

The 'Unstable Body bar Push-Up'

Equipment:

- Body bar, barbell or any solid bar-pipe approximately 3'-4' in length / may need two if you do not have the below
- Dumbbell or yoga mat
- Bench or Box approximately 4" – 16" inches off the ground (you can actually use a coffee table 😊)

The Unstable Body Bar Push-up is a fabulous exercise to work the entire upper body as well as your 'Power Pack' – your Core. The unstable environment in which you perform this exercise recruits TONS of muscles in your chest, shoulders, triceps, posterior deltoids (rear shoulder muscles), back and again, your core.

Follow below on how to properly perform this exercise as well as progressions:

***As with ALL exercise programs make sure you consult your physician before starting.**

- A) Start with a rolled up yoga mat/dumbbell or solid bar and place on the box/bench or coffee table
- B) Place the body bar/barbell/solid bar or pipe **perpendicular** (forming a '+') on top of the above. The bar and dumbbell/mat should be near the end of the box/bench, not in the center.
- C) Place yourself in a push-up position directly over the bar (chest over bar – shoulders directly over wrists). Back is straight, Core is TIGHT..make believe you are laughing very hard or someone is about to hit you in the belly & SQUEEZE - Hold that core. You are also on your toes.
- D) Your head should be looking down at all times. This keeps your spine in alignment
- E) Slowly lower yourself to 90 degrees. DO NOT let your back go below your elbows.
- F) Push yourself back to the starting position. NOTE: When you press back up, DO NOT use your hands...what I want you to concentrate on is pushing your chest and shoulders through the bar on the way up. ALWAYS 'use' the muscles you are working for better results.

Barry Lovelace is the owner of FitQuest Fitness in Allentown, Pa, a personal trainer, functional training specialist, columnist and creator of several fitness products. You can visit his website at www.barrylovelace.com Please feel free to email Barry at barry@barrylovelace.com

- G) You should have felt unstable on the way down and the way up. This is where you are recruiting TONS of muscles and 'grabbing' your core. You will recruit more muscle and create more power with this exercise! 😊
- H) REPS? I suggest performing as many as you can until you are about 2-3 reps away from failure. Rest for a minute or so, and do again for 1-2 sets. You know how you feel so PLEASE use good judgment.

Special notes to add intensity or lower intensity.

- If the push up is too much, just hold the 'plank' position and you will feel your core engage. Progress to the push-up when you are ready.
- If the push-up is too hard and the plank too easy you can either perform a ½ push-up or hold the plank and alternate leg lifts. With the leg lift all you do is raise your leg off the floor approximately 12", hold for a second, GENTLY lower to the ground and repeat other side. The goal when you are lowering your leg to the ground is to not hear your foot touch the ground.
- Too easy or your ready to add intensity? Perform the leg lift as you do the push-ups. You do not have to alternate legs. Change legs for the next set.
- Still too easy? Perform with your feet on a stability ball, bench or second or third stair on your staircase. You can also raise a leg to add even MORE intensity

OK..that should get you started on working your entire upper body as well as your Power Pack!

Again, I cannot stress enough how to perform this movement in a controlled movement pattern as well as STOPPING when you are fatigued. If you feel yourself compensating after a few seconds or reps – STOP!

Good Luck with ALL your goals!

Barry

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