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TRAINING WITH VIBRATION

caused by the plate moving rapidly up and down.

Vertical vibration is more effective because it accentuates the body's normal movements and is less limiting than the tilting vibration platform, Strom says. In terms of the rotation or random orbital vibration, "we're not comfortable with that," he says. "We don't know, but we don't believe it is good for the skeletal system."

Vibration machines vary greatly in price from about \$300 for a basic Soloflex to \$10,000 for the VibroGym. The difference in cost, Yeaman says, is in the quality of the product, which affects the quality of the vibration, its effectiveness and the risk involved. His company's stainless steel products produce a higher-quality vibration, he says, because it maintains a consistent vibration throughout the machine.

"You end up with the issue where the (plastic fiber) or plastic is causing a resonance that can be dangerous to the spinal cord or brain," Yeaman says. "That's where the consumer is being misled. Look at comparing all the vibration platforms out there. Ask them to prove why their platforms are not inferior."

Hopson has a similar challenge. "Ask any salesperson if they can prove their platform is safe and effective," he says. "Say 'Show me the research that says your product does what you say it does. Where's my support? Who's going to teach me how to use it? What support do you have?' You can't spend several thousand dollars on the product and have no idea how to use it."

Yeaman says the consumer market for vibration platforms "could be a real mess in the next six months to a year. Other companies are not living up to what they say at all. You're looking at warranties that last 30 to 90 days. VibroGym's warranty is for five years."

POTENTIAL DANGERS

Despite the evidence of its effectiveness, many critics, including VibroGym's Yeaman, say that whole body vibration can be dangerous. While benefits have been found for athletes and home workout enthusiasts, researchers do warn of some dangers in using the
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Personal trainer Rick Hagaman discusses the proper use of whole body vibration (WBV) training.

What specific sports can this technology improve? For example, how might golfers or tennis players improve their game using WBV?

WBV has many sports-specific benefits, which is why many pro and college sports programs across the country use it. The Power Plate recruits fast-twitch muscle fibers, which is what the body uses for explosive moves. This would be beneficial in most sports. Also, the increased balance, flexibility, range of motion, joint function, mobility, coordination and reflex improvement would be of great benefit to tennis players and golfers alike.

How many exercises can be done on these types of machines? Which do you find most effective?

The number of exercises that can be performed is endless ... if you know what you are doing. But it will probably take the expertise of a Power Plate-certified training company such as Blue Clay Fitness to demonstrate proper form, technique and creativity in isolating muscle target groups

RICK HAGAMAN

is a certified personal trainer with Blue Clay Fitness in Los Angeles, the official training company for Power Plate on the West Coast.



body concentration while always focusing on core exercises throughout. Probably five to eight exercises incorporating some

"The number of exercises that can be performed is endless ..."

through guided exercise routines to get the most value from WBV. Power Plate does provide a chart with examples of some beginning exercises for the product, but I would recommend a certified trainer for the ultimate experience. I find that the exercises that are performed with body parts and weight directly on the plate are the most effective.

Can you give me an example of a typical exercise routine using the WBV?

This would definitely vary according to the goals and fitness status of the client; however, a complete WBV workout can be completed and still effective within a 30-minute period, which is another benefit to busy people on the go. I would usually do two to four training sessions a week and normally I would do an upper- or lower-

static and some dynamic poses/movements would be typical while progressing to more difficult exercises as the client's ability increases.

What are some typical success stories you get from clients?

"Wow" is usually a common reaction. The proven benefits of WBV must be experienced to be believed. It just doesn't seem logical that the sometimes-static exercises performed on the Power Plate within a relatively short period of time can be as effective and beneficial as they are. Our clients have expressed that they have more energy, that they can see and feel a difference in their muscle tone and strength, that they have quickly recovered from injuries, that their flexibility has greatly increased, and that they still aren't sure how WBV works but that it does. ■