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The Isometric Diet and Balanced Health

By Protica Research

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The concept isometric has been a part of the health care vocabulary for decades. The most common application of the term, until now, has been with respect to physical exercise. Taken from the Greek root word Iso, meaning equal, the familiar term Isometric exercises involves applying equal weight to achieve strength goals.

Fairly recently, health researchers have discovered another innovative application of the isometric concept in the health care field: nutrition. These researchers have identified that an isometric approach to diet - a.k.a. the "Isometric Diet" — can lead to health improvement.

The Isometric Diet®, which provides the philosophical basis for the Zone Diet, has swiftly gained respect from the health and nutrition community because it applies this clear "balance" lens to the rather confused, often misinformed world of dieting. Created by Dan Duchaine in the mid 90s, and evolved by researchers such as Dr. Barry Sears (founder of the Zone Diet™), the Isometric Diet is an eating regimen that calls for a balanced ratio of protein, low-glycemic carbohydrates, and essential fatty acids.

The balanced ratio is the result of an overall awareness that the human body does not necessarily desire, or require, all kinds of micronutrients in all situations. While carbohydrates, proteins, and fats do provide the essential building blocks of human life, not all sources of each are optimal in all situations.

The Isometric Diet therefore takes a holistic approach to eating, and incorporates both macronutrient and micronutrient sources of energy. This goes beyond simply balancing proteins, carbohydrates and fats. Instead, an optimal balance is achieved on a deeper level one that leads to optimal body functioning, normalized blood-glucose levels, a controlled metabolism, and a healthy satiating of hunger.

This optimal balance, and particularly the point about healthily satiating hunger, is in stark contrast to some "fad diets", which seek to artificially suppress hunger. This potentially dangerous suppression often forces eaters to experience a weakened immune system, bone density loss, and other adverse

The Isometric Diet and Balanced Health

consequences of malnutrition.

The Isometric Diet is founded upon five integrated principles: balance protein diversity unsaturated fats low glycemic carbohydrates and awareness of food priority.

Principle One: Balance. The Isometric Diet recognizes the fact that the human body functions optimally when it is fueled by a balanced micronutrient ratio of proteins, carbohydrates and fats.[i] The optimal ratio for these three is 1:1:1, or the same number of calories from proteins, carbohydrates and fats.

Principle Two: Protein Diversity. The human body responds differently to different sources of protein.[ii] For example, a post-exercise meal that consists of quick-assimilating whey protein will have a more beneficial health impact than an intake of caseinate or soy protein. The Isometric Diet therefore

promotes a blend of protein intake to seek an amino acid balance, and to select the most appropriate assimilation rate for optimal health.

Principle Three: Unsaturated Fats and MCT's. The Isometric Diet recognizes that the human body processes saturated fats differently from mono- and polyunsaturated fats.[iii] Furthermore, the diet exploits the fact that there are some fats, called Medium Chain Triglycerides or "MCTs", which are shorter chains of 8-10 fatty acids. These MCT chains are shorter, absorb quickly, and digest very easily. The end result is a more efficient digestive system and better results through less effort.[iv]

Principle Four: Low Glycemic Carbohydrates. Healthy eaters are swiftly adopting the Isometric Diet's promotion of carbohydrates that do not cause the blood-sugar to rise. Dieters can therefore use the "glycemic index" (GI) as an intelligent way to measure the body's insulin response to a given food and to monitor the intake of "good" carbohydrates.[v]

Principle Five: Awareness of Food Priority. The Isometric Diet is aware that there are naturally occurring micronutrients found in food that supplements, typically, cannot engineer. As such, the Isometric Diet does not propose an eating regimen that regularly replaces food with supplements. Rather, a controlled diet that is fortified by scientifically designed supplements is most effective.[vi] This is particularly important in a very fast paced world where eating a complete meal can be quite a challenge. In such cases, the Isometric Diet approves of the supportive value of supplements - provided that such supplements are created in light of the above four principles.

One such supplement that has been engineered within the framework of these principles, and that is receiving positive acclaim in the health care field, is called Isometric®, created by Pennsylvania-based Protica, Inc. So named to reflect its balanced composition and support of the Isometric Diet principles, Isometric is a third-generation supplement that provides a complete spectrum of macro- and micronutrients.

Of greater importance to most health-conscious eaters, however, is Isometric's balanced micronutrient breakdown. Each all-natural 3-fluid-ounce serving - which can be responsibly used as a meal replacement -- delivers 25 grams of low-glycemic carbohydrates, 25 grams of protein, and 10 grams of unsaturated, highly-bioavailable essential fatty acids. Of added value to dieters is Isometric's™ modest

300–calories per serving.

The path to perfect eating balance is an evolving one. The more information that nutritional science uncovers, the more effective shall be the resulting eating regimen. However, regardless of what innovations lay ahead, one principle will remain constant: the human body craves equilibrium, and it achieves optimal health through a holistic balance of micronutrients and macronutrients. Enabling that balance today is the Isometric Diet, and more recently, Isometric from Protica, Inc.

About Protica

Founded in 2001, Protica, Inc. is a nutritional research firm with offices in Lafayette Hill and Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Protica manufactures capsulized foods, including Profect, a compact, hypoallergenic, ready–to–drink protein beverage containing zero carbohydrates and zero fat. Information on Protica is available at www.protica.com. You can also learn about Profect at www.profect.com.

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Preliminary Isometric Tension Improves the Effectiveness of Dynamic Work by up to 20%

By Hristo Hristov

Are you looking for a simple and effective way to increase your strength? This article will show you how to incorporate isometrics into your training regime to increase the strength of your favorite lifts.

Soviet research, dating back to the sixties of the 20th century, points out that isometric training preceding dynamic work may increase its effectiveness by up to 20%. This is called the "immediate after effect" of isometric training. When the reverse sequence of training was tested (dynamic work preceding isometric work), results actually deteriorated.

According to Mel Siff's "Supertraining", the after effect occurs immediately after the preliminary isometric tension. Strength continues to increase and peaks between the 10th to 20th minute. To maximize the strength boost, I recommend performing isometric holds 15–17 minutes before the hardest sets of dynamic work. Doing so will synchronize the strength after–effect peak with the hardest part of the training session. Example: consider a training session that consists of high–volume Bench Presses and Deadlifts. Iso–Bench–Presses should be performed 15 minutes before the hardest sets of Bench Presses and Iso–Deadlifts should be performed 15 minutes before the hardest sets of Deadlifts.

The intensity of the isometrics should be carefully selected for maximum results. Tensing at 50% of the max intensity should produce the greatest strength gains. Elite athletes may perform better at higher intensities.

One last question remains: how to select the most performance–enhancing isometric position for a given dynamic exercise? Here you have two choices: the isometric drill should train either the weakest position of your lift, or the position where the involved muscles are maximally stretched (sometimes your weakest position is your maximally stretched one). This recommendation has to do with the long term strength effect of isometrics. It makes sense to strengthen the weakest position in a lift, because a chain is as strong as its weakest link. Improving the strength of a muscle in its most lengthened position, has a distinct strength carryover to shorter muscle lengths. Therefore isometric training at stretched positions, should improve the strength through the whole range of motion!

The training protocol that I have mostly used is 3 sets x 10 sec isometric holds at 50% of the max effort with 10–30 seconds rest in between.

Let's give specific examples of isometric exercises. For the bench press, load the bar with 50% of your max, lower it 1–3 inches above chest level, and hold for 10 seconds. Rest 30 seconds and repeat 3 times. For the deadlift, simply pull on the bar with 50% effort, without moving it at all. For the squat put 50% of your max, squat down to the lowest position you train, and sit there for 10 seconds. Don't forget to push your feet into the ground to activate all the squatting muscles. Imagine that you are squatting up, but don't move.

Here's the overall protocol again:

perform 3 sets of 10 sec isometric holds at 50% intensity
the isometric exercise should train the weakest or the maximally stretched position of the

corresponding dynamic drill

the isometric exercise should be executed 15–17 minutes before the hardest set of the corresponding dynamic drill

You may find that during the isometric holds you start sweating :] That's because they are a great way to warm up the whole body. You get a dynamic strength boost + a great warm up.

Preliminary isometric tension has these three advantages:

it warms up the body

it has an immediate positive effect on your dynamic strength

it has a long term positive effect on your lifts

You can utilize preliminary iso tension on your max testing days. Here is the scenario: you are testing your Bench Press max. Load 50% of your projected max. Perform 3 sets of 10 sec holds in the position where the bar is 1–3 inches above chest level (rest 10–30 sec between sets). In the next 15 minutes, perform 2–5 sets of 1–2 reps gradually increasing the weight to around 90%. Example:

Rest 3 minutes, 2x50%

Rest 3 minutes, 2x70%

Rest 3 minutes, 1x80%

Rest 3 minutes, 1x85%

Rest 3 minutes, 1x90%, Rest 3 minutes

Psyche up, and go for your projected max. Good luck.

Hristo Hristov owns X3MSoftware, a company specializing in developing diet and fitness tracking software. Hristo has a degree in Computer Science and passion for strength training. Hristo has designed and written Fitness Assistant, X3MSoftware's leading software product. Download your demo at

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