

# The Adonis Effect



1.618

*Built For Influence*

Copyright © 2009 by Adonis Lifestyle LLC.

All rights Reserved

No portion of this manual may be used, reproduced, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including fax, photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system by anyone but the purchaser for their own personal use. This manual may not be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of Strength Works Inc., except in the case of a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages for the sake of a review written for inclusion in a magazine, newspaper, or journal, and all of these situations require the written approval of Adonis Lifestyle LLC. prior to publication.

**The information in this program is for educational purposes only.** The information in this program is based on my own personal experiences and my own interpretation of available research. It is not medical advice and I am not a medical doctor.

**The information within this program is meant for healthy adult individuals.** You should consult with your physician to make sure it is appropriate for your individual circumstances. Keep in mind that nutritional needs vary from person to person, depending on age, sex, health status and total diet.

**If you have any health issues or concerns please consult with your physician.** Always consult your physician before beginning or making any changes in your diet or exercise program, for diagnosis and treatment of illness and injuries, and for advice regarding medications.

# Table of Contents

**Introduction.....3**

## **PART 1**

**Chapter 1. *Adonis Complex: How it All Started.....7***

**Chapter 2. *How the Bizarre Bodybuilding Subculture Became the Leader of the Diet and Fitness Industries.....24***

**Chapter 3. *The Giant Pink Elephant.....32***

**Chapter 4. *Still Chasing the Wrong Look: The beginning of my career in the Supplement Industry.....39***

## **PART 2**

**Chapter 5. *Perfect Proportions: The Goldilocks Phenomenon.....56***

**Chapter 6. *Variation of human size.....63***

**Chapter 7. *The Golden Ratio and the Perfect Male Proportions.....71***

**Chapter 8. *The Adonis Index Ratio.....77***

**Chapter 9. *Where you are Now: Calculating your current waist and Shoulder dimensions.....80***

**Chapter 10. *Other ratios, arms and legs.....84***

**Chapter 11. *An unfair advantage: Why Your Adonis Index Matters.....86***

## PART 3

<b>Chapter 12.</b> <i>Building the Perfect Adonis Index.....</i>	89
<b>Chapter 13.</b> <i>Muscle Physiology and Muscle Growth.....</i>	92
<b>Chapter 14.</b> <i>Fundamentals of Nutrition.....</i>	99
<b>Chapter 15.</b> <i>Dietary Supplements.....</i>	102
<b>Chapter 16.</b> <i>Putting it all Together.....</i>	107
<b>Bonus Chapter.</b> <i>First Impressions and the Halo Effect.....</i>	114
<b>References.....</b>	120
<b>Appendix 1.</b> <i>Calculating Adonis Index Ratio.....</i>	124
<b>Appendix 2.</b> <i>BUILD Height to Waist Chart.....</i>	126
<b>Appendix 3.</b> <i>BUILD &amp; BURN Height to Waist Chart.....</i>	127
<b>Appendix 4.</b> <i>BURN Height to Waist Chart.....</i>	128
<b>Appendix 5.</b> <i>Adonis Index Shoulder to Waist Ratio Chart.....</i>	129

## Introduction

If you've ever said to yourself "I want to get in shape" then you must have had some picture in your head of what that "shape" is supposed to be. You might be able to describe it in some abstract terms like, "I'd like to lose some weight", or "I'd like to put on some muscle" or "I want to look like >Insert name of popular Hollywood celebrity here<".

Unfortunately, simply wanting to look better doesn't give you much of a direction or road map to follow. How much weight do you want to lose? How much weight CAN you lose?

How much muscle do you want to build? How much muscle CAN you build? And most importantly how much muscle SHOULD you build?

Suppose you wanted to do both of these things (build muscle and lose fat). How would you know where to start with a workout and diet program, and even more importantly how would you know when you've reached the right size?

Is 10 pounds of weight loss enough? Is 20 pounds? How do you measure fat loss and muscle gain at the same time?

All of these important questions are haphazardly ignored in mainstream fitness advice. Whether it's newspapers and magazines or internet sites and books, no one identifies a true measurable map of how to make your body look better.

The truth is that without a clearly defined target you could always be left unsatisfied and chasing a goal that is simply unattainable. And that is unfortunately what happens to so many of us because we have been given a false sense of what is achievable (and even desirable) by the fitness media, professional and amateur sports, and even Hollywood.

In the following pages you will see how the physiques that are displayed in the pages of fitness magazines, during most professional and amateur sporting events and on the silver screen are often a product of the concealed world of steroids and other physique altering drugs.

Just as the media can portray an unrealistically thin ideal for women leading to anorexia and many forms of eating disorders, the media can and does portray an unrealistic size and muscularity to men that results in the reverse disorder from anorexia, which is called the Adonis Complex.

The Adonis Complex is a body image distortion that many men face believing they need to constantly be bigger. No matter how big a man gets he still views

himself as skinny and weak (just as a dangerously thin anorexic still views themselves as fat).

This is unfortunately how many men start using and abusing steroids. Even while using massive amounts of steroids and gaining inhuman amounts of muscle a man caught in the psychological trap of the Adonis Complex can never be satisfied and hence is constantly searching for a way to get even bigger.

Drugs are added on top of drugs, dosages cycles become larger and longer until people are literally becoming big to death.

As you will soon find out the mainstream media, professional sports and Hollywood are only making this worse as they are all in on an insidious lie about what truly makes their stars look and perform the way they do.

These are the wrong idols to be looking up to if you are at all interested in getting into and staying in your best shape naturally without drugs.

And this is the whole point of the Adonis index Workout and the amazing effect it can have on your body.

The truth is that no matter where you are starting (big or small, skinny or heavy) all roads lead to one perfect shape for each man. It's closer than you think, and it can be achieved without the use of steroids.

It's the looks of success, the look of confidence, the look of a hero, and the look that commands respect. And, as idealistic as it sounds, each of these claims are backed by solid sociological and anthropological research!

The goal is the perfect Adonis Index Ratio. The road is the Adonis index Workout. The result is the Adonis Effect.

The story in the following pages is about how I overcame my Adonis Complex, and developed the road map to the right body shape, built the Adonis Index Workout and discovered the Adonis Effect.

# PART 1

## Chapter 1

### Adonis Complex: How It All Started

I have been fascinated with the concept of building bigger muscles and getting stronger for nearly my entire life.

I started working out when I was seventeen years old, mostly because I was insecure with my body – I thought I was “weak” and abnormally skinny. In fact, high school really marks the first time I can remember realizing there were guys significantly bigger and stronger than I was, which naturally added to my already heavy insecurities.

You see, like you, I related size and strength to social status, confidence and power.

Why?

- The big guys were on the football team.

- The big guys got the girls.
- The big guys were men amongst boys.

Naturally, because of what I saw, I *too* wanted to be a big guy. I believed I needed to be bigger to have the social life I wanted, so...I started working out.

Now I'm approaching two decades of consistently working out without missing more than a few weeks here and there. Quite frankly, working out is so normal to me *now* that I have a hard time relating to people who *don't* regularly go to the gym.

Letting an entire week go by without hitting the gym is a completely foreign concept to me. I can't imagine leaving the size and shape of my body up to chance or whatever genetics might have in store for me. The day I realized I could change the size and shape of my body with weights was the day I started working out.

And I haven't looked back.

Working out is the single most important habit I've picked up in my life.

However, it took more than fifteen years of pounding the weights for me to fully appreciate the power it has over all aspects of my life.

Who has that kind of time? Who wants to spend that kind of time?

That's why I've written this book. I want to relate one of the most incredible secrets I've learned about the human body and how it can transform your entire life. But, in order to fully explain how I came to this amazing discovery, we need to go back in time.

Let's wind the clocks back fifteen years...

Look at me – a nineteen-year-old punk entering college who'd been working out for roughly two years and was feeling pretty good about himself. I'd put on some muscle and was closing in on my goal of getting my bodyweight up to 200 pounds.

At the time, that goal was certainly a big deal for me. When I started working out, I was almost six feet tall and 150 pounds – that's pretty damn skinny. For most skinny guys, becoming 200 pounds is a *big deal*. It means you're a "big guy," it means you're more of a man and, quite simply, it means you aren't "little" anymore.

My younger self felt having a bodyweight below 200 pounds meant I was small, weak, and somehow less of a man. I imagined a fraternity of men who

were either above or below 200 pounds, and I just knew joining the fraternity of 200-pound men would bring me power, respect and freedom.

I have no idea why I felt this way, but it was a feeling I couldn't shake and one that became the driving force behind my workout habit.

After two years of working out, I started to build some significant muscle and strength, and I felt pretty good about my progress. Women started noticing me, I was on the football team and my social life went from nonexistent to partying every weekend. As far as I was concerned, I'd found the answer:

The bigger your muscles get, the better life gets.

Of course, this led to me wanting to get bigger – *immediately*.

In addition to experimenting with all forms of weight training – from power lifting to bodybuilding – I started trying every supplement known to man. Protein powder, weight gainers, amino acids, tribulus, smilax – you name it, I took it. I was even one of the first people in my circle of friends to try creatine when it hit the market in '93.

No matter what I tried, though, I was never fully satisfied with the amount of muscle and strength I gained. In fact, I could feel myself becoming more and

more obsessed with the idea of being bigger. During the summer of '94, when I'd finally achieved my goal bodyweight of 200 pounds, I *still* wasn't happy. I still didn't think I was strong enough...or big enough... I realized there was nothing magical about weighing 200 pounds. There were still many guys at the gym who were bigger and stronger than I was.

But, *to me*, size and strength still meant everything, so...

I immediately reset the goal to 210 pounds.

It was during this time I realized I'd also reset my mentality. You see, when I first started working out, the "big guys" intimidated me. Whether it was at the gym or some social setting, I tried to avoid them altogether. However, after a few years of weight training I was close to being one of them. I wasn't intimidated anymore; instead, I was anxious to get even bigger and start doing some intimidating of my own.

That's when I decided I had to learn more about how the body works and how to build more muscle.

In the fall of '94, I started my undergraduate degree in human kinetics and nutrition. I started learning all about biology, chemistry, physics, human

physiology, nutrition and the like, but I didn't care about much of this stuff on it's own and as such you could say I was quite the horrible student.

I mean, I only listened to the parts of my biology or nutrition classes that related to building muscle or burning fat – *that's it*. I didn't care about anything else. If it wasn't going to help make a measurable improvement to my success in the gym, I just wasn't into it...you know?

So, I guess you could *also* say that thinking a degree in human biology would help me better understand how the body works and put me ahead of the game when it came to building muscle and getting lean wasn't really working. I realized that knowing more about physiology wasn't going to help me get any bigger, stronger or leaner, and I was getting frustrated.

During this time, a competitive bodybuilder would have been around 250 or 275 pounds in the off season and around 220 pounds when he was "competition ready" – or, the way he actually looked when he was on stage. My own weight had stagnated at around 200 pounds and, even though I was religiously crushing the iron four or five times a week, my strength just wasn't increasing.

Surely there **had** to be another way. Surely there **had** to be some information I just didn't have – something that would act as the missing pieces to this incomplete puzzle I had.

How was I supposed to pack on slabs and slabs of rock hard muscle? Bigger muscles were the keys to success, right?

Sadly, the more I learned, the more I realized “science” didn't have the answers to my questions. I gave up on textbook definitions of being “in shape” and what having an “athletic-looking” body really meant. I fully expected to weigh at least 250 pounds. I wanted big ass arms and a barrel chest and to be able to lift more weight with *one arm* than the biggest guy in the gym could lift with *two*.

But, a dark cloud soon formed over me. I started to believe it just wasn't possible.

Or, more precisely, it just wasn't possible without drugs.

Eventually, I decided to go grassroots. I started talking to all the biggest and strongest guys at my gym to find out how they did it. You can imagine how frustrated I got when they threw all the usual generic answers at me: “*Do lots of heavy lifting.*” “*Take your supplements.*” “*Power lift.*” “*Eat tons of calories.*” “*Time your meals.*” “*High protein is a must.*”

Yadda yadda yadda.

I was already doing all of that and I still wasn't gaining any more muscle.

There **had** to be another answer.

I kept asking questions (well, more like conducting interrogations, now that I think about it), but I never got answers that were new to me. All the information was the same stuff I'd read in popular magazines. I did all those workouts, and still the other guys were bigger and way stronger than I was.

I'm a smart guy. *What was I missing?*

Finally, after I'd built up enough rapport with one of the really big guys – “Bob” – he revealed to me the juicy information I knew was out there.

The True Secret to his success.

It was...

...anabolic steroids.

If I told you this was when my naïve world came crashing down around me, it would be an understatement.

There I was, following all the workout routines I'd read about in magazines, spending hundreds of dollars on all the supplements, following all the diet advice and getting *none* of the results I wanted, and "Bob" tells me that the real and *only* way to pack on bodybuilder-sized mass was to use steroids.

I'd been a fool, but I finally had the real answer. Everything clicked into place.

Even later on, I realized how many professional and Olympic athletes, bodybuilders and movie stars were on drugs, and it was clear to me I'd been duped just like everyone else into thinking the body and shape of many of the people we all look up to are totally attainable without drugs.

Think about it: Alex Rodriguez, Barry Bonds, Mark McGuire, Rafael Palmeiro, Roger Clemens – they've all been busted or implicated with steroid use. Arnold Schwarzenegger has admitted to using steroids, Sylvester Stallone has been caught with growth hormones and testosterone and Hulk Hogan has been charged with steroid use. Even *Bigger Stronger Faster\**, the documentary about steroids, revealed how much deeper the steroid rabbit hole really goes with bodybuilders.

As a matter of fact, almost every figure that I'd ever idolized when I was younger has been on steroids at some point during his career.

**BURN!**

I soon began consuming all the information and research I could find about steroids: which ones to take, what was fake and what was real, how much they cost, how they worked, the side effects, the physiological changes in the body after using them, how to buy needles – all of it.

I was basically doing all the background research in order to make an informed decision about using steroids and, after about a year of this, I decided to use steroids for the first time.

I figured if they were good enough for all of my sports and celebrity idols, they were good enough for me, too.

Of course, I was way too afraid of needles to actually ever inject myself with anything, so the first time I tried steroids I did a five-week cycle of an oral steroid called dianabol, and, WOW.

I gained size and strength – FAST.

The amount of muscle and strength I gained in those five weeks matched all the strength and muscle I gained during the previous four years. It was *ridiculous*. My bodyweight shot up from 200 pounds to 220 pounds, and I was constantly growing. It felt like a muscle pump that *never went away*. My shirts became tighter around the arms and shoulders, and I maintained a lead body fat percentage, too. This truly was the answer to getting big, staying lean and gaining immense strength all at the same time.

Each new day at the gym seemed to bring the ability to lift more weight – it was as if I had no limit. If I lifted 250 pounds one day, I would lift 275 pounds the next week and then 300 pounds the week after that. The amount of strength I gained – and kept gaining – didn't make any sense. I felt like I was wearing an invisible suit of armor, or like I had a permanent spotter who lifted the bar along with me with each rep.

Once, when I was trying a max on bench press that I'd never attempted before, I told my spotter to stay close to the bar just in case I couldn't lift it. I did one rep and immediately racked the weight. Thinking my training partner was to blame (not thank) for my instant success, I yelled at him and told him not to lift the bar for me. He told me that he didn't touch it – that it was *all me*. I didn't

believe him, so I told him not to even spot me when I tried again. Sure enough, I easily did five more reps. It was all me – well, me and my supercharged drugs.

When I didn't even believe my own body lifted the weight was when I realized how powerful steroids truly are.

I dabbled with steroids off and on for the next three years. I'd do a six- or eight-week cycle two or three times a year, and my body weight actually managed to go all the way up to 257 pounds. I didn't realize it at the time, but I'd gotten pretty big and very bulky.

And, of course, it still wasn't enough to satisfy me.

I remember my only thought when I hit 220 pounds: *Now I gotta hit 230 pounds*. When I hit 230 pounds, I was dead set on reaching 240 pounds. And once I was over 250 pounds? I *still* wasn't satisfied. My next goal was 275 pounds.

*What the hell was I thinking?*

You can't gain social dominance and life success through sheer size – this was a futile attempt, and I know that now. Of course, that sure as hell didn't stop me from trying then.

Man, was I missing the boat.

As I grew increasingly larger, another interesting thing happened: I finally became one of the “big guys” at the gym. I was a regular steroid user, and so all the other users openly talked to me about it. Within six months of using I knew every other guy in town who was using. It was a fraternity of sorts; everyone was buying from the same few sources, so I got to know who everyone was really quickly.

I also became very good at picking out who was and who wasn't using steroids. The amount of muscle and strength a guy could gain was a dead giveaway. I knew because, well, I'd been there. I'd experienced it firsthand. I knew how slow the process was without drugs, and there was no fooling me anymore. Steroids are similar to any other drug; nonusers might have a difficult time spotting a user, but users can pick each other out from a mile away.

Of course, a person who uses steroids usually has a list of people he will tell about his use. This list usually includes close friends and workout buddies, and those are the two groups of people I was honest with. They were the guys I thought I could trust with the information – the guys who didn't judge because they were either on steroids themselves or were very curious about steroids and wanted a to hear a firsthand account.

Everyone else – like acquaintances or people I felt wouldn't understand, wouldn't handle it tactfully, or would assume I was on the same page as a heroin addict – stayed in the dark. Oh, I answered their questions, but I fed them the same lines the fitness magazines fed me: "It's the amino acids, the protein, the supplements, the amazing workouts."

Sure it was.

Fortunately, most people in the "Everyone Else" group never pressed the issue. Why would they? They didn't know much about steroids, having never used them, and so they had no reason to doubt me and no proof that I was lying.

I never considered it at the time, but another reason why Everyone Else didn't bug me about it could have been *my size*. Remember how I wanted to start doing some intimidating of my own? Well, on more than one occasion people told me I was becoming an intimidating person.

One day, while I was at the gym working out with all the "big guys," two smaller guys were working out beside me with what I thought were pathetically light weights. I knew they were quite dedicated to working out because I saw them at the gym every day; however, I also thought their attempts at building muscle were futile. They weren't using any drugs, and no matter how badly they

wanted to be big like me, I knew they weren't going to be able to do it without drugs. In my head, it was so clear: Either get on the program, get some drugs, and actually become big, or get out of the gym and stop pretending.

This was volatile thinking, I know, and I was becoming rather arrogant...but, I digress.

Anyway, there I was – all 250 pounds of me – working out next to these 170-pound beanpoles. They were using a stopwatch to time their sets, and the damn thing went off every sixty seconds. The stopwatch's beeping irritated me so much that I stopped my workout, walked over to them and told them point blank, "If I hear that stopwatch go off one more time, I'm going to break the watch then throw both of you out of the gym."

Needless to say, I never heard the stopwatch again.

Who the hell was I to do that to a couple of unsuspecting guys who were just trying to work out?

Looking back, I now realize why that stopwatch bothered me so much. I became irritated with the watch because I knew those guys had been misled to believe timing their rest periods was the "magic missing ingredient" they needed

to finally get big. They honestly believed that stupid little watch was going to help them get big.

But I knew better.

And those two guys were living, breathing reminders of my former naivety.

It irritated me because, just a few short years earlier, / was the kid with the stopwatch. I never wanted to be that naïve kid again, so I couldn't stand seeing someone else being so naïve. I guess, in my own way, I was telling them to stop being so naïve about working out and getting big. After all, I was proof of how to get big, and that formula sure as hell didn't involve a stopwatch in the gym. Of all the things I used in my quest to get big, steroids were the only thing that delivered on the promise to make me bigger.

At that moment, I had a revelation: Being a "big guy" put me in a position of ultimate authority on how to build muscle and get ripped.

I was almost 260 pounds and I could practically bench press a small car. Who was going to argue with me? If a smaller, weaker guy wanted to get bigger and stronger, who was he going to believe – me, or some other guy who was just as small and weak? Everyone assumed the biggest and most ripped guys had all

the answers to questions about working out and nutrition, so it didn't matter how much education I had; all that mattered was what I looked like.

As far as I was concerned, the joke was on everyone else now. The only answer anyone ever really needed was how to find and buy good drugs.

My experience with steroids changed my perception of the bodybuilding, fitness and nutrition industries forever. Now when I read magazines, I can see the articles for what they are: mindless jumbles of useless information trying to take credit for the results only drugs can provide. Yet, because the people reading the magazines don't use drugs, they assume all the exercise and nutrition advice the magazines offered would somehow give them the bodies like the one of the bodybuilder or fitness competitor on the cover.

What a joke.

The only information I needed was the current price of the drugs I wanted to use, and it was blatantly obvious to me the culture of bodybuilding was actually leading the trends of the entire fitness, nutrition and weight loss industries.

## Chapter 2

# **How the Bizarre Bodybuilding Subculture Became the Leader of the Diet and Fitness Industries (Or, Why Supplements and Secret Workout Routines Will Never Make You Big or Ripped)**

If I asked you to tell me who's leading the diet and fitness industries, you might say it's a group of health scientists or the scientific community as a whole. Maybe you'd tell me it's a medical association or two, or the government's various health departments.

Or, perhaps you'd suggest it's the folks who can really profit from leading such industries, like companies that provide exercise equipment, the nationwide fitness club chains or the food and supplement industries.

You might even tell me a combination of all these groups is driving our opinions and the information we get regarding diet and fitness.

However, if you tell me you think *any one* of these is the right answer, I'd tell you *you're wrong*.

Each of these groups is following a much more obscure and strange subculture, and that subculture is comprised of groups of bodybuilders and fitness competitors. These people truly are the freaks of the diet and fitness industries. Their goals are to build superhuman amounts of muscle and drive their body fat percentages as low as possible – usually at the expense of their social lives, bank accounts and health.

From my experience, mainstream trends always follow the lead of some fringe group of eccentrics, and believe it or not, this particular group of bizarre people includes the trendsetters of the entire diet and fitness industries.

In the athletic and bodybuilding industries, the now infamous Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative (BALCO) was just such a trendsetter. BALCO was far ahead of the scientific community and the Olympic Committee. The fact that BALCO had multiple athletes using the company's designer drugs and neither the Olympic Committee nor any of the professional sports organizations had any idea how to even test for BALCO's drugs is evidence of that.

Olympic sprinter Marion Jones is just one example of a BALCO drug user. She earned each of her medals while using BALCO drugs. She finally confessed to using the drugs and suffered public disgrace when the Olympic Committee asked her to return the five gold medals she'd won while using drugs.

(This is an excellent example of what cheating and lying can do to a sports career. Hopefully you didn't need that reminder.)

As long as she didn't get caught, Jones was a hero among mortals and capable of world-class feats of human physical achievement. Trainers used her beautifully defined body as proof that all women should use sprinting in their workout programs if they wanted to be truly ripped. (Clearly, many people miss the big picture)

Then, the minute Jones was exposed as a drug user she became a symbol of shame and instantly all of her achievements became meaningless. (Of course, trainers still tell women they need to sprint to get really lean!)

The BALCO fiasco is a clear example of a fringe group of people who become the trendsetters and leaders of an entire industry. We now know that other Olympic athletes admitted to using BALCO's drugs, and the list of popular athletes who used BALCO's drugs, such as potential Hall-of-Famer Barry Bonds, is much longer.

Younger athletes undoubtedly aspired to be like Jones, Bonds and dozens of other BALCO athletes. These people were trendsetters and naturally other athletes wanted to mimic their diets and workout routines.

But, without the drugs, all their work was futile.

A fringe group leading the masses isn't an idea unique to the diet and fitness industries. For example, the clothes you see on display at department stores are typically less extreme versions of the clothes models wear at fashion shows. Similarly, the cars and trucks you can purchase at your local car lot are always less excessive versions of the models displayed at auto shows.

These fringe groups also span other subcultures. People see skateboarders as symbols of anti-establishment, and certain age groups consider their clothes "cool" and ideal for displaying individuality and rebelling against the norm. Likewise, a few drug dealers wearing Timberland boots (simply because the boots kept their feet warm while they sold drugs in cold, wet streets) created a fashion trend through the hip-hop culture.

In the diet and fitness industries, bodybuilders and fitness competitors make up a powerful fringe group. They are the extreme "models" that set the trend for the rest of the population. The diet and fitness industries are just like the fashion and auto industries in that the "models" you see in magazines and at shows are rarely ever the ones you can *actually get*.

Think about it like this: The clothes on the runways and the cars at the auto shows are never mass-produced. Without a great deal of help, you're just not going to get your hands on any of it. And, as far as bodybuilding goes, the same is true for the diet and fitness industries. You're very rarely ever going to get the real answer to how the bodybuilders get in the shape they're in.

Unfortunately, the mainstream masses and media view bodybuilders and fitness models as being on the leading edge of what's possible and assume whatever they do will work for all people. There's also a false assumption that bodybuilding is a healthy lifestyle. Let me make it very clear that what is "healthy" is not synonymous with what makes your muscles massive or your body fat nonexistent. Body builders and fitness models go to extremes that are, in fact, the furthest you can get from what is actually healthy.

Bodybuilding and fitness competitors do whatever it takes to get into cover model shape. Yes, this includes taking steroids, but it also includes behaviors like:

- Taking recreational drugs.
- Using drugs designed for animals.
- Developing antisocial, obsessive-compulsive eating habits.

These are the “models” that set the trends in the diet and fitness industries? Regardless of the effects their lifestyles have on health? Yup.

Keep in mind diet and exercise fads usually hit the mainstream market five or ten years after the bodybuilding industry adopts them. For example, the current high protein fad we see today started with bodybuilders well over fifteen years ago, when they mixed powdered milk and raw eggs in blenders. When the supplement industry finally clued in, it began marketing premixed and flavored protein powder and now it’s virtually impossible to find a health food product without some sort of protein claim attached to it.

The interesting part about all this? These industries completely leave the opinion of the scientific community out of the equation. The health food and supplement industries are steering the ship while the true scientific answers about diet and exercise have little to do with what you’re hearing and reading.

When it comes to diet and exercise, there is solid scientific research that clearly explains what does and doesn’t work. The take-home message from scientific evidence surrounding diet and exercise isn’t that exciting, sexy or controversial; it’s actually pretty mundane and can be summed up in two sentences:

1. In order to lose weight, you must consume fewer calories than you burn.

2. In order to build muscle, you must do progressive resistance training workouts.

Yep, that's it.

Obviously there are a few more details about how both work, but these are the basic answers the scientific community arrived at decades ago – and they still stand today. You've probably heard these answers more than once, but because they're not glamorous, marketable answers and do nothing to provide interesting reading in popular magazines, they might not have a lot of staying power.

But why?

It seems like people hang on so tightly to the idea of individuality that they can't accept a simple generic answer to something like health and fitness. So, they search and search for that one special answer that's *just for them* when, in reality, the answer for getting in shape is *the same for everyone*: Eat sensibly and exercise.

Another factor that's making people's searches even more hopeless is the fact that the body image many people are chasing simply isn't attainable without drugs – and this is the giant pink elephant in the room of every fitness magazine photo shoot and every gym.



## Chapter 3

### The Giant Pink Elephant

When it comes to bodybuilding, there's a giant pink elephant in the middle of every weight room and on the cover of every muscle magazine that no one will talk about.

That elephant is **drugs**.

Bodybuilders – both male and female – take drugs in an effort to build bigger muscles and burn fat, and the list of drugs one needs to take in order to truly succeed at bodybuilding – in order to build the level of muscle necessary to become massive, even by bodybuilders standards – is staggering.

Typically, getting involved with these drugs includes using:

- A variety of oral and injectable testosterone.
- Anti-estrogens to stop the conversion of testosterone into estrogen.
- Estrogen blockers to stop estrogen from functioning in the body altogether.
- Diuretics to eliminate excess water weight (the misuse of which has directly led to many deaths among competitive bodybuilders due to sudden heart failure).

- Drugs to make the body produce more testosterone after finishing a “cycle.”
- Powerful stimulants to help burn fat.
- Recreational drugs that suppress appetite (for some bodybuilders, this means extremely dangerous drugs like cocaine).
- Various drugs common among diabetics, like Growth Hormone and insulin, in order to raise insulin levels.

Nearly every bodybuilder I met while working in the industry – and some you might have seen in popular magazines – has used some combination of testosterone and fat-burning drugs.

Of course, you won’t hear or read much about this in magazines and on websites because this knowledge would make all the nutrition and exercise advice – as well as all the money companies pay to advertise in these magazines – pretty pointless.

Think about it: If you found out the models and other spokespeople who promote any nutrition or exercise product used steroids, how would you ever know if their success came from the nutrition product, diet, and exercise, or if it came from using steroids?

The answer is simple: You wouldn’t.

Did you know steroids are *so potent* that a man who takes steroids but doesn't work out at all will build more muscle than a man who works out religiously without steroids [Bhasin S., 1996]? It's true. Clinical research shows us that men can take testosterone and *not work out* but still gain more muscle mass than a man who *works out hard*, for the same amount of time, without steroids.

The powerful effects steroids have, combined with the fact that *nobody* will ever admit to using them, is what allows diet and nutrition fads to keep surfacing. The truth is the diet and fitness industries *need* the secrecy and lies that surround steroids; they're convenient and allow them to continue producing new diet and exercise fads.

Yet, anyone who's used steroids will tell you it's the drugs that do all the work – not some fancy workout or nutrition program.

Claims like "Gain 11 Pounds of Muscle in Just 2 Weeks!" and "Lose 20 Pounds in 10 Days!" will jump out at you every time you browse the headlines of any popular fitness magazine. Yet, if it were honestly that easy to gain muscle and lose weight, do you really think there would be any overweight people left in America? Don't you think everyone would be in perfect shape by now?

Don't you think bodybuilders and fitness competitors would stop spending thousands of dollars on black market drugs *if they didn't have to?*

I know now that, with steroids, you can follow any workout and nutrition program you like and still gain muscle, and with enough stimulants burning fat and dieting aren't too difficult. Just as there are professional bodybuilders who advocate doing only one or two sets of a particular exercise per muscle group, there are also bodybuilders who do ten times these numbers. Both groups will experience basically the same results across the board, and it all comes down to the drugs.

Some drugs, like diuretics and stimulants, go beyond just helping you build muscle to also helping you lose your appetite and burn off nearly all your body fat.

Fitness magazines clearly pack a lot of power. They're full of flashy advertisements for the latest products and glossy photos of models with the kind of bodies you dream of, and so you, as the reader, assume the "expert" information they provide will help you build that kind of body – never realizing it's a huge web of lies...

As long as bodybuilders never admit they use drugs, the fitness and nutrition industries can always take the credit. They can continue claiming their new diets, supplements and food or exercise programs are what the bodybuilders and fitness models use to achieve such desirable size and strength and low bodyfat levels.

They can continue telling you these methods *will do the same for you*.

But let's not forget someone is always paying these "models" to give credit to the diets, supplements and workout routines. Let's not overlook that these "models" – as well as the products and companies they endorse and the magazines that feature their images – are all in on the gig. You as the reader are the only person who's never let in on the secret.

To put it bluntly, the joke is on *you*.

It's been going on for years, and will continue going on until someone finally admits the look of a bodybuilder and even many of the mainstream fitness model guys just isn't possible without drugs.

Take a look at these statements:

- Eating all of your daily calories in one meal per day, rather than in three meals spread out throughout the day, makes NO difference in your ability to lose weight or gain muscle [Stote, 2007].
- Eating massive amounts of protein does not produce more muscle or help you lose more weight beyond the effects of a regular weight training workout. [Burke 2001, Hoffman 2006]

Research proves these statements *true*; however, a quick browse through any popular fitness magazine will have you believing quite the opposite.

And, sadly, the cycle will continue. Many people will try all the techniques they read about in magazines. They'll keep hoping that soon – maybe the next one they read about, maybe the one after that – they will find the one technique that does the trick.

They never will, though, because *it doesn't exist*.

Until they realize they're chasing a body that's only attainable through drugs, creative photography and airbrushing.

The bodybuilding and fitness industries are selling a lie. They're selling a look that's deceptive. It's a look you can't obtain without drugs. One you can't achieve without noticing – and embracing – the giant pink elephant.

Of course, it's also the **wrong** look if you are at all concerned about also achieving greater levels of social, personal, financial and overall life success.

## Chapter 4

### Still Chasing the Wrong Look: The Beginning of My Career in the Supplement Industry

After I earned my degree in human kinetics and nutrition, I started working for one of the world's largest sports and supplement companies. I thought this experience would give me new answers about building muscle.

Maybe there was a supplement that I could use to replace the steroids? Maybe the "big guys" only used steroids because supplements were too expensive?

This, however, was just another one of my naïve assumptions and was quickly proven wrong.

After almost a year of working in the supplement industry, I realized nearly every bodybuilder and fitness model I met used steroids. I found myself even deeper down the rabbit hole and wondered if *anyone* could trust *anything* in the popular media about body image and what was attainable without drugs?

As you can probably imagine, this was pretty frustrating. At this point, I knew everything there was to know about all the supplements on the diet and

fitness markets, as well as all the steroids on the black market. For God's sake, I worked in the research department of a sports supplement company! If I didn't know what it took to build muscle and get ripped, nobody did.

The thing is, I *did* know what worked and didn't work. I just didn't want to accept the answer was *drugs*.

No matter how naïve I felt when I first learned about steroids, I couldn't shake the feeling that there was more information...something I was missing...

I mean, the answer couldn't really be that everyone who is big and muscular is on drugs...could it?

So, I left the supplement industry and went back to school to search for another way. I thought a master's degree in nutrition would help me learn more about how the body works and find out about other ways to build muscle and burn fat without using drugs.

In other words, I thought it would give me the final answer I was looking for.

It was also during this time that I realized I had to stop using steroids. I knew it was a never-ending cycle of use and eventual abuse, and I didn't want to sustain any long-term side effects.

And I won't lie: When I stopped using steroids, I stood by helplessly as my bodyweight and strength dropped over the course of the next twelve months. No matter how hard I trained, my muscles shrank and I actually became weaker. I worked out just as long and just as hard as I did before, but I couldn't gain an ounce. Weights I could push the previous week became too heavy to manage the following week. The muscles, the strength, my "big guy" status – it all slowly drifted away until I was back to the size and strength I had before I started using steroids.

It was a sobering experience, to say the least.

(Little did I know, the look of my body actually *improved* as it shrank, and this is one of the keys to social dominance. But, more on that later.)

After ten years of weight training, undergraduate and master's degrees in human kinetics and nutrition and a year of working with the biggest sports supplement company in the world, I *still* didn't have the answers I was looking for.

I started thinking that perhaps the answer didn't exist yet because nobody in the scientific community had asked the right question.

I had renewed vigor at this point, so I promptly prepared my application to the University of Florida. I wanted to obtain a PhD in exercise science. If the answer didn't exist, I was going to take it upon myself to do the research and bring both the right question *and* the right answer to the world.

Off I went to sunny Florida to start working on my PhD and answer the question about how much muscle we can really build naturally without drugs once and for all.

*Would you believe I came up empty again?*

After a year at Florida, I realized I simply wasn't going to get the funding for the research required to get my answer. Even though this was the one question that was virtually *running my life*, it simply wasn't a question any granting agency felt was worth the cost.

Of course, throughout it all, I didn't realize I was still asking the *wrong question*.

During my research, I met several medical doctors and people with PhDs whom many considered “experts” in building muscle mass. Sure, they all had their theories – from nutrient timing to workout percentages – but when it came to explaining how a person could get really, *really* big, they were clueless.

You see, in scientific research studies, gaining eight to ten pounds of muscle is considered a really good result. In order to see this effect, most researchers study people who’ve never lifted weights before. This is what I call “stacking the proverbial research deck,” and it’s also why *everyone* seemed to be an expert at turning a 170-pound, eighteen-year-old kid who’d never trained before into a 180-pound “success story,” but *no one* knew how to turn a 170-pound man into a 250-pound success story!

If you’ve ever lifted weights, you probably remember how easy it was in the beginning. Beginners generally gain up to ten pounds of muscle in the first few months no matter what he does. I was interested in the muscle that comes *after* these first ten pounds.

Experienced bodybuilders and weight lifters know how hard it is to put on even a few ounces of muscle a year. This is the barrier I wanted to breach; this is the slow progress I didn’t want to accept.

I wanted to gain muscle the way I did when I first started working out, *but I didn't want to use drugs to do it.*

Obviously, I was becoming obsessed with finding the answer. I still wanted to be bigger – a lot bigger – and my obsession started to take its toll on my personal relationships, my social life and even my finances. I mean, I left a well-paying job to go back to living like a broke student just to find another way to build muscle!

Needless to say, I wasn't making rational decisions anymore; I only focused on finding the answer to the one question I should have never been asking.

And, as if that weren't bad enough, I was still looking for a way to bring about all of my success through the one thing that worked for me in high school. I still didn't know about the other aspects of social attraction and influence beyond just muscle size – and clearly didn't realize I was sorely lacking in them.

Discouraged once again, I left Florida and went to work for a new start-up company in the sports supplement industry. Maybe academia was the wrong place to get the answer? Perhaps science just moved too slow for this kind of information and the supplement industry was where I needed to be again? After

all, I'd been away for a while – there could have been some new innovations in supplements I'd missed out on.

Yet, after spending another three years developing supplements, I was no further ahead with my quest for answers and, at this point, I was becoming depressed. Did I really have the answer ten years ago when I tried steroids? Was that really all there was to it – no magic, just drugs? And, if steroids really were the answer, why was I so unsatisfied with my results? I became really big and really strong, but none of it ever satisfied me.

I was at a dead end, and I really didn't know where else to look.

Then, as if by some brilliant stroke of fate, I got the phone call that totally changed the way I think about bodybuilding, working out, how much we can really change the shapes of our bodies without drugs and – most importantly – how much we *should* change the shapes of our bodies.

As I mentioned before, most researchers only study beginners who've never lifted weights. This is useless information for people like me; therefore, one of the major problems I kept running into with my search for the real answer about changing my body and how much muscle we can really build was a lack of research on people who workout regularly.

The other major problem was steroid use.

There's no way to conduct accurate research on bodybuilders who take illegal drugs, therefore there's no good published science on how much muscle these guys can gain with or without steroids. Likewise, there's no good research that tracks people from the first day they started working out – that would take decades, and it's pretty impracticable to try to accurately track people for that long.

These two factors – the drugs and the time – make it almost impossible to determine what long-term effects working out will have on a body. The only “easy” way to figure it out is to turn yourself into a guinea pig and conduct your own personal experiments.

Which is exactly what I'd been doing all these years.

Back to the phone call: It came from a colleague of mine who had exclusive access to a large group of men, including bodybuilders. Some of the men were using steroids, and some were clean and free of steroids. He also had access to state-of-the-art body composition measurement tools and could give me accurate data on how much muscle and fat each bodybuilder had on his body.

This was when my world was completely *rocked*.

My colleague told me that based on their heights, the guys who were clean (no drugs) had roughly the same amount of muscle on them – no matter what the scales reported. In other words, two guys who were each six feet tall and who both regularly worked out would have the same amount of muscle, no matter how much heavier or lighter each guy was. There were guys who weighed 250 pounds and guys who weighed 195 pounds and they had almost identical amounts of lean muscle. The rest of the bodyweight on the bigger guy was fat!

I thought this was impossible, but the data was right there. There was simply no such thing as “bulking up” without steroids – all the extra weight was just fat. This left me feeling betrayed somehow.

But there’s more.

All the guys who were using steroids had more lean muscle mass than the clean guys, but – and this really shocked me – the difference between steroid users and nonusers was between just twenty and twenty-five pounds of total lean muscle mass.

In other words, the amount of muscle I gained before I tried steroids was exactly the amount I should have *expected* to gain. The extra muscle I wanted to

gain beyond that was *only attainable with drugs* – I now had hard data and proof of that.

My colleague and I realized that, without drugs, people simply can't gain as much muscle as popular fitness magazines suggest. The only way to build massive amounts of muscle is to use drugs, and any guy who tries to build these massive amounts of muscle without drugs will just end up overeating and making himself fat. Sure, he might weigh as much as the steroid-induced muscle monster next to him at the gym, but the natural guy will just be carrying around more fat.

This information, combined with my past failures to find the answer in academia and the diet and fitness industries, made me feel like a fool. I really did have the answer ten years ago when I tried steroids. I had already gained most of the muscle my body could handle naturally for my height and frame and I could only attain every extra pound after that with drugs.

...and I knew it. I just didn't want to admit it.

Once regular workouts no longer produce an increase in growth, you've pretty much reached your genetic limit. From then on the gains come painfully slow until there's simply no more size or strength you can squeeze out of your natural body. If you wanted more, you'd have to quit your job and become an

Olympic athlete who does nothing but work out all day with a team of experts hired for the sole purpose of making your workouts successful.

The true answer was that I had a totally unrealistic goal that was never going to be something I could achieve naturally.

And, man. Did that ever *suck*.

However, it led me to an even bigger question: Why the hell did I want to be so big anyway? I never wanted to compete in bodybuilding and I didn't play professional sports. I sure as hell wasn't going to make any money simply by being bigger than everyone else.

Of course, there were more curious questions (*Why do bodybuilders follow such a bizarre path, fully knowing that their goals are only attainable through drugs? Was there a good reason why our bodies stop us from gaining massive amounts of muscle?*) and more personal questions (*Why was I unsatisfied with the amount of muscle I gained naturally? Did I just waste the last fourteen years of my life? Was I just running around in circles chasing my own tail? How could I have been so wrong?*)

I worked for a bodybuilding supplement company. I had a master's degree in human kinetics and nutrition. And it seemed like all I really had were new questions.

Let's quickly review the struggles I'd faced, and conclusions and discoveries I'd made, thus far:

- After gaining quite a bit of muscle, I ran into a roadblock and couldn't find a way to build any more muscle without drugs.
- All my sports heroes were on steroids.
- Every bodybuilder I saw in magazines was on steroids.
- Everybody I considered big and strong at the gym was on steroids.
- Thanks to very little research funding in this area, research on this topic is scarce at best and not moving forward much at all.
- A master's degree and more than six years developing bodybuilding supplements provided me with no answers about how to really build massive muscles without drugs.
- Even with steroids, I was never going to be satisfied with how big I grew.

This last point bothered me the most. Regardless of how big I became, I was never big enough.

Then it dawned on me...

If bigger wasn't the answer, and if there are limits regarding the amount of muscle I can build, then I needed to focus on building the best body possible within these limits!

This is when I changed my focus of research from nutrition and exercise science to:

- Body proportions.
- Body shape and form.
- Physical attraction.
- Anatomy.
- Evolution.
- Anthropology.
- The look of a hero.
- Why the shape of your body has profound effects on your relationships, career, and social life.

In essence, I started over from scratch – as if I were a blank slate that had never been into bodybuilding and never stepped foot in a gym.

When I started looking into all of these new areas of research, I finally realized that my drive to be physically bigger was a misplaced drive to be successful. In reality, I was just trying to “big” my way to a successful life. I never actually cared about being big just for its own sake; I assumed it was going to bring me things like respect, social dominance, more women, a better career, a better social life, more money and ultimately more success.

Of course, this way of thinking shouldn't have surprised me: The desire to be successful is almost universal in human nature; however, the way to get there is unknown to most people.

One aspect of success that men do understand, at a subconscious level, is *pure physical dominance*.

Think about it: If you're not smarter, richer, more resourceful, better looking, in a higher social status, or if you don't have access to more wealth and people than the next guy, you can at least be bigger than him.

Having that mentality was a mistake I was making all along and is at the root of my Adonis complex. The only answer I could come up with to any of my failures or lack of success was simply not being big enough yet. But as I now realize...

*Bigger wasn't always better.*

Sure, bigger might be better in a one-on-one, winner-takes-all confrontation, or in a fight between a couple of eight-year-old kids on the playground, but these situations just don't happen in modern society and they're surely not how you become successful in your career, with your finances or in your relationships. You just can't physically intimidate your way to the top, and what worked for me in high school and during my early college years wasn't going to work for me for the rest of my life.

*(the feeling men have about physical dominance will never go away because at the highest levels of societal organization we still see that the biggest guy with biggest stick still wins – to prove my point you need look no further than the dominant super power nations on earth and the size of their military armies. Military might is still based on physical dominance.)*

It took a lot for me to realize this, to the tune of spending fourteen years haunting college libraries and academic labs, incessantly researching diets, exercise, drugs and supplements; earning undergraduate and master's degrees in human kinetics and nutrition; becoming a certified strength and conditioning specialist and coach; directing the product development of leading sport supplement companies; and spending hundreds of hours in the gym every year for almost two decades, some time of which included steroid use.

But, finally I realized I'd been asking the wrong questions.

I didn't need to know how to get bigger.

I needed to know what body shape and proportions made the right look – the best look. The look of success. The look of a leading man – a man who gets the girl, the job, and the raise. I needed to know how to get the look of a man who every woman wants, and every man wants to be.

I was asking the wrong questions all along, and yes, it's embarrassing how obvious it was.

The real question I should have been asking was, "What body shape do I need to have a more successful life?" After all, it was always about using my physical form to create success in all areas of my life, including my career, my relationships, my friendships, my social life and my financial situation.

I knew everything about diet, fitness, exercise, supplements and bodybuilding, but I knew nothing about the proportions of a perfect body. My education about body form and body portions, and how they're directly linked to social dominance, relationships, personal brand management, money, success and human nature was just beginning.

My research led me to new areas I'd never considered before. I looked at anatomy, social psychology, anthropology, ancient sculptures, art history, the evolution of sex and human behavior – even mathematics!

The first thing I started looking at, however, was physical attraction research. I know exactly what guys find attractive in women, but I realized that most guys – including myself – really have no clue what women find attractive in *men*.

***...For the rest of the story make sure to pick up the Adonis Effect 2.0 when it goes Live July 21<sup>st</sup> 12:00pm EST...***