



2020

Understanding Health & Fitness Education Series 5b

MUSCLE BUILDING AND STRENGTH BUILDING EXERCISE

How Much Muscle can you Gain?

How much muscle you can gain is much less than what some trainers and supplement companies tout. It is limited to a great degree by your genetics. There are many other factors such as age that you started training. When puberty starts through early adulthood is the time when you will see the most gains in both males and females. The longer you train the greater likelihood of increased muscle mass, but there is a plateau that is reached usually after the first year of training, where gains are much harder thereafter. Through proper training, good nutrition and adequate rest, a person can maximize their genetic potential, but they cannot exceed their genetic limitations. The fat-free mass index (FFMI) which is a calculation similar to the Body Mass Index (BMI) and is determined when we do body composition measures is used to identify the proportion of a person's lean body weight in relation to their height. Studies reveal that a male cannot achieve an FFMI greater than 25-26 without using steroids, while this number is greater than 22 for females. Some researchers suggest male muscle gain in males when training and nutrition is ideal is between 1 to 2 pounds of month and those gains slow after a year in those who are not using performance enhancing drugs. One researcher suggest that it is highly unlikely that a male could put on ore than 18 to 20 pounds of muscle within a year through drug-free means. While women rarely bulk up as dramatically as men because they have lower testosterone levels, some women build muscle more easily than others. The exact amount of muscle a woman gains as in men depends on her age, fitness level, body type, diet and program.

