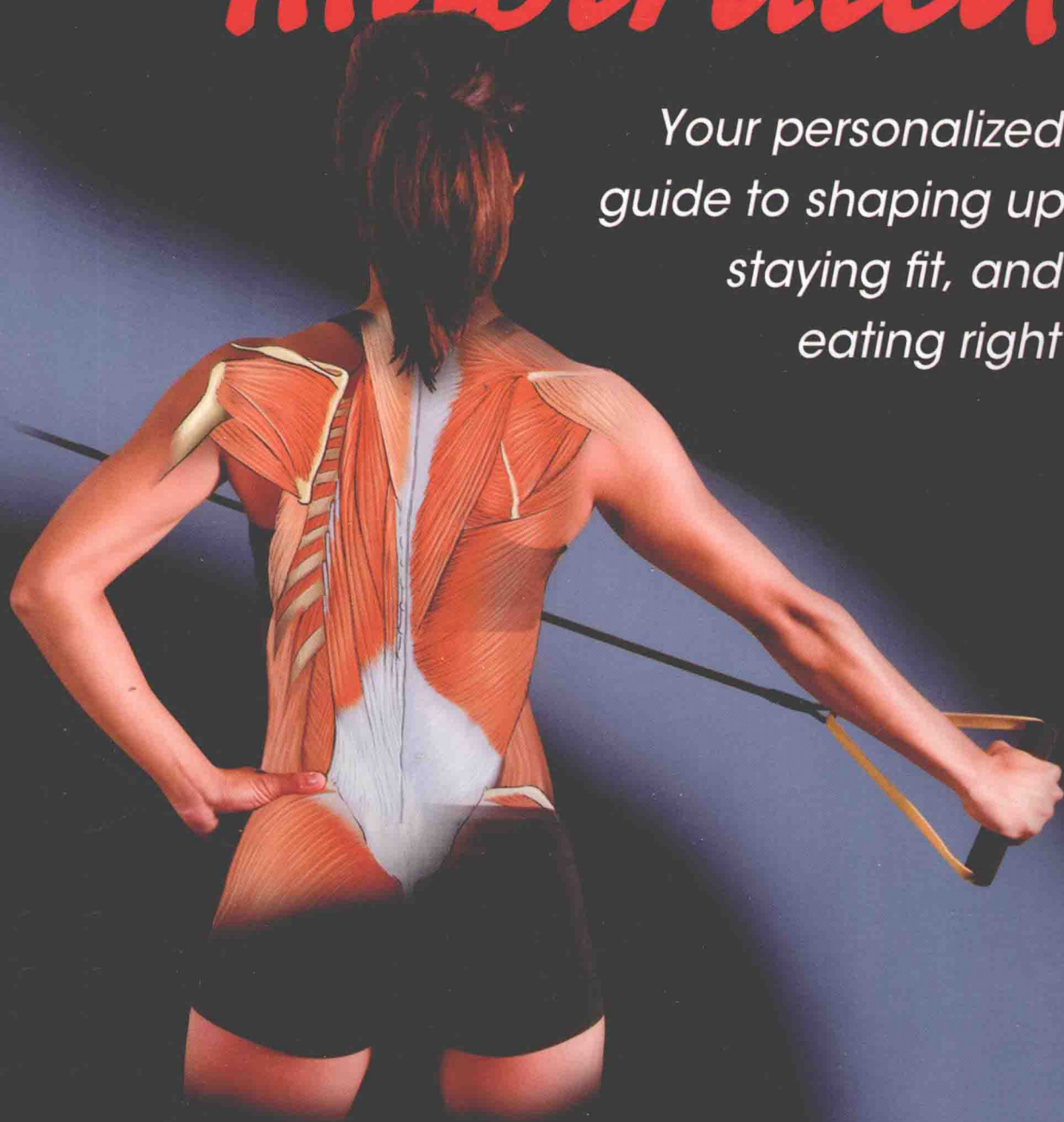


Fitness

Illustrated

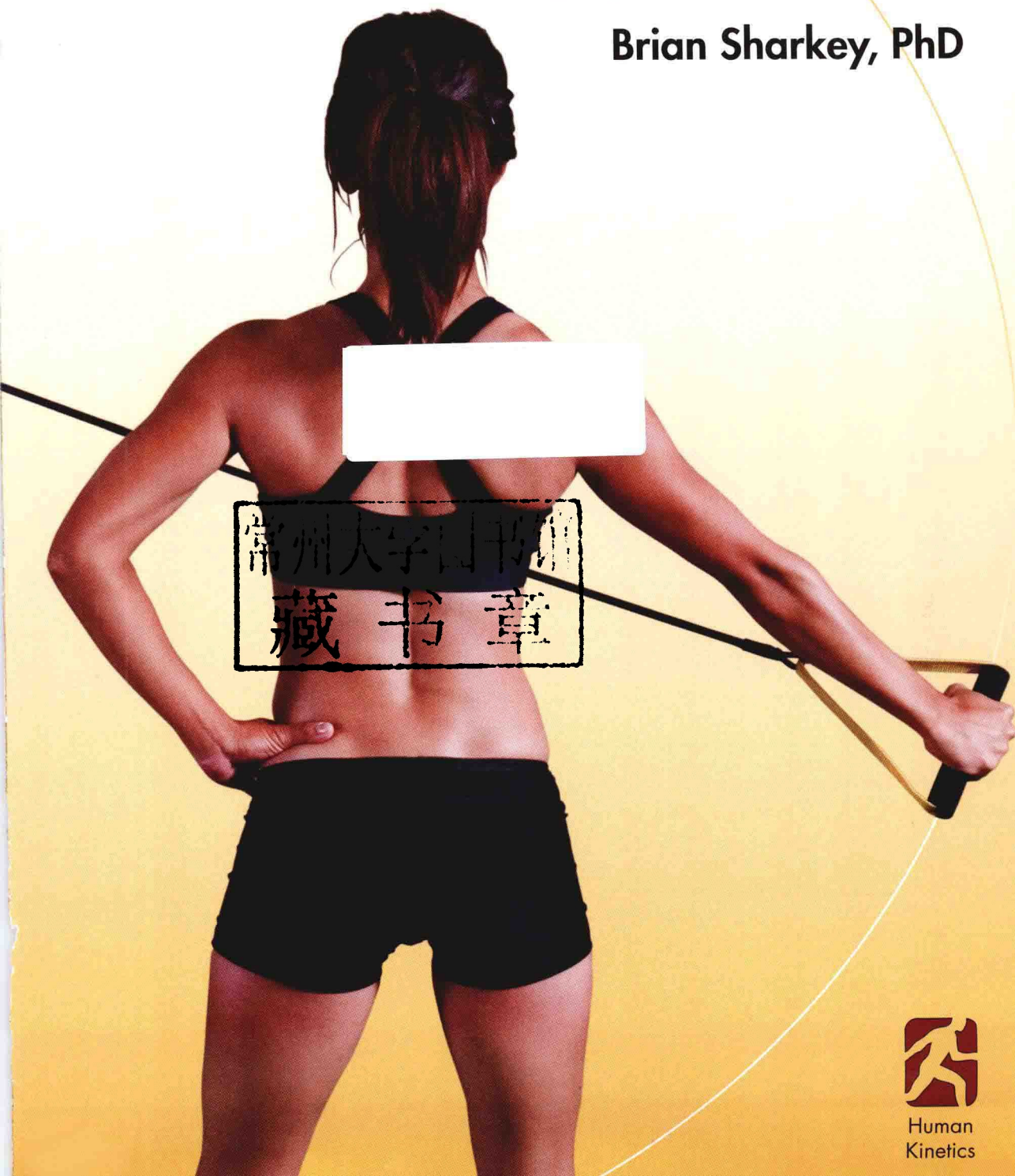
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guide to shaping up,
staying fit, and
eating right



Brian Sharkey

Fitness Illustrated

Brian Sharkey, PhD



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Ann,

You spice up my life.

Preface

 **I've been involved** with physical activity and fitness most of my life. As a kid I was very active, until one day when my knees ached so much I was unable to walk. I was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, an acute disease characterized by fever and inflammation in the joints and the heart. During my youth I had the illness at least two times. In those days the illness required prolonged bed rest followed by a gradual return to activity. The inactivity and the disease's potential effect on the heart made me appreciate an active life. I recovered well enough to run the mile and other races in high school and college. Those experiences may explain why I decided to devote my professional life to the study of exercise and fitness.

I began college studies just as researchers were beginning to recognize the link between physical inactivity and cardiovascular disease, a topic close to my, uh, heart. Soon thereafter President Eisenhower created the President's Council on Physical Fitness to improve the fitness of military recruits. By the time I graduated from college, I knew what I wanted to do; I just didn't know where or how. Graduate studies focused that interest and prepared me for a university position involving teaching, research, and service. Since then I have devoured research journals, conducted laboratory and field studies, and published a few books. I've worked with adults, athletes, and those involved in physically demanding occupations. And I've presented papers and visited with colleagues throughout the world in an effort to better understand the benefits of physical activity and fitness. I bring this lifetime of study to the task of writing yet another fitness book.

But this book is different. It is well illustrated but not glitzy. It conveys what we know about fitness but avoids excess detail. And it allows me to clear up fallacies and misconceptions concerning exercise and its benefits. I start by answering the question *Why get fit?* You'll look at the benefits of an active life, including what you'll gain physically and psychologically. Then you'll delve into aerobic fitness—what it is, why it is important, and how you can design your own aerobic fitness program with activities that you enjoy. Next you'll look at muscular fitness, including strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility. I provide direction in creating a personalized muscular fitness program to help you reach your goals. You'll also learn what to eat for a physically active lifestyle, how you can manage your weight, and how to deal with various health issues, such as heart disease, arthritis, and fitness problems such as muscle cramps and knee pain. I explain fitness facts and fallacies so that you can be an educated fitness consumer. In the final chapter, you'll explore vitality and longevity: how you can add life to your years by becoming active now.

Whether you are just beginning or have been active for a long time, this book will pique your interest, focus your direction, and unearth the self-directed motivation that will keep you active the rest of your life.

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I want to thank Rainer and Julie Martens for encouraging me to write this book, even when I doubted my ability to think visually and write sparingly. The talented staff at Human Kinetics helped bring this book to fruition. Contributors included Nancy Rasmus, graphic designer, who conceived the original design for this book and fit all the pieces together in an attractive layout; Jennifer Gibas, illustrator, who refined our sketchy illustrations; Neil Bernstein, photographer, who took the technique photos in chapter 7; Laura Podeschi, managing editor, who checked and double-checked all the details of this book; and Chris Drews, the ever-patient editor who did all she could to make the book factual and readable. To these folks and others at Human Kinetics I say thanks again for a job well done.

Credits

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1



Activity and Fitness

Contents

Preface vi • Acknowledgments vii • Credits viii

- 1 Activity and Fitness 1**
Why Get Fit? Discover the benefits of being active, get the facts on how much activity you need, and find out whether being physically active is safe for you.
- 2 Understanding Aerobic Fitness 15**
O₂ and You Explore why aerobic exercise is so good for you, the role of oxygen, and how your body changes with aerobic activity.
- 3 Aerobic Fitness Training 41**
A Gentle Pastime Investigate how to adjust your aerobic fitness training program to reach your goals, and decide which activities will be most meaningful to you.
- 4 Aerobic Programs 65**
Have It Your Way Personalize your aerobic fitness training program based on your fitness and experience level, and discover training tips such as what to wear, where to train, and how to deal with training problems.
- 5 Understanding Muscular Fitness 95**
Strength and Endurance Find out how your muscles work and how they change with training. Look at how to improve your muscular fitness, including strength, endurance, flexibility, speed, power, balance, agility, and coordination.
- 6 Muscular Fitness Training 123**
Shape Yourself Evaluate your muscular fitness and select your muscular fitness goals, learn how to improve and maintain your strength and muscular endurance, and explore flexibility and core training.

7 Muscular Programs 149

Designed for You Design your own muscular fitness program using the 53 flexibility, core training, strength, and muscular endurance exercises illustrated in this chapter.

8 Nutrition and Weight Control 191

Eat to Live Discover how to adjust your diet as you become active, and take a new look at weight control and dieting.

9 Health Issues and Exercise Tips 233

Overcoming Hurdles Choose meaningful activities, monitor your health, and use these prevention tips to deal with exercise conditions such as muscle soreness, muscle cramps, knee pain, and arthritis.

10 Fitness Facts and Fallacies 259

What's the Truth? Get the facts on 12 training principles and 7 fitness fallacies so that you can evaluate the plethora of fitness information on the Internet, TV, and other media.

11 Vitality and Longevity 281

Add Life to Your Years Alter your view of getting older: See how you can extend your vigorous years by living an active, healthy lifestyle.

Appendix: Energy Expenditure Chart 304 •
Bibliography 308 • Index 310 •
About the Author 315



A full-page photograph of a woman in athletic wear running across a green field. She is wearing a yellow tank top, dark leggings with yellow stripes, and yellow sneakers. The background features a blue sky with large white clouds and a distant city skyline.

Why Get Fit?

Let him that would move the world,
first move himself.

~ Socrates

Sarah

is a 28-year-old attorney

caught up in the struggle to succeed in a high-powered urban law firm. She had been active in college but found little time for fitness in law school and now finds even less. Working more than 60 hours per week leaves her precious few hours for a personal life, let alone regular physical activity.



Sarah

Her weight has crept up...

Her weight has crept up, and she lacks the vitality she enjoyed when she was active, so she wants to lose weight, regain fitness, and feel healthy again. She wants to be able to run to catch a train or plane, carry luggage through the airport without breaking a sweat, and work all day and still have the energy to go dancing. In order to meet this challenge, Sarah must set attainable goals, find time to achieve them, and get going. This book is dedicated to Sarah and to the many others who want to become active and fit, to eat right, and to experience the benefits and pleasures of an active life.



What Are the Benefits

A person with dark hair, wearing a white tank top, is sitting on a bed. Their arms are raised high, reaching towards a window with white frames. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting natural light from the window. The person's back is to the camera, and they appear to be in a relaxed or stretching pose.

Imagine awakening in a body that is newly transformed by several months of fitness training—a condition not unlike a state of grace, one that is inwardly sensed rather than outwardly observed. You would rise each day with the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigor and alertness, remain free of undue fatigue, enjoy your leisure pursuits, and meet unforeseen emergencies. You would have the energy and muscular fitness to carry out work and activity demands; the flexibility and balance to perform well and avoid injury; and the stamina to handle home life, work, recreation, and the inevitable unexpected demands.

If you are like many active individuals, your first thought upon waking would focus on the physical activity you planned to perform that day, as well as when and where you would do it. Indeed, when you become active and even addicted to exercise, regular physical activity becomes an indispensable part of your life. Physical activity and fitness do more than improve your performance; they also improve your physical and psychological health, thus enhancing your vigor and extending the prime of your life.