

W O M E N ' S *fitness* & HEALTH

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**LOVE YOUR
SHAPE WITH BERRI**



Get a Great Bottom Line!



A great bottom is the centre of attention both in the gym and out on the town. It is the most common reason for women to go to the gym or work with their own personal trainer. Butt (excuse the pun) how many of you know the best way to train this complex group of muscles known as the gluteals.

The Anatomy

The gluteal group consists of three muscles, the maximus (the big rounded one that everyone looks at), medius and minimus. The medius and minimus are the side muscles on the sides forming the roundness of the hip.

The Function

The medius and minimus are stabilizers and are activated anytime you stand or exercise on one leg. They hold the pelvis stable when walking or running.

The gluteus maximus (GM) is a prime mover and is our strongest hip extensor (pulls the leg backward). The GM works with the hamstrings, particularly when sprinting or rising from the bottom of a deep squat, and in climbing situations, such as taking multiple stairs at one time.

Do's & Don'ts

Paul Chek is an expert when it comes to poor functionality in exercise equipment. He says many exercise machines claim to improve the bottom when they DO NOT!. A classic example is the stair climber.

To activate the GM, the thigh must be at least parallel to the ground. When squatting you must go low enough so that your hip bone is level with your knee joint – or deeper. Partial squats work the quads, so you can see that the range of motion on a stair climber is not nearly enough to effectively activate the GM. Best to use a step mill where you can take multiple steps at a time.

Another great GM exercise is the lunge. The lunge has great potential, but it must be performed correctly or it too will become a quad exercise with potential for low back strain.

Ask your personal trainer to check your technique - a large enough step to keep the shin of the leading leg vertical, when the back knee reaches the floor. Pushing with your heel activates more GM, while driving off the balls of the feet encourages quad activation. Remember slow the lunges and squats down. The faster you move, the less the GM is activated.

The Real Bottom Line

Your bottom is not only important to aesthetics, but also for the stability of the pelvic girdle. The GM are most effectively conditioned with deep squats and lunges. To improve your bottom line, strength, sprint speed, climbing ability when running or hiking, or to simply give your partner something nice to hold onto, these tips are a must. *

Here are some great Mediball exercises for your bottom...

