

SOP: INABILITY TO GAIN LEAN MUSCLE

BUILD STRENGTH AND MUSCLE IN & AFTER MENOPAUSE



OVERVIEW

- **Definition:** Difficulty building or maintaining lean muscle mass despite consistent exercise.
- **Target Audience:** Women over 40 struggling with muscle maintenance or growth.



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- ✓ Lack of muscle definition despite strength training.
- ✓ Slow recovery or muscle fatigue from workouts.
- ✓ Body fat percent is not changing.



WHAT TO TRY: INITIAL STEPS & PROGRESSION

STEP 1: PROTEIN & SUPPLEMENTS OPTIMIZATION

- **Sub-step 1:** Consume 30g MINIMUM of protein per meal: body wt in lbs/gm per day
- **Sub-step 2:** Prioritize fuel pre and protein post-workout to stop catabolism.
- **Sub-step 3:** Check for Vitamin D, magnesium, consider Creatine.
- **Sub-step 4:** Check total caloric intake meets activity and metabolism needs.

STEP 2: STRENGTH TRAINING ADJUSTMENTS

- **Sub-step 1:** Lift heavy weights 2–3 times weekly with adequate volume.
- **Sub-step 2:** Incorporate progressive overload.

STEP 3: RECOVERY SUPPORT

- **Sub-step 1:** Prioritize sleep.
- **Sub-step 2:** Ensure adequate rest days.
- **Sub-step 3:** Confirm “cardio” optimization (walking and wts, HIIT if appropriate and ditch chronic cardio).



SUGGESTED TOOLS FOR TRACKING

- **Metrics to Monitor:** Body composition, strength progression, total calories and protein per meal and day.
- **Recommended Tools/Apps:** Macros First app, CalorieCalculator.net., InBody Scan/ smart scale, strength logs.

CLIENT COMMUNICATION TIPS

- **Tone & Approach:** Empathetic, non-judgmental, and open.
- **Key Phrases to Use:**
 - *"Muscle is easier to lose than to gain with each decade so what we've done before simply won't work."*
 - *"Lets consider all the habits that contribute to catabolism and anabolism and consider that a way to keep score."*



REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- Flipping 50 blogs, podcasts, Modules: Exercise, Hormones, Stress
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7290663/>
- <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-0383/9/5/1588>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33548486/>



NEXT STEPS FOR PRACTITIONERS

- ☐ Check in daily on protein/calorie/supplement goals.
- ☐ Reevaluate progress every 4 weeks.
- ☐ Refer to a healthcare provider for hormone testing if HRT is a consideration



NOTES SECTION

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