

## **Twelve Strategies to Increase the Overload on a Muscle**

### **1. Using stricter tighter form**

This the most obvious one, yet most underused: stricter form. You can simply increase the overload on a muscle while using the same weight, by simply doing each rep in stricter, more rigorous form of execution. Of course, this will require greater concentration and sharper focus.

### **2. By performing more reps in each exercise.**

This is easier to accomplish in the novice trainer. As a rule of thumb for every rep you add in the 3 to 12 R.M. , you are looking at a 2 % increase in maximal strength.

### **3. By increasing the load on the bar.**

Duh!, Pretty simple, yet most people take too great of jumps. Please read my video on micro-loads for more details on this concept

### **4. Do the same total amount of reps in less time**

This concept is far from being new. This was done as early as the 1920's when Egypt was a powerhouse in Olympic lifting. It basically entails record how much work you did in x amount of time, and do the same amount of work in less time next workout. I love using this for increasing chin-ups. For example, the athlete has to do 60 chin-ups, takes him 15 sets to do the total 60 reps in 45 minutes. Next workout. He has to do the same number of reps in less time. Which means, he has to crank them in less sets.

**5. By performing more working sets of each exercise.**

This is more for the advanced trainee who wants to break a plateau

**6. By including pauses throughout the concentric range of motion.**

Including pauses not increases neural overload, it can also change recruitment patterns. For example, pausing at 30 degrees of elbow flexion in all form of elbow flexion curls increases the recruitment of the brachialis anticus. A must if your arms need thickness and a boost in strength.

**7. By including pauses throughout the eccentric range of motion.**

This is great for allowing the IGF-1 molecule to exert its anabolic effect. A very common practice amongst successful lifting coaches/athletes like Istvan Javorek and Dmitry Klokov.

**8. By pausing in the most disadvantageous position.**

Pausing in the bottom position of presses and squats, forbids the use of the elastic component of muscles, thus increasing overload. A great strategy to blast plateaus.

**9. By using more neurologically demand exercises.**

For example, dog bone chin-up are far more demanding to the CNS that standard neutral chin-ups.

**10. By doing more exercises for each body-part.**

That works well for hypertrophy, but necessarily a good thing if maximal strength is the goal. It is my least favorite method.

**11. By adding bands or chains in extensor chain movements.**

Bands and chains are particularly useful after the two year mark to further maximal strength development.

**12. Any combination of 1 – 11.**

Initially, strategies 1 to 4 will keep you progressing for the first two years. After this, I would suggest to use one strategy every time you change your program up.

Enjoy the new progress,

Coach Charles Poliquin