



A **Men's Health** Guide

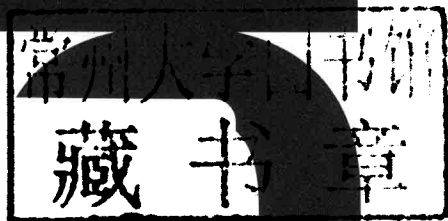
YOUR BEST BODY AT 40+

**The 4-WEEK PLAN to
Get Back In Shape—
and Stay Fit Forever!**

By *New York Times* best-selling author
JEFF CSATARI

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JEFF CSATARI and the Editors of **Men'sHealth**®

This book is intended as a reference volume only, not as a medical manual. The information given here is designed to help you make informed decisions about your health. It is not intended as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, we urge you to seek competent medical help.

The information in this book is meant to supplement, not replace, proper exercise training. All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks. The editors and publisher advise readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits. Before practicing the exercises in this book, be sure that your equipment is well-maintained, and do not take risks beyond your level of experience, aptitude, training, and fitness. The exercise and dietary programs in this book are not intended as a substitute for any exercise routine or dietary regimen that may have been prescribed by your doctor. As with all exercise and dietary programs, you should get your doctor's approval before beginning.

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This book is dedicated to men
everywhere who realize that,
at 40+, the best years are
yet to come—and that we can
be stronger, smarter, better
than men half our age.

+ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing *Your Best Body at 40+* was very rewarding and motivating, because all those long hours at the computer taught me just how important stretching is to the proper function of a 47-year-old body. And it was a lot of fun, too, as it gave me the opportunity to work with some really smart people. I'd like to say "thank you" to those folks in this space.

First, before a writer can start tapping away on a keyboard, someone needs to say, "Okay, there's a need for this book and we believe in it." Those people are the members of the Rodale family, senior vice president and *Men's Health* brand leader David Zinczenko, and senior vice president and publishing director of Rodale books Karen Rinaldi—the gatekeepers who ensure that a new project meshes with our company's mission "to inspire and enable people to improve their lives and the world around them." Thank you for believing that this book can help men embrace this most crucial decade proactively by making healthier lifestyle choices.

Once a book is green-lighted, the actual information gathering begins. I am grateful to the many doctors, researchers, nutritionists, psychologists, and exercise physiologists who graciously shared their time and wisdom through interviews, e-mails, and last-minute phone calls—especially Joe Maroon, MD; Vonda Wright, MD; Jeff Volek, PhD; Robert Sapolsky, PhD; Leslie Bonci, RD; Harold Millman, DPT; and Ron DeAngelo, CSCS. And I am fortunate to have been able to draw on the previous work of the best health and fitness researchers, reporters, and writers in the world at *Men's Health*, including Peter Moore, Bill Phillips, Matt Marion, Adam Campbell, Bill Stieg, Matt Bean, Matt Goulding, and Eric Adams.

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Jeff Csatari

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introduction |

BETTER THAN EVER AT 40+



The 4-Week Plan That Will Help You Get Back into Shape for Life



WELCOME TO THE MOST CRUCIAL DECADE OF YOUR LIFE.

Maybe you've just pulled off at exit 40, heading onto the next stretch of your big journey. Or perhaps you're looking at that milestone in the rear-view mirror from a distance of a year or two.

Either way, congratulations! You've survived the bad haircuts and boy bands, the blind dates from hell, and the slow climb out of the cubicles. You've seen booms and busts—a few of each by now—and you've had your heart broken and healed in any number of ways. Oh, and all that hype about 40 being the new 30? Well, it's actually true—if you play the next 10 years really smart.

For men and women alike, the 40s bring the first great opportunity to reassess, take charge, repair neglect, and remake the rest of your life. Thanks to breakthroughs in medicine, health, exercise, and nutrition, a fortysomething today has a chance to live longer, stronger, and leaner—to remake his body into a sleeker, fitter, stronger version of its younger self. ➔

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AND SATISFYING
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YOUR LIFE.**

The other bit of good news is this: You're smarter than you used to be. With the experience, discipline, and savvy you've already acquired, you now possess many of the tools needed to take control of your health and well-being. And you're still young enough to take advantage of them to bend the future to your advantage. If you seize this moment and follow the fitness plan in this book, the next 10—or even 20!—years will

be the healthiest, and most productive and satisfying years of your life. All you need is a simple strategy to get you back into shape. Lucky for you, that's exactly what this book is about.

But first, a reality check. Anyone who's faced down 40 candles on a birthday cake can tell you firsthand that *change happens*. By the time we are in full possession of a fortysomething physique, most of us have lost a few steps, gained a few inches around the middle, and found that we have to work a little harder to keep up with the kids. Even if the bathroom mirror compliments you and tells you that you've staved off many of time's effects on yourself, the proof of time's passage comes in the rounded faces, saggy eyes and jiggling bellies of your friends and co-workers. Is everyone but you getting older? And what

about those high school classmates who've tracked you down on Facebook—the ones with the gray hair and the triple chins? Can they possibly be the same age as you? Are we all destined to age that badly?

The answer is no. There is an emerging consensus that everything we thought we knew about aging is false. “The problems typically attributed to aging have less to do with actual aging than with the sedentary way more than 70 percent of people in this country choose to spend their lives,” says Vonda Wright, MD, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at the UPMC Center for Sports Medicine, who runs a program called START for people over 40 who want to get back in shape. “It’s never too late to build muscle. It’s just different. When we were 20, our bodies could do anything to shape up. From 40 onward, we have to be a lot smarter about it. But there’s no reason you can’t be fitter than you were 5, even 10 years ago.”

Your Best Body at 40+

Exercise physiologists, nutritionists, and gerontologists now agree that during the decade of your 40s, men and women still have enormous potential for getting leaner and stronger, improving energy level and brain function, and transforming decades of bad habits into a healthier lifestyle that will prime them for smooth sailing the rest of their lives.

Think it’s too late? Think again. You must have seen some of these men and women at the beach or the gym—the silver-haired surfers and svelte, sexy cougars who look a decade or two younger than their years. And we’ve all seen what 40+ looks like in professional sports, from baseball to ice hockey and ultimate fighting. In the summer of 2008, American swimmer Dara Torres, at age 41, left the Beijing Olympics with three silver medals. Earlier that year, 46-year-old Chris Chelios helped his Detroit Red Wings take the Stanley Cup. Another 46-year-old, pitcher Jamie Moyer, helped the Philadelphia Phillies win the 2008 World Series (2009 was his 23rd year in Major League Baseball).

Still not convinced? Look at Tom Cruise at 47, or Brad Pitt, 46, or Will Smith and Daniel Craig, 41! Consider Laird Hamilton, 46, the chiseled surfing legend, who can beat kids half his age in a beach sprint. Or adventure racer Dean Karnazes, arguably the world's fittest man at 47 years old, who has completed 50 back-to-back marathons!

Well, you're thinking, these folks are freaks of nature, or rich actors who can afford constant body maintenance, right? Wrong again. There are growing numbers of everyday Americans who are incredibly fit at 40+. At least 50,000 of them belong to the 40-and-above rankings of masters swimmers. According to the U.S. Track and Field Association, the number of marathon runners over 40 has increased more than five-fold to more than 162,000. Triathlons have become the sport of choice of the fit 40+ crowd. "People in their 40s make up the fastest growing segment of the sport," says Tim Yount, senior vice president of marketing and communications at USA Triathlon.

**HABITS FORMED
DURING YOUR
40s WILL CHART
THE COURSE FOR
ALL THE DECADES
THAT FOLLOW.**

But in a man's 40s, health, fitness and sex appeal aren't automatic. Testosterone and growth hormone begin to abate, and metabolism slows. The game gets a little more complicated—and you need to use your wits and wisdom to stay on top of it.

But if you make smart tweaks to your fitness and diet plan, and control stress in your work and family life, you'll be set up for many years of looking and feeling great.

And that's what makes this your most crucial decade. Whether you spend the next 10 or 20 years looking and feeling your best, or take the slow downhill ride, is now your choice. You don't have a long time to decide. So make your play: Stay with those who believe that aging and physical decline are inseparable and hobble off to middle age, or buck that foolish notion and embrace youth, health, and sexual vitality.

In these pages, we've burned through and boiled down a whole world of scientific research, focusing on the newest

information targeted precisely at the 40+ man. And we've created an exercise and eating plan that will change the way you look, feel, and live, today and in the years to come. Plus, we've assembled a dream team of expert advisors who will teach you how to control stress, look your best, and take control by following the advice in this book. In these pages we've gathered all the latest scientific information in a simple, easy-to-follow plan that is guaranteed to turn back the clock and get you in the shape of your life.

40+ Get-Back-in-Shape Plan

You may not be able to recoup your investment losses for several years, but you can seize control of the things you can improve now—your body and your health. And you can do it in as little as 4 weeks, with a smart eating plan and the perfect workout for your body—both of which you'll find in these pages. “The single thing that comes close to a magic bullet, in terms of its strong and universal [health] benefits, is exercise,” says Frank Hu, MD, professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Don't worry if you're new to the game. Once you experience the uplift that exercise and eating right bring to your body, your mind, and your self-confidence, you'll find plenty of motivation to keep it up for the rest of your life. The 10 chapters in this book, which cover all aspects of the fit-at-40+ lifestyle, were written to help you do just that.

Conquering the Crucial Decade

The time to get back in shape is now. The 10-year span between the ages 40 and 50 is critically important because the habits formed during this decade will chart the course for all those that follow. In your twenties and thirties, you had the luxury of time. You could eat badly, stay out late, work out when the spirit moved you. You could let yourself go without worrying much about your health. Frankly, that's no longer the case. At the very

least, living like that will pile on the pounds. More likely, your health will suffer. Heart disease and diabetes can hunt you down if you're not vigilant. Consider the statistics: More than a quarter of Americans over age 30 are insulin-resistant, a condition known as "metabolic syndrome," or "pre-diabetes," and on the verge of full-blown diabetes. That figure rises to 40 percent of the American population over the age of 60. And once you have diabetes, odds are that you will have it the rest of your life. Some people can reverse it with much effort and commitment, but most can only hope to manage it with diet and medication. And managing it is difficult, too. Seventy-five percent of people with diabetes will die of cardiovascular disease.

But you can avoid that fate with very little effort. In a landmark fitness survey known as the Nurses' Health Study, researchers found that moderately intense exercise—that means walking for a half hour to an hour each day—lowered the risk

of developing type 2 diabetes by up to 40 percent. Just walking! Dr. Hu, the Harvard researcher and epidemiologist involved in that study, says nothing is quicker or more effective for preventing diabetes than exercise.

Exercise not only builds muscle—it impacts nearly every organ in the body. It builds new capillaries in the skeletal muscles, heart, and brain.

Red blood cells increase in number, improving oxygen transport. Blood pressure and resting heart rate go down, reducing the stress on the heart and arteries. The left ventricle of the heart increases in size and becomes more efficient at pumping blood.

The best news of all? Almost everything that declines physiologically as the decades pass improves with exercise and proper nutrition. What does that mean for you? It means you have the opportunity to change your life right now. Every journey begins with a single step, which you have already taken. Congratulations. Your new life begins on the next page.

**ALMOST EVERYTHING
THAT DECLINES
PHYSIOLOGICALLY AS
THE DECADES PASS
IMPROVES WITH
EXERCISE AND
PROPER NUTRITION.**

+ JUST LOOK AT WHAT YOU HAVE TO GAIN!

You Will Build Muscle and Lose Weight

Muscle mass begins to decline at the rate of about 1 percent a year from the age of 30, and this decline accelerates after the age of 45. This creates a problem for fortysomethings, because as your muscle falls away, your body's calorie-burning action—its metabolism—slows down. We're talking about your resting metabolism, the rate at which your body burns calories to perform its essential functions, like breathing and pumping blood and digesting the deep-dish pizza you had for dinner. If you eat the way you did in your twenties and thirties, when you had more calorie-burning muscle, you're going to put on weight. That's an indisputable fact. And that explains the preponderance of the population with excess belly fat.

But, once again, it doesn't have to be that way. Studies show that even the elderly can build muscle, increase strength, and ramp up their metabolisms—even into their 90s. For you, a mere youngster in this scenario, it means you can easily keep the weight off with the right combination of strength- and muscle-building exercises that you'll find in this book. Even if you never picked up a dumbbell in your life, it's not too late. In fact, building muscular strength is one of the most critical things you can do to ensure a healthy, lean, and active life at 40+. With a greater ratio of muscle to fat, your metabolism will rev higher, and you won't have to worry about counting calories. Your active tissue will take care of all that. How's that for good news?

You Will Look and Feel 10 Years Younger

It's not just the *quantity* of the muscle you lose that's important, but also the *quality*. Research shows that as you age, fast-twitch muscle fibers shrink twice as fast as slow-twitch fibers. Why should you care? Because your fast-twitch fibers are the muscles largely responsible for generating power, the key to peak sports performance when you're young, and getting your butt out of a chair when you're old, says Alex Koch, PhD, an exercise researcher at Truman State University. And everyone knows intuitively how muscles tighten with the passing years. When you reach down but still can't pick up the ball on the tennis court or find yourself stuck to the mat in a seated yoga pose, that's all due to your declining fast-twitch muscles. If you target these muscle fibers with the exercises we show you—and elongate your muscles with proper stretches—you'll actually put more spring in your step, and, yes, keep up with your teenagers on the basketball court.

Oh, and by the way: Unlike explosive muscular power, muscular endurance doesn't naturally abate as you reach your 40s; it actually improves, as long as you stay fit. So if you stay strong, and keep your muscle tone, you'll actually be a better athlete than your teenagers are—because you'll have greater endurance.

You Will Injury-Proof Your Body

Think of your skeletal system as your personal infrastructure. Like our nation's roads and bridges, your bones will weaken and fail without maintenance. Or they will turn brittle with age, a condition called osteoporosis. Although often considered a women's disease, osteoporosis, or "porous bones," affects plenty of men, too. Keep your bones healthy throughout your life by getting adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D, a nutrient that helps calcium leave the intestine and enter the bloodstream, and by doing *strength- and muscle-building exercises*. (Starting to see a pattern here?) Weight lifting helps strengthen bone because it increases the weight of gravity on your frame. Brisk walking, rope jumping, and exercises you'll read about

later stimulate cells to build more bone, particularly in your back and hips. But lifting weights in your 40s requires more care and specific exercises, which you'll find in these pages.

You Will Have More Sex

The fitter the body, the better the sex. True for women *and* men. Exercise whips up the libido, lifts mood and energy levels, and improves blood flow to the genitals. One study found that women who cycled for 20 minutes before watching an erotic video experienced a greater level of sexual arousal than women who didn't pedal up to the DVD. And a wealth of research indicates that men who are fit enjoy firmer erections. One large study of 31,000 men found that guys over 50 who walked just 2 miles a day had half the rate of erection problems of more sedentary men. "The harder the erection, the healthier the man," says Steven Lamm, MD, author of *The Hardness Factor* and a faculty member at the New York University School of Medicine. "When a man's blood vessels are healthy and elastic, his heart and brain are functioning well—and his erections are rock hard."

You Will Live Longer

We all live without ever knowing when our day of reckoning will come. But there are a few things you can do to exert control over your lifespan, things that can dramatically improve your chances of spoiling your great-grandchildren. The first are just common sense: Buckle your seatbelt, and put away the cell phone while driving. But there are others nearly as simple.

⇒ **BREAK A SWEAT DAILY:** "If you had to pick one thing to make people healthier as they age, it would be aerobic exercise," says James Fries, MD, senior author of a new study at the Stanford University School of Medicine on the effects of running on aging. The research tracked 538 runners over age 50 and compared them to a similar group of non-runners. It found that runners have fewer disabilities, have a longer span of active life, and are half as likely as non-runners to die early deaths. Nineteen years