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ZAP!

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“HOW I ZAPPED CELLULITE!”

Mrs. Minnesota America 2004, Melissa Hall reveals her secrets for overcoming her own weakest body part in six strikingly effective moves. BY CHRIS CANDER | PHOTOGRAPHY RALPH DEHAAN

“Cellulite? Oh yeah. I’ve definitely struggled with that,” confesses Melissa Hall, Mrs. Minnesota America 2004. “In fact, my legs have always been my weakest body part.” Melissa has always had difficulty toning her lower body. When she started competing, she craved that subtle separation between the quadriceps and hamstrings. Her characteristic diligence has certainly paid off, though, and now admirers ask for her advice on how to achieve the same results.

Melissa is more than happy to share her knowledge. She is one of those giving souls who always has time to help others, despite her own overcrowded day planner. “I love trying to get people passionate about fitness,”

she says. Whether she’s interacting with clients at the fitness studio she runs with her husband, inspiring her coworkers at Fox Sports to eat better or serving on the board of the Hope Chest for Breast Cancer, Melissa thrives on seeing others’ desire to achieve their goals and be well: “For me, it’s not just about looking good. It’s about sharing what you have.”

Melissa says her secrets to staying lean are all about planning. She prepares her weekday meals ahead of time to ensure she has nutritious options when hunger strikes. And to keep herself motivated for her workouts, she’s recruited her sister and a friend as training buddies. Finally, she knows she absolutely needs eight hours of shut-eye each night to be at her best. “My

schedule is packed, but I never get less than seven hours of sleep each night.”

the bottom line

Do the following six moves as a circuit if you want an intense workout or you can do it as a regular routine. The amount of weight you should use depends upon your goals. “If you want to build mass, go heavier with fewer reps. If you want to tone up, try lighter weight with more reps,” suggests Melissa, who does one of each per week. If you do two sets of 12 to 15 reps with minimal rest between sets, this circuit will take about 45 minutes. “It’s hard, but it goes fast,” Melissa says, “because I know I’ll get results.” With a consistent program and a cleaned-up diet, you can expect results in six to eight weeks.



A



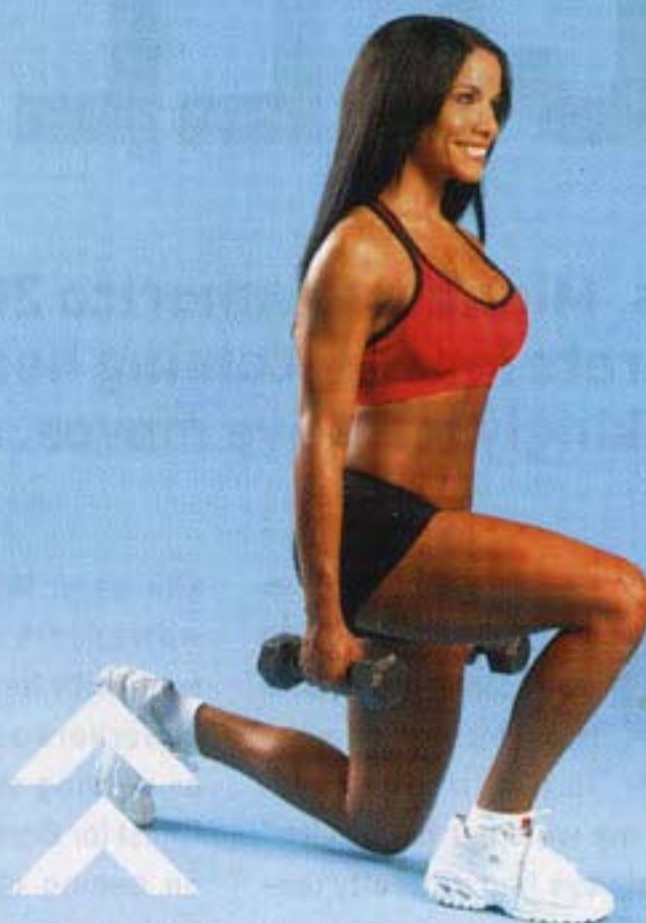
B

dumbbell squat

The squat not only builds muscle, it also provides a great cardiovascular workout. Stand grasping dumbbells at your sides. Keep your head forward, back straight, chest high and feet flat, weight distributed evenly through forefoot and heel. Melissa says, "A wide stance will work your entire lower body." Bend your knees until your thighs are about parallel to the floor. Do not let your knees bend past your toes. Return by extending your knees and hips until your legs are straight. Repeat.



A



B

lunge

Stand tall, holding dumbbells at your sides. Take a step forward with your right leg, landing first on your heel. A long lunge emphasizes the gluteus maximus; a short lunge emphasizes the quadriceps. Lower your body by bending the right knee to about 90 degrees. The knee of your left leg should almost touch the floor. Return to original standing position by pushing through the heel of your right foot and extending the hip and knee of the same leg. Repeat, alternating legs. "Go slowly to isolate your quads," suggests Melissa.



A



B

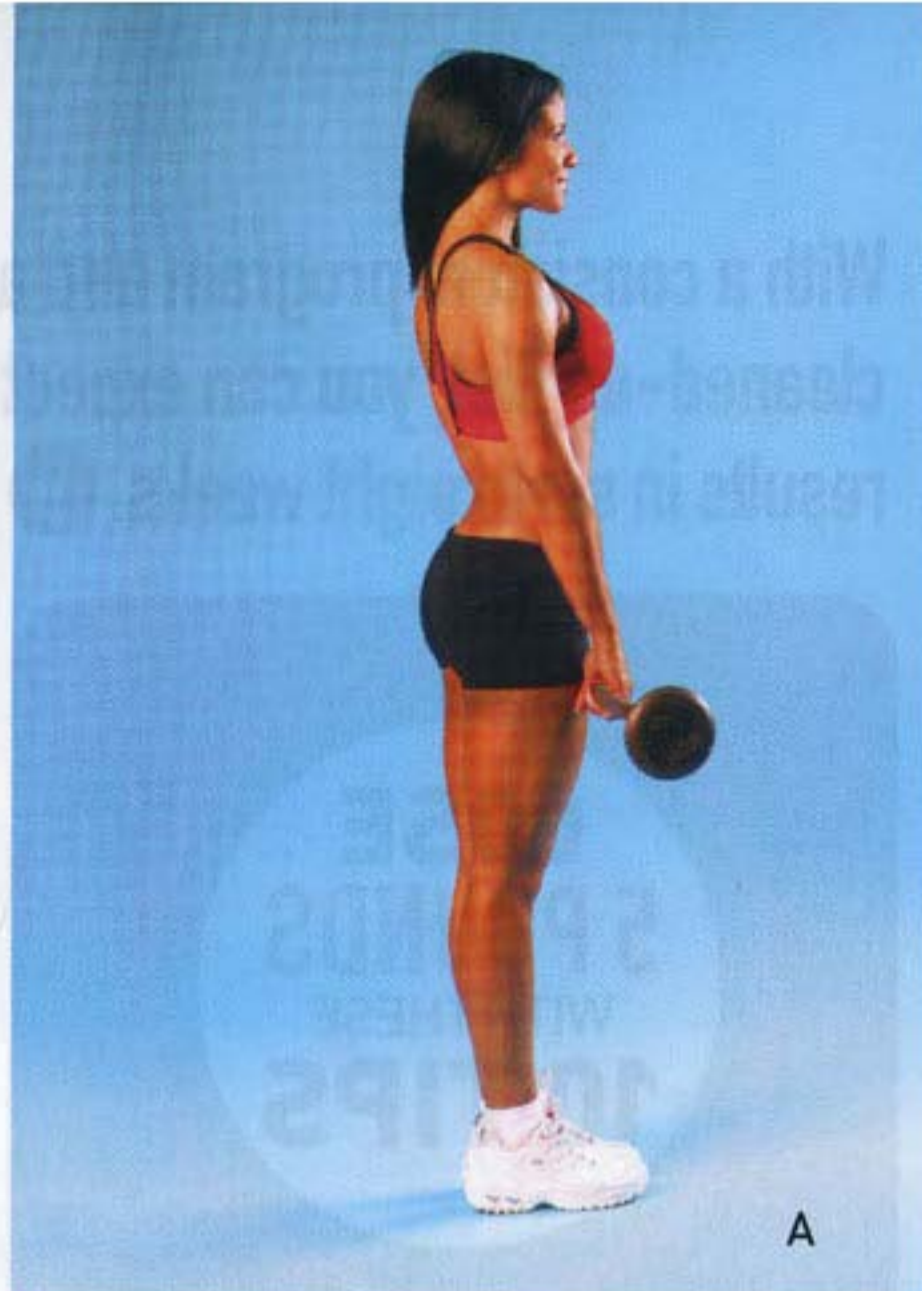
barbell squat

Similar to the dumbbell squat, this move adds resistance to the upper body. Position the bar on the back of your shoulders and hold it with a firm but comfortable grip. Tighten your abs and lower back, keeping your head forward and back straight. Ensure your feet are flat on the floor with equal distribution of weight throughout forefoot and heel. To start, lower your body until your thighs about parallel to the floor. Don't allow your knees to extend beyond your toes. Keeping your gaze forward rather than on the floor will help you maintain balance.

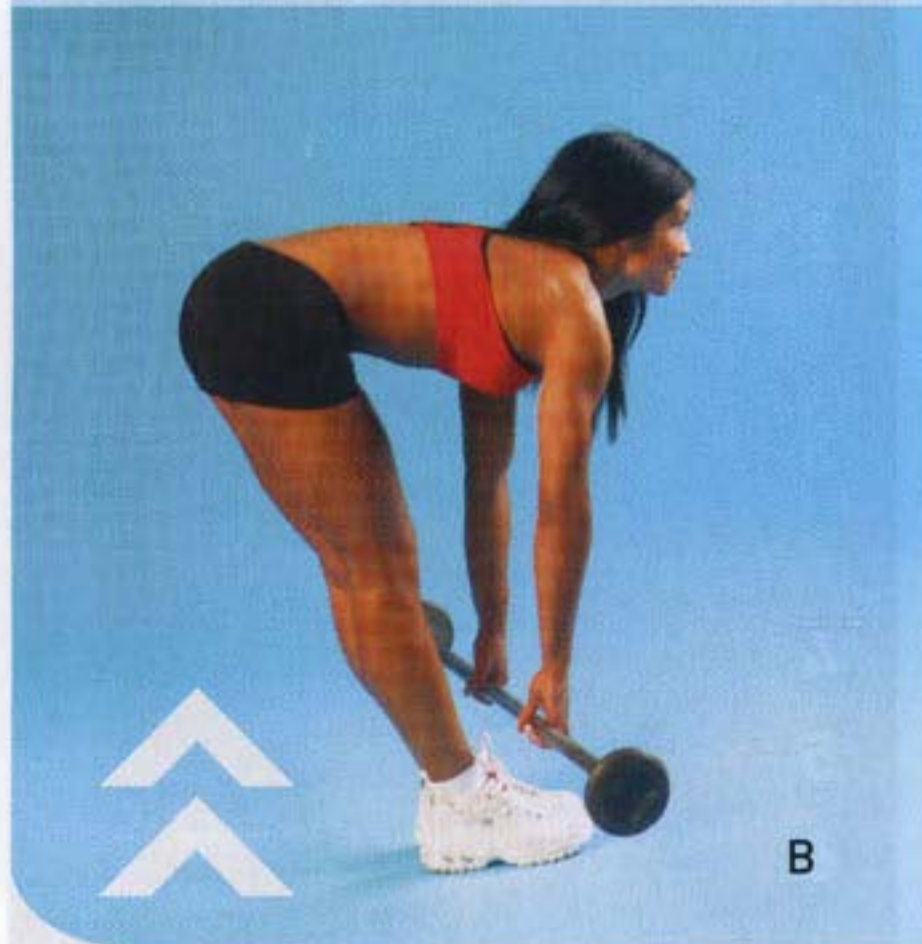
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LOSE 5 POUNDS WITH THESE 10 TIPS

- 1 Keep well hydrated by drinking lots of water throughout the day.
- 2 Eat your high glycemic carbohydrates before 6:00 p.m., then switch to lower glycemic carbs like green vegetables and salads.
- 3 Stock your desk drawer and glove compartment with healthy snacks like protein bars, rice cakes, low-fat popcorn, almonds and all-natural peanut butter.
- 4 Do cardio first thing in the morning to jump-start your metabolism.
- 5 Never skip breakfast.
- 6 Find a workout partner to keep you accountable and motivated.
- 7 Replace processed carbohydrates, such as breads, pasta and cereals, with healthy alternatives, such as oatmeal, yams, whole grain rice and wraps.
- 8 Limit your alcohol consumption.
- 9 Limit your intake of high-fat dairy products.
- 10 Eat every two to three hours to speed up your metabolism. You'll also avoid those crashes that can lead to binge eating.



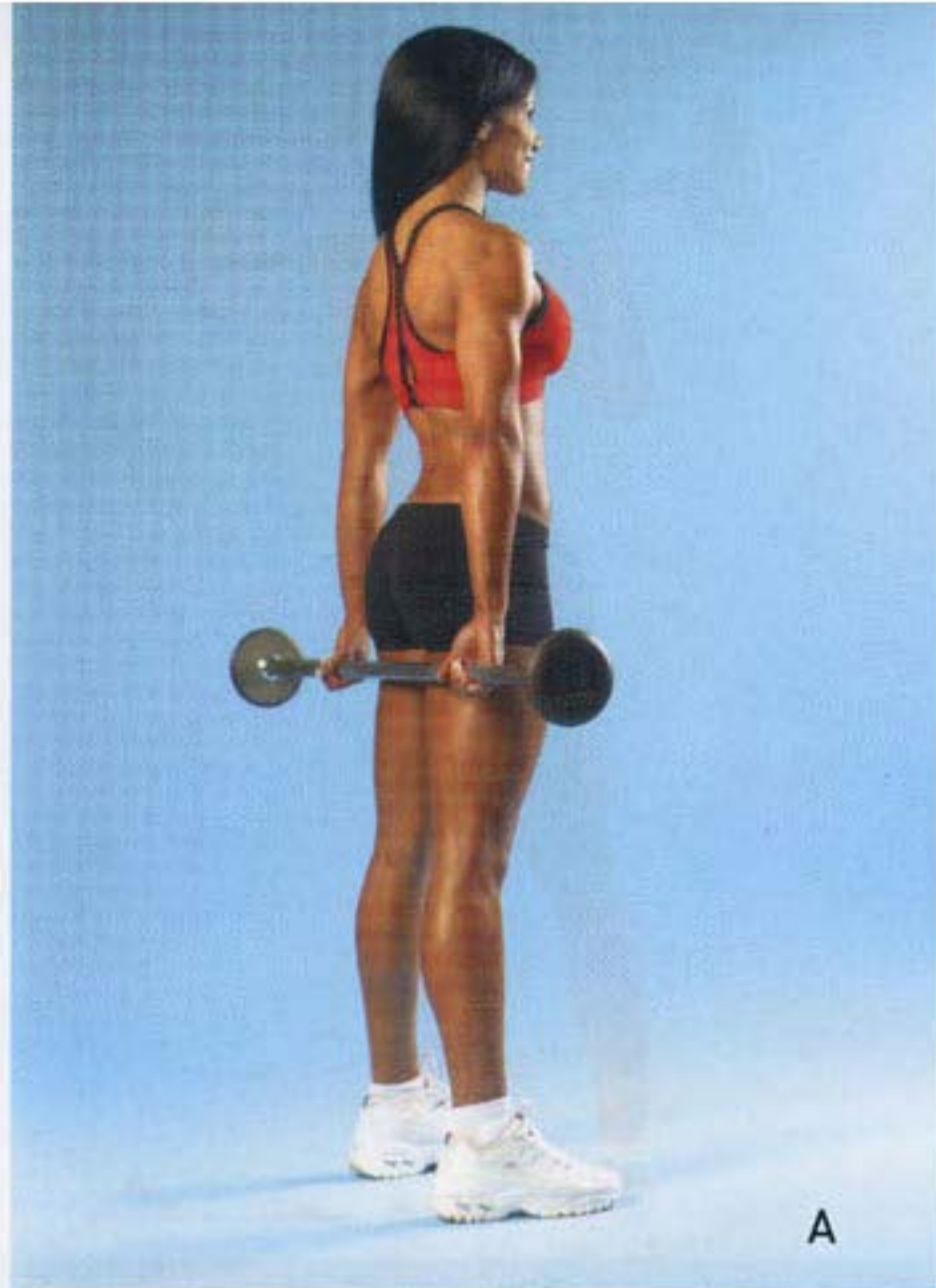
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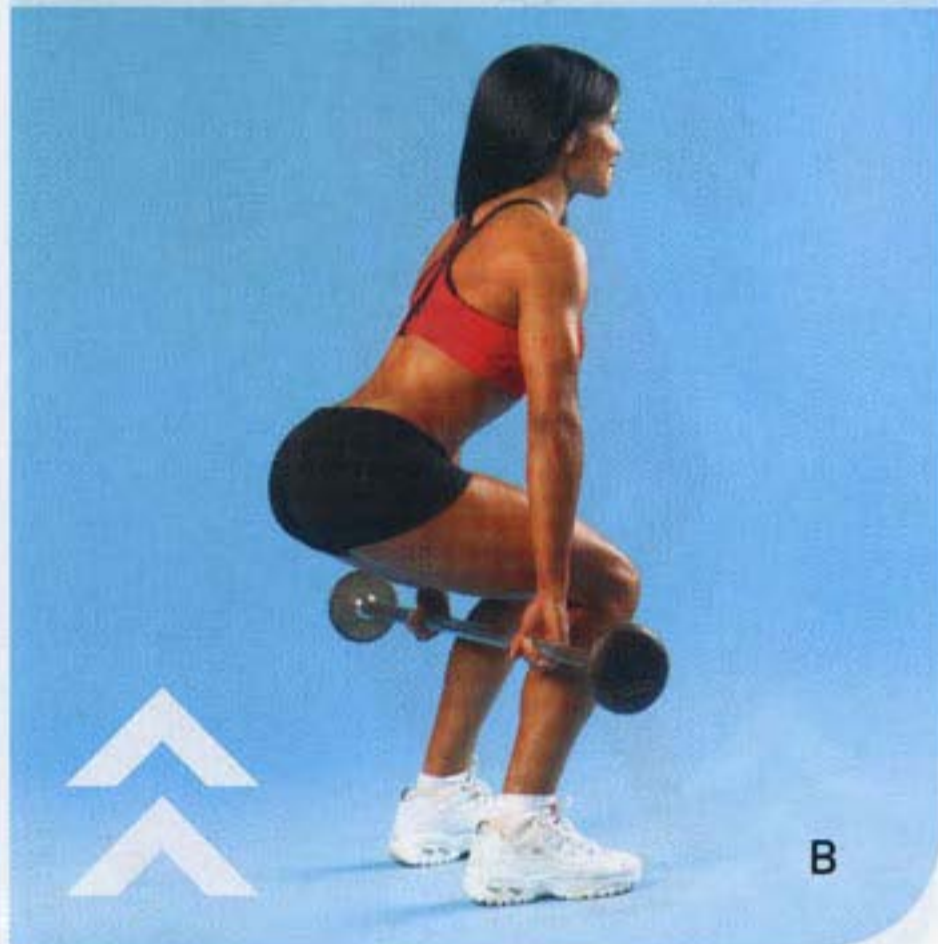
B

deadlift

Stand with legs straight and knees tight but not locked, with most of your weight in your heels. "Keeping the feet together helps to develop the outer hamstrings and glutes," says Melissa. Hold the barbell with a shoulder-width, overhand grip. Slowly bend at the waist to lower the weight to the top of the feet. Positioning the resistance away from the legs adds unnecessary stress on the lumbar spine. Your lower back may bend slightly during full hip flexion, but keep your shoulders and head lifted. Raise to the starting position and repeat.



A



B

rear barbell squat

The squat is a staple of leg training and there are plenty of variations to keep training interesting and challenging. This one might feel a bit awkward at first, but is great for developing balance and for isolating the glutes. Stand with feet hip-distance apart, holding a light weight behind you with an underhand grip. Arch your back slightly and keep your derriere out and shoulders forward. Bend your knees to about 90 degrees then pause and squeeze the glutes before returning to the start position. "Concentrate on good form," says Melissa. Repeat.

The amount of weight you should use depends upon your goals. "If you want to build mass, go heavier with fewer reps. If you want to tone up, try lighter weight with more reps." **ZAP!**



hamstring curl

Lie prone on a bench with your weight balanced on your forearms and your knees at the end of the pad. Grasp a dumbbell with your feet, allowing the round end to rest on the soles of your shoes. The pressure from holding the dumbbell together with your feet isolates your hamstrings. Start with your legs extended, then flex your hamstrings to raise the weight until your shins are perpendicular to the floor. Lower slowly without pausing, then repeat. You can also perform this exercise one leg at a time on a leg curl machine. Be sure to inhale as you raise your feet and exhale as you complete the movement. **ZAP!**



MELISSA'S WEEKLY WORKOUT



After years of muscle-building workouts, Melissa can now enjoy a maintenance schedule. She lifts weights three times per week, favoring a full-body workout that takes 40 to 45 minutes to complete. "I train my legs twice a week since they have always been a weak area for me," she admits. On alternate days, she does 40 minutes of cardio (kickboxing, elliptical machine or stationary bike). She does at least three to four days of cardio each week. Her routines vary, but a typical week looks like this:

DAY 1: Chest, shoulders, biceps, quads, abs

DAY 2: Cardio

DAY 3: Back, triceps, calves

DAY 4: Cardio

DAY 5: Quads, hamstrings, abs

DAY 6: Cardio

DAY 7: Rest or cardio