Vorkout

Another Innovation from Pete Sisco

Pete Sisco's

A totally new type of workout

Introducing the SuperRep™

Trigger a Massive Anabolic Response!

The Central Nervous System (CNS) Workout

By Pete Sisco

IMPORTANT

This program involves a systematic progression of muscular overload that can lead to lifting very heavy weights. Proper warm up of muscles, tendon, ligaments and joints is mandatory at the beginning of every workout.

Although exercise is very beneficial, the potential for injury does exist. Precision Training, LLC and its owners, agents, affiliates and employees are not liable for injuries sustained while lifting, using or moving weights and exercise equipment in a gym or elsewhere.

Always consult with your physician before beginning any program of progressive weight training or other exercise.

If you feel any strain or pain when you are exercising, stop immediately and consult your physician.

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Introduction

Here is a quick lesson in hubris. Or: how I learned that I can be just as blind as everyone else.

Way back in 1992 when I was just getting serious about lifting weights I was surprised to learn how unscientific the whole enterprise really was. Everyone in the gym just seemed to be doing a random routine using whatever equipment was not in use, they didn't write down what weight they lifted or how long it took to complete an exercise.

That was the most shocking thing to me -- nobody seemed to keep track of time! Many people talked (and talked and talked!) about "intensity" but I knew from studying physics that the measurement of intensity of muscular output must be measured with time. Soon I developed the Power Factor measurement so a person could go from saying "*I bench press 325 pounds*", to saying the more precise and meaningful, "*I bench press 2,800 pounds per minute*."

This innovation led to others which all basically focused increasing the intensity and efficiency of both individual exercises and complete workouts.

So I was pretty proud of myself for noticing that in 100 years of strength training and bodybuilding nobody before me had really focused on measuring intensity in a precise way. I wondered how everyone missed it.

Then 10 years later...BAM!...I suddenly realized I'd been missing another big piece of the picture...just like everyone else had.

Central Nervous System

I've optimized workouts for every major muscle group in the human body...but I completely missed the **most obvious and important component** in stimulating new muscle growth: the Central Nervous System. The CNS is the **master switch** in the human body that determines whether ANY exercise for ANY muscle group is effective. In short, if the CNS has not switched the body into an anabolic state there will be no new muscle growth. Period.

For example, if you do triceps exercises at an intensity that is high enough, your brain will in effect say, "*This workout is very demanding and it taxes the body's resources too much so I need to send signals through the body to build more muscle in those triceps*." That is the body's way of protecting itself. It adapts to stresses so next time the stress occurs the body is ready for it. But it only adapts if it truly needs to. Do a wimpy triceps exercise and your CNS will not trigger new muscle growth.

But when you work an individual muscle to failure – even successfully - you are nowhere near the level of intensity the **entire** Central Nervous System can withstand.

So what is needed is a workout **optimized to signal the CNS** to kick the entire body into anabolic mode.

Purpose of the CNS Workout

It's important to understand what we are doing with the CNS Workout. To illustrate our objective, let's take the example of arm training. Suppose you wanted to create a workout for the major muscles in your arms; the biceps, triceps and forearm muscles.

If the workout you designed used bench presses, lat pulldowns and deadlifts it would yield some benefit to your arms. The bench press works your triceps a little but it's primarily a chest exercise. The lat pulldowns work your biceps a bit if you bend your elbows and pull all the way down but it's primarily an upper back exercise. And holding a heavy bar for deadlifts will exercise the gripping muscles of your forearms but it's primarily a lower back exercise.

So you can see that the above workout is **not** *optimized* for the arms. Yes, it will work...but **it won't work best**.

The same thing happens when we do our normal workouts (even my optimized PFT and SCT workouts)...they are engineered to target individual muscle groups with the maximum intensity possible, but they are NOT engineered to signal the CNS to switch to maximum anabolic mode.

Why? Because you can't do both at once! You need a separately engineered workout for each objective.

Eureka! How did we miss *that* for 100 years? I even searched the Internet looking for a workout targeting the CNS instead of targeting legs or shoulders or whatever. Nothing. I've never read nor heard anybody talk about a workout engineered and optimized to target a maximum CNS response.

So this is a very new and powerful concept and, as I mentioned, it is important to understand what your objective is in the gym because the CNS Workout has two unusual characteristics:

1. The exercises do not target a specific muscle group 2. The workout is far more demanding than a normal workout

The Exercises

The way to stimulate the growth of new muscle is to force them to operate at high intensity. That intensity is measured in work per unit of time. So the way to maximize intensity is to do a great amount of work is as brief of time as possible. This same stress is what triggers the Central Nervous System to switch into anabolic mode. **The CNS Workout aims to deliver the highest possible systemic intensity** by forcing the largest muscle groups of the body to work "all out" in rapid succession.

These are the muscles we will use to overload the CNS:

Triceps - the largest muscle of the arms

Pectorals - the large muscles of the chest

Spinal Erectors and Hamstrings - the powerful muscles of the lower back and upper legs

Trapezius - the strongest muscles of the shoulder girdle

Gastrocnemius - the fantastically powerful muscles of the calf **Quadriceps** - the strongest muscles in the legs.

Again, notice this is not an arm or shoulder or leg workout...it is a "systemic" workout designed to sent the maximum possible growth signal to your CNS

These exercises were chosen based upon two important criteria.

- They represent some of the heaviest exercises that can be done.
- Secondly, they can be configured into a routine that can sequence these exercises quickly and efficiently.

These two elements combine to make a specialized workout **that forces the CNS to cope with maximum output per unit of time**. In other words, this is the highest overall intensity that can be engineered to overload the entire body...not just one muscle group.

Range of motion

If you know anything about the work I've done in the last decade you should know I'm an advocate of limiting the range of motion to only the strongest and safest range in every exercise. This not only increases intensity but it reduces the risk of injury.

However, this workout can be performed in the conventional manner of full range of motion. I don't recommend it, but if you are still training that way you can do so with the CNS workout.

Those who are familiar with my Power Factor and Static Contraction books or with my <u>TRAIN SMART!</u> e-book will be very comfortable performing the CNS Workout in their strongest range **and will, of course, reap more benefit.**

Getting Ready

Warm-up

Just as with any weightlifting workout, you should perform your normal, thorough warm-up before doing the CNS Workout. You always do a warm-up...right? If not, now is the time to start.

Do 10 to 20 minutes on the treadmill, LifeCycle®, elliptical machine or similar aerobic equipment. Just go at a brisk pace but not anything that gets anaerobic or high intensity.

Before each exercise in this workout do 15 - 20 reps with about 1/3 of the weight you'll be lifting. I do the reps in the 2-4 inches of my strongest range. (I never do full range reps anymore. Save that flexibility stuff for yoga class ... with no weights.) Even when I'm going to do a static hold, I first do a few very short reps in the strongest range with less than half of what I'll be lifting statically.

Using this technique I've never had an injury. If you are nursing an old injury, do a little extra warming up there ... **assuming your physician said it was OK** to be working it at all.

Never let your warm-up become part of your workout. Doing so leads to more and more strenuous warm-ups and that will defeat the purpose. Soon you'd have to warm-up for your warm-up.

Knowing you are fully warmed up and ready to hoist the heavy iron is a subjective evaluation only YOU can make. Factors such as your age, previous injuries and the temperature of the gym all determine how much warm-up you need.

Order of Exercises

The order of these exercises matters. This workout is engineered to increase intensity until you reach the peak on the last exercise.

Please perform the workout as described. It progresses from triceps and pectorals to spinal erectors, hamstrings, traps and calves, and finally to the quads and more of the calves.

The exercise go in **exactly** this order:

- 1. Wide-grip bench press
- 2. Close-grip bench press
- 3. Deadlift
- 4. Shrug
- 5. Toe raise
- 6. Leg press
- 7. Toe press

But they are combined in a new and unique way.

Introducing the SuperRep[™]

Have you ever performed a "super set" to target a certain muscle? It's a pretty popular method, even though it's inefficient. For example, for triceps a person might do a close-grip bench press that is quickly followed by cable press downs. Or for the chest a person might do a bench press quickly followed by a set of cable crossovers.

The hypothesis behind a super set is that it delivers extra overload to the target muscle. Some people also claim it "hits the muscle from a different angle" which is pretty much bunk, but nevertheless, forcing muscles to do more work will sometimes have some added benefit.

The key to super sets is that they have to target the same muscle. By contrast, there is no such thing as a super "set" using a biceps exercise followed by a calf exercise. It wouldn't make any sense.

But the CNS Workout is not designed to target any specific muscle group. Instead it's **designed to deliver the maximum possible overload to the entire Central Nervous System**. This unique objective allowed me to innovate the: SuperRep[™]!

For example, when you do the deadlift exercise in this workout you perform it in the normal manner, then while still standing upright with the bar in your hands, you perform a barbell shrug with your traps, then while holding the shrug position you perform a toe raise with your calves. That represents an enormous amount of muscular output in a short unit of time. The intensity has to be felt to be believed!

In one SuperRep you use your spinal erectors, your traps and your calves to deliver **an unprecedented overload stimulus** to your Central Nervous System. Of course, this method would never be used in a workout optimized to target only the back or traps or calves...but that is not our goal here, is it? Our goal is to send the most powerful overload stimulus to the CNS so that **the CNS sends the body the most powerful muscle growth stimulus!**

In the CNS Workout you will perform the following SuperReps:

- Wide-grip bench press and Close-grip bench press
- Deadlift, Shrug and Toe Raise
- Leg press and toe press

In each case you'll repeat the SuperRep until absolute failure and then move on to the next one. The muscle groups you just finished exercising will be completely fatigued but your body will still have plenty of "gas in the tank". Each successive SuperRep will drain out more of the gas. When you are finished your body will have delivered the highest possible overload stimulus to your CNS...and it will, as a means of positive adaptation, trigger the highest possible muscle growth stimulus throughout your body.

You might ask, "Couldn't I get the same result by just picking the highest intensity exercise – leg presses – and doing all the reps I possible can in one workout?" The answer is, no. Because as tired as your legs got, there

would still be plenty of reserve energy in your other major muscle groups. Using the CNS Workout that reserve energy can be used to deliver a greater muscle growth stimulus to the Central Nervous System.

The Workout

First SuperRep: Wide-grip bench press and Close-Grip bench press

Place a barbell in a power rack. (or use a Smith machine or a really reliable partner as a spotter) Adjust the range of motion to the last 2 or 3 inches of your strongest range in the bench press. Alternatively, if you insist, use a full range of motion.



Note the bar is already positioned in the trainee's strongest range of motion. This allows the use of much heavier weights with safety.



Press the weight up off the supports but do not lock out your arms. Make sure the weight is heavy enough that you can only perform 8 to 10 reps. If doing SCT make the weight heavy enough that you can only hold it 5 to 10 seconds.

Wide-Grip Bench Press / Close-Grip Bench Press: Most people can do these two exercises with about the same weight. Select a weight that you can do 8 to 10 reps with or that you can statically hold for 5 to 10 seconds.

1) Perform 10 wide grip reps with your hands shoulder-width apart on the bar. (For SCT perform a 5-10 second hold)

Without resting, move your hands to the Close-grip position and repeat the movement using the power of your triceps.



After your set of Wide-grip presses, move your hands to the Close-grip position and repeat either the 8 to 10 reps or the 5 to 10 second static hold.



Use the power of your triceps to hoist the same weight. Do not lock out.

2) Perform 8 to 10 close grip reps with your hands about three inches apart on the bar. For SCT perform a 5-10 second hold.

Repeat this Wide/Close cycle until you can only perform 2 reps on each exercise (or a 2 second static hold.)

Note: If you can do more than 4 cycles of each exercise it means you chose too little weight. Make a note to perform these exercises next time with 10-20% more weight.

Second SuperRep: Deadlift, Shrugs and Toe raises

Next, remove the bench from inside the power rack and set the safety bars so the barbell is resting at knee level. (Full range trainees can just put the barbell on the ground...if you absolutely insist.)



Barbell positioned in power rack at slight above knee level. Note the use of <u>lifting</u> <u>hooks</u> to maximize the usable weight.



Keeping your back straight, raise the weight using the powerful muscles of your lower back.

1) Perform a deadlift by keeping your back straight. Lift the barbell from knee level to the fully erect position.



Perform a shrug while holding the barbell. Use your trapezius muscles to raise the barbell.

2) When your torso is erect, perform one rep of a barbell shug by raising your shoulders while holding the barbell.



While holding the shrug position, perform a Toe raise by using your calf muscles to raise your heels up from the floor.

3) While holding the shrug position, perform a toe raise by raising your heels off the floor.

4) Lower your heels back to the floor, relax your traps and lower the barbell, then complete the deadlift rep by lowering the bar back to the supports on the power rack.

Repeat steps 1 to 4 until you cannot complete another cycle of SuperReps.

Note: If you can do more than 10 cycles of this SuperRep it means you chose too little weight. Make a note to perform these exercises next time with 10-20% more weight.

Third SuperRep: Leg press and Toe press

With the sled empty of weight, slide it to the fully extended position and engage the safety stops. Load the weights.



Start position for the Leg press.

1) Place your feet flat on the sled about shoulder-width apart.



Finish position. Not locked out.

2) Using your quadriceps muscles, press the sled up 2 to 4 inches but do not lock out. Repeat for 8 to 10 reps or do a static hold for 5 seconds.



With the sled at rest, position your toes at the bottom of the sled with your heels completely off the sled.

3) Immediately after your leg presses, move your feet into position to perform a toe press. (above)



Press your toes forward using your calf muscles to raise the sled.

4) Press the sled upward using your calf muscles. Repeat for 8 to 12 reps or perform a 5 to 10 second static hold.

5) Repeat this cycle until you've burned "everything in the tank". If you can do more than 10 cycles it probably means you selected too little weight. If so, shoot for 10 to 20% more weight next time you do the CNS Workout.

That's it! By performing these seven exercises in this exact order and using sufficient weight that you can only perform the reps and cycles specified you will have delivered maximum overload to your CNS. Your CNS will trigger a **massive anabolic response** to this workout!

BONUS EXERCISES

If you are fortunate enough to have the new <u>Explosive Fitness</u> static contraction equipment you will be able to do a bonus SuperRep.

Because this unique and revolutionary <u>EF</u> equipment was purposedesigned for Static Contraction Training, it is not only perfect for the entire CNS Workout, it also has a unique configuration that easily permits an addition SuperRep.

Fourth (EF) SuperRep: Shoulder press and Lat pulldown

1) Set the bar in the position you normally use for Shoulder presses. Zero the meter.



2) Perform maximum effort shoulder press. Check peak readout on the digital meter. Reset meter to zero.



Lat pulldown using a reverse grip. Photos courtesy of <u>Explosive Fitness</u>. 3) Immediately switch you hand position to Lat pulldown using either a forward grip or reverse grip. (Depending which one gives you a higher number during your normal Lat workout.)

4) Perform a maximum effort Lat pulldown. Note the peak readout.

Perform this SuperRep four times.

NOTE: When you use the EF equipment to perform the second SuperRep (Deadlift, shrug, toe raise) you'll see the meter increase on each segment of the rep. The deadlift will deliver a certain read out, then when you add the toe raise the meter will increase significantly and finally, when you perform the shrug the meter will increase again! Of course the EF meter will automatically lock in your absolute peak weight. How cool!

Frequency of Training

The CNS Workout is the most intense workout you can perform. I recommend you use it no more than three times in the first month. Use it a maximum of twice in your second month of training and no more than once per month after that.

Each time the CNS Workout is performed you should be able to lift 5 to 10% more weight than the last time. If you cannot accomplish this it means you are not fully recovered and should take more days off between all your weight lifting workouts.

If you are training on my workouts in my <u>TRAIN SMART!</u> e-book you can integrate the CNS workout into your program. To do so, substitute one CNS Workout in place of your regularly scheduled Workout A *and* Workout B. One CNS Workout replaces two regular workouts. So if you were scheduled to perform Workout A, then take 8 days off, then do Workout B then take 8 more days off before A again, replace both of those workouts with one CNS Workout in the middle of those 24 days.

For Maximum Results Get Lifting Hooks

The second SuperRep using deadlifts, shrugs and toe raises greatly relies on your ability to hold a heavy barbell for an extended length of time. Trainee's often need to stop this exercise, not because their backs, traps or calves are fatigued, but because their grip if fatigued.

If you suspect this is happening to you, I strongly urge you to consider using lifting hooks. Hooks transfer much of the weight from your fingers by distributing the load over your wrists and hands. These 1TonHooks were made to specifications I recommended. I consider them to be the best hooks available and they are very affordable. <u>Click here</u> for more info.



World's best lifting hooks.

Thank you. Have a great workout!!

Pete Sisco

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