LITERARY DIGEST
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FLESH SCULPTORS: Screen Players Find It's Fun to Keep Healthy—Here's How

Miss Harlow keeps stream-lined by swimming

The girl with the piquant face, a movie star in the making, watched the studio physical director apprehensively. Her short gymnasium trunks and pull-over sweater revealed her figure as undeniably plumpish in spots.

"Will I have to diet?" she asked anxiously.

The gymnasium instructor grinned a little wearily.

They always asked that. He studied the girl with the impersonal eye of a sculptor in flesh.

"You not only won't have to diet," he said, "but I strictly forbid it. Rope-skipping and a few fast exercises will burn off fatty tissue without developing undesirable muscle to take its place."

Last week, any week, this little scene was enacted in the gymnasiums of any major Hollywood studio. Nine times out of ten, the physical director tells the movie star and the star-to-be: "Eat what you like, within reason."

New Diet—Freak diets are definitely "out" in the movie colony. The new Hollywood health formula calls for (1) exercise; (2) common sense.

Metro's Mr. Loomis keeps beauties beautiful

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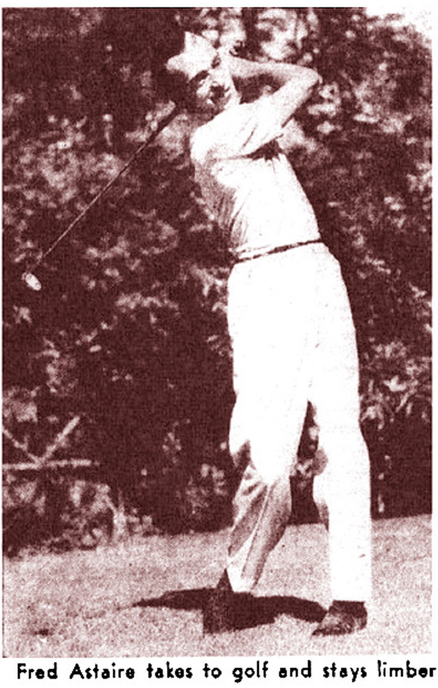

Fred Astaire takes to golf and stays limber

Altho most of the studios have built elaborately equipped gymnasia right on the lot—Warner Brothers, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Paramount are conspicuous examples—no cinema actor, no director or executive patronizes them because it is so nominated in the bond.

Rather, he seeks them out for the soundest of business reasons: The wise-cracking ingenue and the sigh-wrenching leading man must be so explosively healthy that vitality just naturally bursts out all over the screen. The box-office takes a lacing when actors are noticeably lacking in pep, vigor, or what the gym man calls "the old zip."

When young players arrive on the Paramount lot they are taken to the gymnasium, where Director Davies gives them an exercise routine. Faults of posture, carriage and weight are noted for correction. Day after day, the young player returns and is put through exercise paces until specifications are met. Male players get work-outs that would dismay a longshoreman.

Out at the Metro lot in Culver City, Donald Loomis is a studio physical director with definite ideas. He orders exercises to build up weight as well as to take it off. One of his conspicuous successes is Robert Taylor, top heart-flutterer of the 1937 season. When he came to Metro, Taylor needed additional poundage distributed about his person to bulge biceps and expand the chest-line in the right places.

Muscle—To Loomis, putting on weight means adding muscle. He prescribed barbell exercises for Taylor, and a series of heavy exercises involving the pulling of weights and other resistance apparatus—all done slowly but with real muscular exertion. This developed Taylor's muscles, at the same time burning away surplus fat, gave him abundant energy and a reputed salary of $3,500 a week.

For reducing, Loomis recommends light calisthenics, rapid waving of arms, rope-skipping.

"In no case must fat be taken off too quickly, or it will return immediately," Loomis warns.

"The secret is to build up muscle to take its place."

For this purpose, he advises bar-bells, Indian clubs, a lightly weighted exercising-machine. Massage, being a form of exercise, he uses both for reducing and increasing weight. In some cases, a hot cabinet is helpful for healthy reducing. But diets are almost never advised, it being a fixed belief of this Hollywood health expert that a person may eat anything if he takes enough exercise to burn

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Donald Loomis

Ginger Rogers finds tennis an "anti" for fat

up the surplus fuel.

"Proper exercise makes diets unnecessary," Loomis says. "Many diets, especially if not carefully supervised, may actually be dangerous."

That diets can be dangerous, Hollywood knows too well. The tragic deaths of Renée Adorée, Louis Wolheim and Barbara LaMarr, attributed to unwise dieting, still linger in studio memories. So does the so-called "Hollywood Diet" which swept the country a few years ago—a freak regimen which unquestionably reduced weight because it provided but half the food allowance normally needed by the body. A triumph of press-agentry, the Hollywood Diet was commercially inspired, used the name of the movie city for business glamour.

Rules—General health rules given by Loomis can be adopted by any one in or out of Hollywood: Drink a glass of warm water with the juice of a lemon upon arising.

Take deep breathing exercises before an open window, followed by a tepid shower—not too warm nor too cold. Begin breakfast with a glass of fruit juice. Avoid drinks that are too hot or too cold. Do not salt food; most foods contain sufficient natural salts.

Eight hours of sleep are essential, Loomis says. He advises sleeping without a pillow, but suggests that the mattress be tilted at the head of the bed by putting blocks beneath it. A brisk walk before retiring often induces sleep. Another unusual method of combating insomnia which Loomis gives his cinema customers is this: Lie on your side in bed, move the shoulders slowly backward until they lie flat, follow by throwing the leg over until you are lying flat on the other side of the bed.

This, says Loomis, loosens the vertebra and releases nervous tension.

Madge Evans keeps pounds from accumulating by following an exercise formula

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Donald Loomis

Marlene Dietrich keeps busy and forgets to sleep when pounds and ounces gather

Symmetry is the objective of Hollywood body sculptors. For bust-reduction, Loomis has a simple formula: Jump up and down with no support. Exercises in which the arms are forced backward and forward horizontally are used to develop the upper chest.

To develop the calf, rope-skipping, dancing, raising the body on the toes is recommended. Bar-bells are used for shoulder development.

Favorites—Each Hollywood star has his own favorite exercise formula. Fred Astaire takes no routine exercise of any kind, plays tennis and golf because he likes the games. Ginger Rogers is an all-round sports enthusiast who takes up badminton one week, ping-pong the next, tennis the week after that. Jack Oakie rides a bicycle to keep his rotund figure within bounds.

Joe Penner pitches baseballs at a robot catcher in his back yard. Katharine Hepburn never diets, keeps in condition by taking long walks, playing golf.

Marlene Dietrich cuts down on sleep if she finds that she is gaining. Carole Lombard keeps trim by bowling, swimming, riding.

Claudette Colbert is a tennis enthusiast. Joan Crawford mixes tennis and badminton, as caught by the camera for this week's DIGEST cover.

Jean Harlow swims and golfs. Madge Evans is one of Loomis' star gymnasium pupils.

Clark Gable is a fervid outdoor man, Nelson Eddy golfs, Lionel Barrymore swaps punches with a bag.

Most stars follow their exercise routine because they love it.

Hollywood long ago discovered that it's fun to keep healthy.

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