises with proper form.

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If you’ve been training for a couple of years, however, and are struggling with your progress at the gym, improper M.M.C. might be one of the reasons you might have hit a plateau.

To understand the importance of M.M.C. you need to understand that every exercise has a primary muscle group, secondary muscle groups and several stabilizing muscles involved. Having the right M.M.C. helps you optimally target the primary muscle group, thus ensuring better recruitment of muscle fibers and hence better growth.

Let’s take the ‘Flat Bench Press’ as an example. The primary muscle group for a Medium-Width Grip Flat Bench Press

would be the Pectoral (Chest) muscles, while the secondary muscles would be the triceps, shoulders and the stabilizing muscles would be the Lats and Back muscles. Having a proper M.M.C. will ensure that you recruit maximum muscle fibers from the Pectoral Muscles.

Tips for a Better 'Mind Muscle Connection':

- **Know your basic anatomy.** Knowing the anatomy of the muscle group you're targeting helps you mentally feel the connection while performing an exercise. Muscles like the Triceps, for example, have multiple muscle heads and depending on the angle of a Tricep Pushdown, you target different muscle heads.
- **Strict Form:** Like Arnold said, "feel the pump". Feeling the contraction during the concentric phase and the stretch during the eccentric (negative) phase ensures better growth.
- **Kill Your Ego!** While heavy powerlifting does have its place in making strength gains, tossing around heavy assed weights isn't the best option for ensuring proper Mind Muscle Connection. Stick to comfortable weights and the right form.
- **Warm Up:** Warming up helps to get the blood flowing into those muscles and ensures better recruitment of muscle fibers.
- **Flexing:** While this may come about as cocky or showy, flexing target muscles between sets helps to get the blood flowing into them, ultimately resulting in a better 'pump'.

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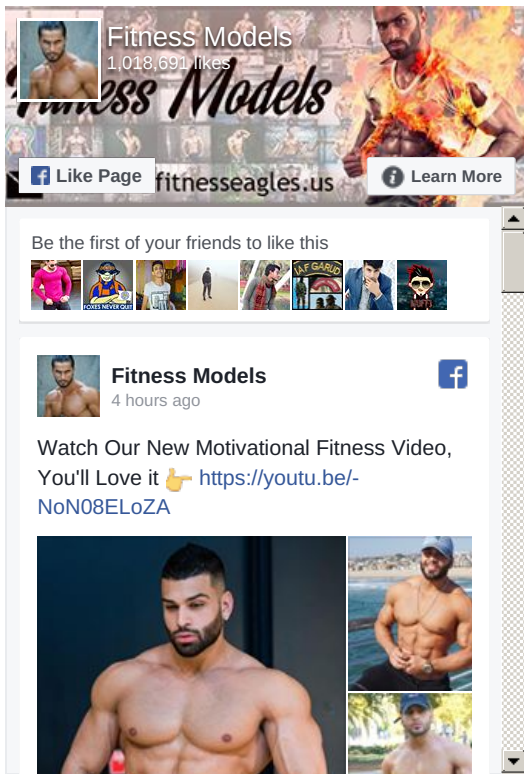
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