

Know Your Body Type to Build Muscle Quickly

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Not all bodies are identical, so choosing a cookie cutter muscle-building plan is a recipe for disaster. You want results, and the best way to get them is to tailor a plan to your specific needs.

You may have tried to build muscle in the past, but without much success. The problem probably wasn't you. It was the plan you were using.

There are three main body types you need to know about when you want to build muscle - and you need to know which category you fit into so that you can choose the best and fastest way to put on muscle.

The three main body types are Ectomorph, Endomorph and Mesomorph. We'll break down each body type so you can understand the strengths and problem areas you might encounter as well as the ways you can thwart any roadblocks to your success.

Building Muscle for an Ectomorph Body

An ectomorph body means that you have the leanest frame of all the body types. It can be harder (but not impossible) for someone with this body type to build muscle. There are ways that you can tell if this title describes you.

First, your bone structure will be small boned. Sometimes people with this type of body will appear to be lean or even underweight. Long arms and legs are associated with this body type.

If you're a woman, you won't be rounded - your build will have an almost boyish frame. Women with an ectomorph body often have flatter chests and rear ends.

You can look back at your years growing up to pinpoint if you fit this description. Most men and women who fit the ectomorph body type will have been very thin as a child. You may have been very active as a child and as an adult, eat a healthy, balanced diet and still struggle to gain weight.

The struggle to gain weight is because your metabolism is faster than those with other body types. You may feel you eat a lot of food - in fact, others may have commented that you eat and eat and never gain weight.

Another clue that this is your body type is if your appearance doesn't fit your age. You can appear several years to a decade younger than you actually are. You might be someone who's often asked for ID to prove your age.

Those with ectomorph bodies are often narrow shouldered and sometimes even have shoulders that bow inward giving the chest a concave appearance.

Being tall can also be a clue that your body is an ectomorph body. You can also do a quick check to see if you fit this category. Circle your wrist with your middle finger and thumb. If your finger and thumb overlap, that means your body type is ectomorph.

Knowing that you have an ectomorph body is just the beginning. You might be happy with your lean frame, but you hate that you look fragile. If you're a man, this might be more of a struggle to deal with than it is for a woman because men often associate being fragile looking with being weaker.

However, if you're a woman and you feel your body type makes you look boyish, then you may want to put on muscle in order to give your body the curves you want it to have.

You may be completely happy with having an ectomorph body type, but you want to gain some weight without it being fat weight. The right muscle building plan can help you gain muscle weight at a healthy pace.

Problem Areas

For an ectomorph body, one of the problems when trying to build muscle is that the metabolism is so fast that many types of workouts will have the opposite effect.

You'll lose weight because you burn fuel so fast. You end up with a body mass index lower than you should have.

Another problem is that people with an ectomorph body follow a general workout routine on top of trying to build muscle and on top of other activities such as swimming, jogging, etc.

If you want to build muscle, you have to scale way back on any activity that can make you lose weight. You also have to follow a structured workout routine.

Ectomorph Workout Routine, Schedule and Nutritional Needs

You would think that cardio is always a great workout for anybody, but for an ectomorph, a little goes a long way. If this is your body type, you can't engage in a lot of high paced cardio workouts like running or aerobics when you're trying to bulk up.

Your focus should be two areas: strength training and eating. Your workouts should consist of routines that build muscles for your shoulders, arms, legs, back and chest. You need to focus on raises, presses and rows as well as curls, squats, barbells and bench presses.

You'll want to work out using machines as well as free weights. Do 2-4 sets and rest time should be 120 seconds. The reps will vary according to the area of the body you're working out.

Your nutritional needs are extremely important. You need to consume 500 or more extra calories every day. You should eat 5-6 times a day and pack those meals full of lean protein.

If you don't eat enough and then you work out to build muscle, you're going to end up disappointed. If you have an ectomorph body type, you have to eat a lot - even if you don't want to.

Some people with this body type also take nutritional supplements to help gain weight, but if you concentrate on adding more healthy calories to your everyday meals, you won't have to take a supplement.

Building Muscle for an Endomorph Body

Many men and women find themselves in the endomorph body type category. An endomorph means this is a person who happens to have a higher fat to muscle ratio and the appearance is more rounded.

People with this body type can easily become obese if the weight gain isn't stopped. You can tell that you're an endomorph type if you circle your middle finger and thumb around your wrist and the tips can't touch.

If you're a woman with an endomorph body, you'll have wider hips and be curvier. Even though curves can be a good thing, on your body frame, it will give you a heavier appearance. Women with a pear shaped body fit into this category.

If you're a man with an endomorph body, you can be described as stocky - which may or may not make you look heavier than you really are. There are certain characteristics that can help you define if this is your body type.

First, you'll be a big boned person. You'll be plump or noticeably overweight. Your waist will be higher than the average person's and your metabolism will be slow. You may have dieted in the past and found it difficult to lose weight.

For people with this body type, their weakness is the ability to gain weight quickly. However, the thing that works in their favor when building muscle is that they have strong muscles to begin with. People with strong muscles do extremely well with revving up their strength training routines.

One of the reasons that people with an endomorph body want to build muscle is to change their body appearance from one of softness to one of physical strength. Another reason is that people with this body type have a tendency to carry weight around the stomach area and want to change that for aesthetic and health reasons.

Problem Areas

Because your metabolism is slower, your workouts are going to have to be different. Your metabolism is going to make turning the fat into firm muscles a bit of a battle, so the first thing you're going to have to have is dedication.

You must commit yourself to a dedicated muscle building routine and you have to commit yourself to sticking with it for as long as it takes.

Most people who have the endomorph body shape find the struggle to be in their legs, rear end and stomach. Particularly, some people can have short, wide legs, and shorter trunks - and adding too much muscle can cause the person to look overly bulked up.

Endomorph Workout Routine, Schedule and Nutritional Needs

Since your metabolism is slower, you have to have your workouts focused on two main points. You need them to have more repetition and you need them more often. You should set as your goal as 10-12 reps for all your muscle building sets.

Unlike people with the ectomorph body, where the focus should be mainly on building muscle and weight training, people with an endomorph body should engage in other high intensity workouts - especially cardio.

These should be between 3-4 times a week and should be a minimum of 45 minutes per workout. Aerobic classes are good for endomorph body types, as are treadmill workouts.

You have to work out more often and you have to do it faithfully. You need to focus on fat burning exercises in order to help you build muscle. Out of 7 days in the week, for you, 4 of them should be focused on muscle building. You should have a day of rest from all workouts each week.

Your muscle building routine should focus on an area by breaking it down into days and then shaking up the routine. For example, on the first day of week one, work on your chest. The next day, work on biceps, the following day, work on cardio and so on. You have to have an intense workout in order to build muscle and get rid of the softness.

Make sure you incorporate bench presses, barbells, squats, leg presses, curls and raises in your repetitions.

Building Muscle for a Mesomorph Body

If you have a mesomorph body, then count yourself very fortunate. This definition means you have a body that's lean and athletic. It means that it won't be difficult for you to build muscle.

By nature, if you're a mesomorph you'll be stronger than most people.

You can use the wrist bone measuring check to see if you fit this category. When you circle your middle finger and thumb around your wrist, if they can touch, that means you're most likely a mesomorph body. Your bones will be medium.

It's also easy to tell if you fit this category because you'll have muscles that are easy to define from fat. However, if you do put on weight, you'll end up looking like you're a lot heavier than you actually are because you have more muscle mass. More muscle mass combined with weight gain makes you look bigger.

When you do decide to work on building muscle, it will happen easily and others may remark on your 'overnight' firmer body.

If you're a woman who fits the label of mesomorph, then you'll usually have an hourglass shape and your body fat will be spread throughout your body rather than gathering in one area.

If you're a man who fits the label, then you'll have broad shoulders and even if you do gain weight, you won't look fat - you'll just look big boned. Both men and women in this category usually have very good posture.

Problem Areas

The biggest problem that people with mesomorph bodies have is that they can gain weight so fast. In fact, of the three, this is the easiest body type for gaining weight. But it's true that people in this category also have an easier time losing that gain.

Because of their bone structure and strength, people in this category often easily overwork their body when building muscle. They have a high capacity for building muscle and a high perseverance level. This drive can easily lead to over training.

Mesomorph Workout Routine, Schedule and Nutritional Needs

Besides being blessed the ideal body type, mesomorph people do really well with any kind of resistance training. They have a metabolism that's right in the middle of the three body types. Not too fast, and not too slow.

On the downside, though, your body can quickly adjust to your muscle building workout - so that means you have to keep it changed up in order to build the muscle and maintain.

Even though you can easily go longer than other people can when working out, you should never push your muscle building workouts longer than an hour. Stick to 45 minutes maximum.

Your workout should consist of moderate weights, since it's easier for you to build muscle. You can set up a workout plan so that you work out every day with one rest day - but every other day will work well for your body

type. Each set that you do (don't do any more than 5 sets) should have no more than 12 repetitions.

Because an unbalanced diet can lead to fast weight gain for you, try to stick to carbs that are low on the glycemic index and eat plenty of protein. You want to use the 40/30/30 rule. Your carbs should make up 40% of your diet, protein 30% and fat 30%.

If you weighed 200 pounds and needed to consume 400 more calories for your muscle building, then you would eat 340 carbs, 255 grams of protein and 113 grams of fat.

Since that's too much to consume just by eating breakfast, lunch and dinner, you're going to want to break that down by eating more often. Have 5-6 meals throughout the day. It keeps your insulin level under control and helps your metabolism.

Building muscle doesn't have to be a struggle. Once you know what your body needs, it will be much easier to accomplish than previous times when you may have been attempting to use a cookie cutter approach.



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