

Ms. Maya Ash,

How did you get into Fitness?

Fitness has been a part of my life since my early childhood. I started with gymnastics at a very early age. Then I got a taste of competitive running in the 3rd grade. After my first PeeWee race in summer camp I knew I was born to run. Hard work and commitment blessed me wonderful opportunities along the way. From competing in the Junior Olympics in grade school to competing at State annually throughout high school. In college there was Nationals and an Olympic Festival invite. My passion and dedication not only rewarded me with many trophies and titles but it allowed me the privilege of competing with the best of the best. Unfortunately, I was forced to hang up the spikes due to chronic injuries. But I was lucky to find a new competitive passion to pour my love for fitness into - Figure Division Bodybuilding.

Are there any rituals you go through before going on stage or a photo shoot?

Rituals? Oh Yes...LOL! I have a little thing I say to myself from the moment I line up until I first walk onto the stage. I discovered I ALWAYS whisper to myself, "Smile! Smile! Smile! And in the name of everything holy and chocolate DON'T TRIP!!" LMBO!!

What's your weekly workout like when you're training for a show?

When I am prepping for a competition work outs consist of moderate to heavy weight training with low rest between sets. This type of training occurs five to six days a week. Two to three of those workouts usually end with 30 to 40 minutes of some type of cardio. The type of cardio, length of time and the number of days depends on how my body fat reduction is progressing.

Which of your workouts do you enjoy the most?

Although I love my plyometric and my sprint workouts deeply, I have to be cautious incorporating those workouts into my training cycle or I run the risk of needing too many days to recover due to my old injuries. This has resulted in me developing a deeper love for my Giant Set workouts, specifically my Back & Butt routine.

If someone wanted to get into fitness what would you say are the three moves that would bring them the biggest gains?

Wow...only three? Okay. Well if someone was looking to enhance their body and wanted to get the most exercise bang for their exercise effort I would say do wide grip pull downs, moderate weight dumbbell deadlifts, and jog or walk on a high incline for at least 20 minutes, three times a week. Why? Wide grip pulldowns will give a guy that sexy V-taper and woman a back taper that will make their waist look MUCH smaller. Moderate weight dumbbell deadlifts will tone the hamstrings but mostly lift and round out the glutes and who doesn't want a tone tight tush! Finally Jogging or briskly walking on a high incline will tone the legs and help burn excess fat.

How important is diet to fitness?

Making healthy meal choices at least 80% of the time is as important to fitness as air is

to breathing! No matter the reason a person starts a fit lifestyle, consuming meals that are clean and balance will not only enhance your performance it will optimize your bodies fat burning capabilities so your body "shows" off all your efforts. So if you are in the gym giving 110% and only seeing minor changes or no changes at all, heed these words - "You cannot out train bad diet".

What do you eat during the off-season?

First, I don't believe in an "off-season". When I was an elite track and field sprinter my conditioning coach trained me to understand that you are either competing or you are improving. So during my "Growth & Improvement" Season I allow myself to enjoy my favorite naughty foods and snacks items three to four times a week, but in moderation. Otherwise I mainly stay with a healthy balance of carbs, protein and healthy fats in every meal.

What supplements do you use?

The following are supplements I use year around on a daily basis. Due to my busy lifestyle and the intensity of my workouts sometimes my body needs a little support to prevent nutrient deficiencies and help the body to keep functioning optimally.

First thing in the morning:

Multivitamin
Fish Oil
Pyruvate Calcium
Vitamin B Complex
Black Pepper Extract
Fulvic Acid
Dandelion Root

Before/After Workouts:

Whey Protein Isolate
Glutamine
BCAA

Lunch Time

Fish Oil
Pyruvate Calcium
Dandelion Root Tea

Before Bed

Black Pepper Extract
Fulvic Acid
Casein Protein

Do you need to take supplements if you want a fit physique?

You really don't need to take supplements to attain a fit physique. If you lead an active lifestyle, have a healthy balanced eating regime and get adequate amounts of rest you

can develop a fit physique. However the thing to remember is that everybody's "body" is different. The intensity of your activity, your lifestyle and your state of health will play a role in whether you need a little support to prevent nutrient deficiencies and help the body to keep functioning optimally.