

# THE NO-WORK WORKOUT

Is there hope for those who consider exercise a dirty word? **Megan Deem** tries to get off the couch

One universal truth, my universal truth, is that anything—reading the paper, paying bills, writing this story—is infinitely more appealing if done lying down. Not surprisingly, I'm not all that keen on cardio—or exercise in general. Some might call it lazy, but I would argue...yeah, it kind of is. I know all the reasons I should break a sweat, and I want to fit into my pencil skirts and skinny jeans as much as the next girl. But I'm more of a loungeur than a lunger.

Which is why meeting Alex Reznik seems like divine intervention. He's the founder of Manhattan's Complete Body Development, a gym beloved by Wall Streeters (where it's located), as well as hard-partying types with enough disposable income to fund at-home trainers. It was for those who live the high life that Reznik developed what I consider a stroke of genius: an hour-long workout performed entirely on the floor, most of it on one's back. Brilliant! "My trainers were going to clients who answered the door and said, 'I'm too hungover to exercise today,'" Reznik says. "I wanted to figure out a way for them still to get in a workout." (He points out that this routine can also be performed by sober travelers in their hotels, since it doesn't require equipment.)

While his program (see box, next page) combines some elements of pilates, yoga, and even Russian gymnastics, it's different from most other floor-based routines in that it works the entire body from head to toe, not simply the core. He tells me that if I move through the series at a decent clip, I'll get my heart rate up, albeit not as much as if I were pounding away on the treadmill. Still, I run Reznik's routine by Richard Cotton, the American College of Sports Medicine's national director of certification. Cotton stress-

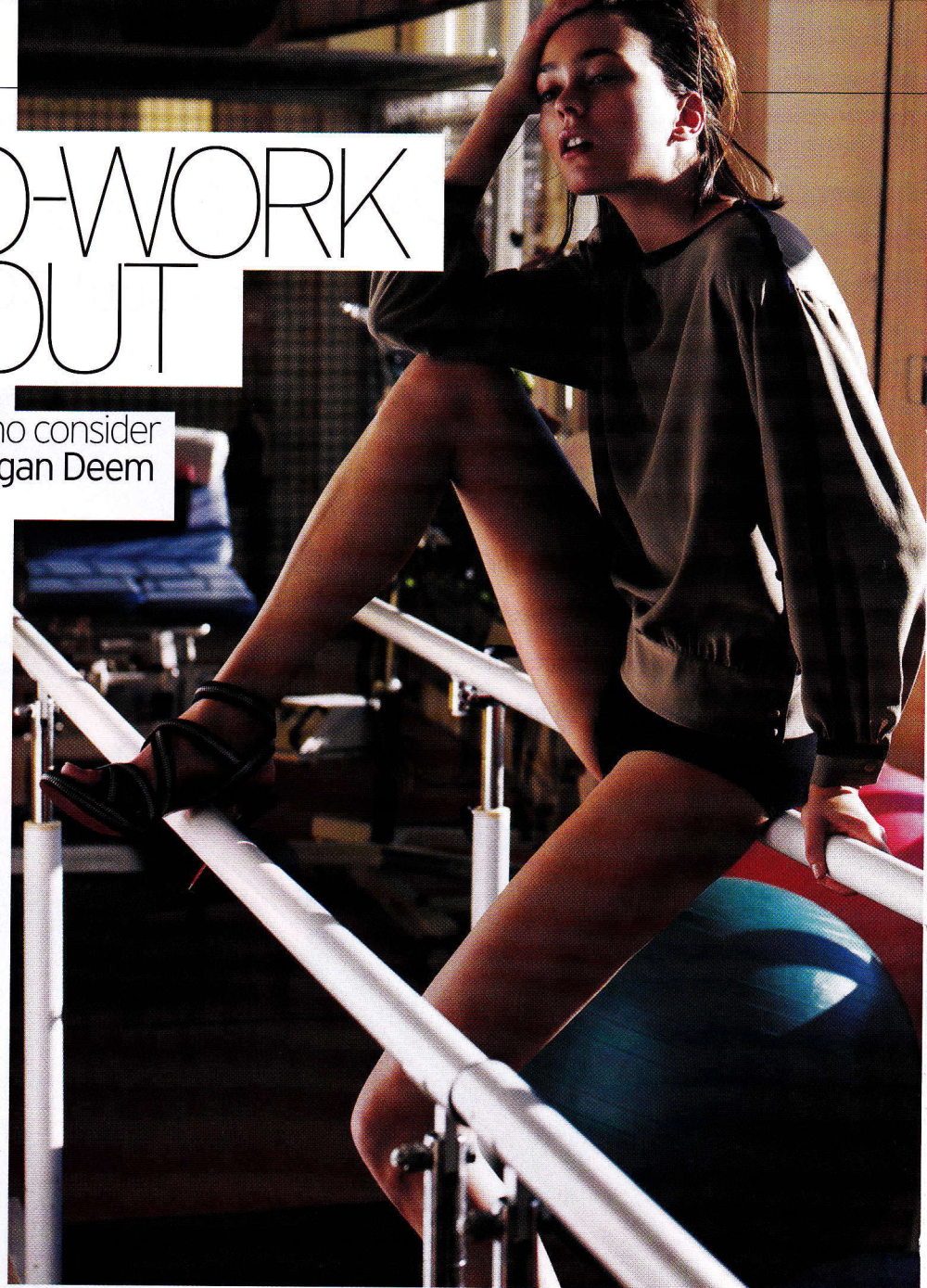
es that some of the moves are too advanced for a true beginner, who should ease into exercise with a mere 10 minutes of activity. I may be lazy, but I'm also vain—I'll risk it.

My training gets off to a rocky start when, out with a friend, I blithely saunter into the side mirror of a parked Yukon Denali, smacking the entire lower right side of my chest. It hurts to draw breath for at least four days. Reznik makes it clear that his program isn't cardiocentric, but the first time I go through it, I wonder if my run-in cracked a rib.

Like just about every fitness guru on planet Earth, Reznik advocates a buffet approach to physical conditioning: Try something different every day—including, yes, a bit of real cardio. (It doesn't have to be wind sprints. According to Reznik, even

pedaling on a recumbent bike, the La-Z-Boy of gym machines, is enough to start.) Reznik, who is equally well-known for taking a mind/body approach to training (Deepak Chopra is a fan), doesn't believe that you need to go gangbusters every time you pull on a sports bra. "Listen to your body," he says. "If you're not feeling up to it, don't go crazy; just try a lighter program or meditation instead." Clearly, this is someone who is speaking my language.

I promise to do the floor portion three times a week—tripling my regular number of workouts. The unrepentantly indolent may wonder if the bed is a fine substitute for the ground. I wouldn't recommend it: One, you need to have plenty of back support and space for an adequate range of motion. But



Ritchie Maine; model: Morgane Dubled/Viva



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In the U.S., JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel is indicated for injection into the mid-to-deep dermis for correction of moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds (such as nasolabial folds), and is generally well tolerated. The most commonly reported side effects are temporary injection site redness, swelling, pain/tenderness, firmness, lumps/bumps, and bruising. Exposure of the treated area to excessive sun and extreme cold weather should be minimized until any initial swelling and redness have resolved.

If laser treatment, chemical peel or any other procedure based on active dermal response is considered after treatment with JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel, there is a possible risk of an inflammatory reaction at the treatment site.

Patients who are using substances that can prolong bleeding, such as aspirin or ibuprofen, as with any injection, may experience increased bruising or bleeding at injection site. You should inform your physician before treatment if you are using these types of substances. As with all skin injection procedures there is a risk of infection.

JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel should be used with caution in patients on immunosuppressive therapy, or therapy used to decrease the body's immune response, as there may be an increased risk of infection. The safety of JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel in patients with a history of excessive scarring (e.g., hypertrophic scarring and keloid formations) and pigmentation disorders has not been studied. JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel should not be used in patients who have severe allergies marked by a history of anaphylaxis or history or presence of multiple severe allergies. JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel should not be used in patients with a history of allergies to gram-positive bacterial proteins. The safety of JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel for use during pregnancy, in breastfeeding females or in patients under 18 years has not been established. The safety and effectiveness of JUVÉDERM™ injectable gel for the treatment of areas other than facial wrinkles and folds (such as lips) have not been established in controlled clinical studies.

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more to the point, after round one, I'm not panting, but I do perspire (my least favorite activity, after trying on swimsuits), so much so that I have to open a window and keep a towel handy. Afterward, my abs are slightly sore and I feel some tingling in my glutes.

### Supporting Players

My new fitness plan has me thinking about other ways I can get maximum body-shaping returns with minimal effort. There are plenty of products fitting this bill, but I decide to try those with at least a modicum of scientific backing.

An independent clinical trial of 40 women commissioned by Nude skin care found that after three months of twice-daily

### TAKE IT LYING DOWN

For each exercise, aim for two to three sets of 10 to 15 reps each. On the final rep, hold position for 10 seconds. Depending on how many of each you do, you'll need about an hour to complete the routine.

- Grab your knees and roll like a ball back and forth along your spine.
- Straighten your arms in front of you and lift legs and trunk to form a V, then lower.
- Holding legs at a 45-degree angle to the floor, do sit-ups rotating toward opposite knee.
- Extend arms straight, palms on floor. Raise legs perpendicular to floor. Lower without touching the ground. Repeat, but only drop legs halfway.
- Lift legs to a 90-degree angle, lower to one side, center, and rotate to opposite side.
- Raise arms and legs to meet directly above body. Lower without touching the floor.
- Bend knees at a 90-degree angle to floor. Lift chest straight up in three small steps to reach legs. Pulse chest up to either side.
- Flip onto stomach, and extend arms straight ahead into Superman pose. Raise all limbs as high as you can, then lower to floor.
- On all fours, raise one leg into an L, and extend arm on opposite side perpendicular to body. Hold for 10 seconds, then switch.
- Still on hands and knees, prop on forearms, raise bent knee and circle, changing directions after 20 reps. Switch sides.
- Extend into a push-up and lift one leg straight up, cross it down over the opposite leg, raise it again, and return to start, alternating legs.
- Lift one leg, then squeeze shoulder blades and release. Switch legs.
- Roll body to one side, balancing on hand. Stack feet and raise top leg, holding for 10 seconds, then rotate sides.
- Sit up, put one foot on the ground, and extend other leg. Trace an L in the air, then circle leg, changing directions after 20 reps. Switch.
- With legs and chest at 45-degree angles to the floor, write Social Security number with legs.
- Put hands and one foot on floor, and lift your bottom. Flex and extend elbows to raise and lower trunk, working triceps.
- Move up into a runner's stretch, with one foot on the floor, knee bent 90 degrees, and opposite leg extended. Hold for 10 seconds, then place both hands inside of front foot, lift heel, and push slightly onto hind foot. Switch.
- End by lying across the floor, closing eyes, and meditating for five minutes.

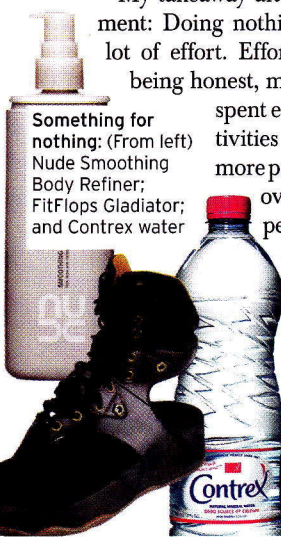
application of its Smoothing Body Refiner lotion, all participants had shed weight—an average of 6.1 pounds—without dieting. (The control group lost nothing.) It sounds insane, I know. The company founders claim that fig and organic mountain ash help the body flush fat cells. I don't know about that, seeing as countless doctors have told me that lipo is the only way to remove fatty tissue, but I slather on the Nude lotion like a woman possessed. Before, I'd never moisturized below my neck on a regular basis. (See? Lazy.) I don't lose six pounds, but then again, I test it for only 30 days. However, my figure gets slimmer (but could it be my new floor plan?).

I also make a change at the office. In France, Contrex water bottles litter their desks the way coffee cups litter ours. That's because the H<sub>2</sub>O, loaded with calcium, is rumored to accelerate weight loss. It's not crazy talk: A study published by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology found that the mineral speeds fat-burning in mice. I already swig three liters of water daily; swapping in Contrex is easy, though it does leave a weird broccoli-like aftertaste.

Then there are the FitFlops, brainchild of Bliss founder Marcia Kilgore, who designed the shoes with the help of biomechanics experts at London's South Bank University Centre for Human Performance. FitFlops are reputed to deliver "a workout while you walk." This is due to the differing density in their soles, which supposedly destabilize and strengthen leg muscles, the same principle as MBTs, those vaguely orthopedic sneakers. Unfortunately, FitFlops don't come in my size (11), so I enlist a co-worker to give them a spin. We agree on one commonality between these sandals and MBTs: Both are quite ugly. (There's hope: Manhattan's ultracool Kirna Zabête boutique is carrying an exclusive, and more attractive, Gladiator version.) But she reports FitFlops are comfortable and that she can tell they're working her feet, as well as her tush.

My takeaway after this experiment: Doing nothing requires a lot of effort. Effort that, if I'm being honest, might be better

spent engaging in activities with a little more payoff. I haven't overhauled my personality, but I did buy a pair of running shoes. We'll see if they make it out of the box. ●



Body Refiner, water: Steven Krause; sandal: courtesy of Kirna Zabête