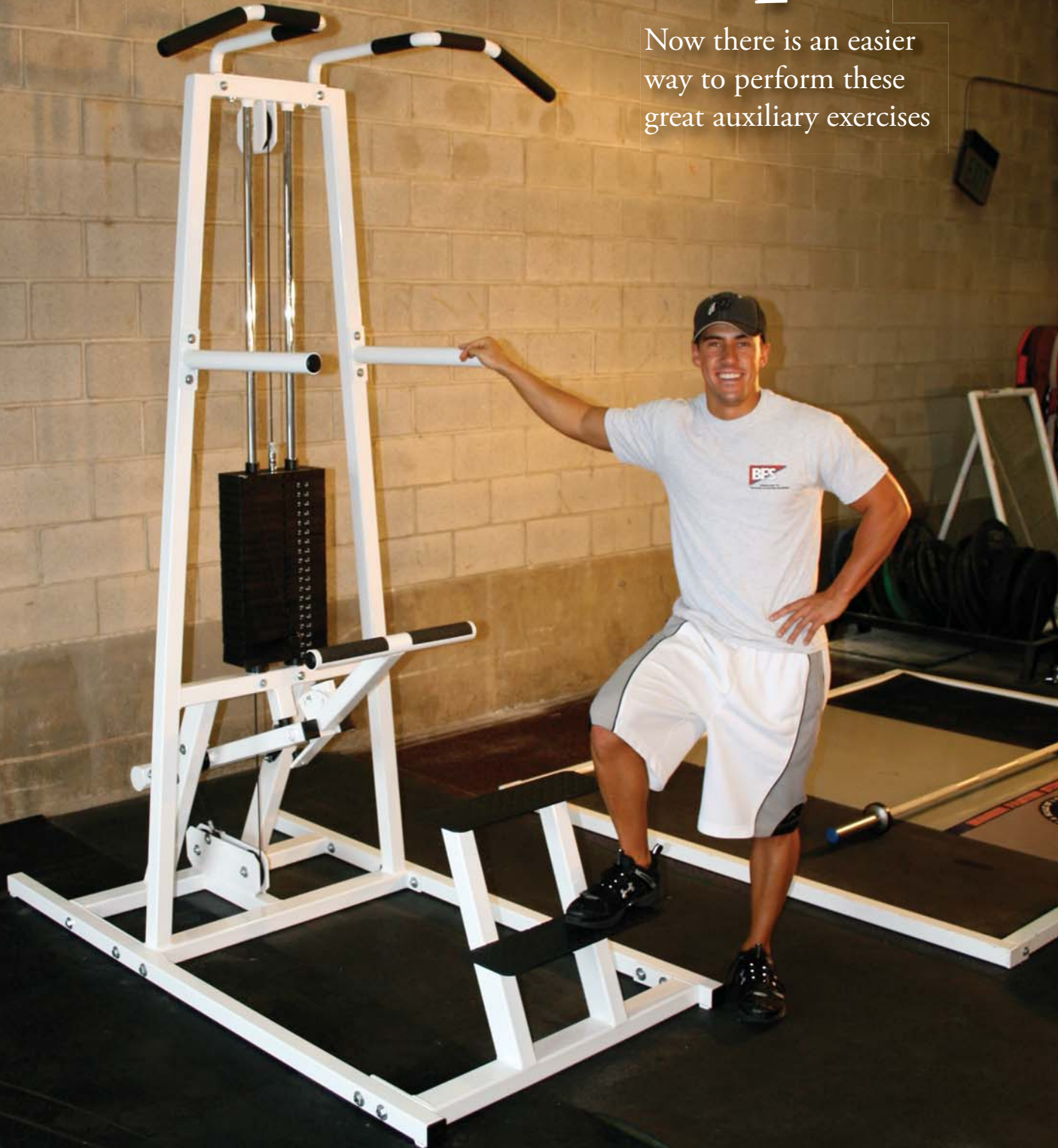


Rediscovering *Chins and Dips*

Now there is an easier way to perform these great auxiliary exercises



In the early days of physical culture, chin-ups and dips were considered key exercises that should be performed on a regular basis, whether your goal was to improve athletic prowess or to simply enjoy optimal health. These two exercises worked all the major muscles of the upper body – chest, shoulders, upper back, biceps and triceps. What happened?

Bodybuilding happened, with its focus on isolation exercises to shape each individual muscle. And that's fine, if you're a bodybuilder. Powerlifting happened, with its emphasis on bench presses and partial movements. Personal trainers happened, the modern-day physical fitness experts who ultimately lost their way with Swiss balls and foam rollers and rubber bands. What also happened, and this may be the most important reason, is laziness.

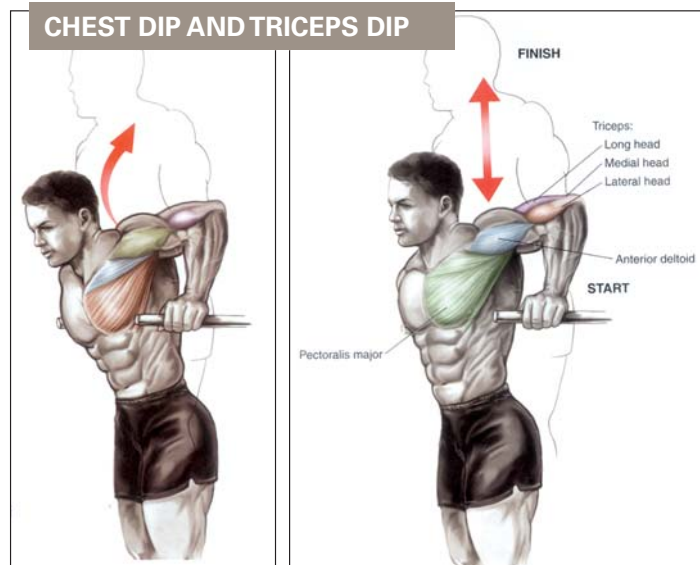
Chin-ups and dips are hard, so hard that some individuals, especially women or individuals who are overweight, cannot perform a single repetition of either. They become embarrassed and frustrated, and so they stick to cable pulldowns and triceps pushdowns instead. Although an occasional lat cable crossover or triceps pushdown is fine for variety, nothing packs on slabs of muscle like dips and chins.

Just look at the upper back muscles of gymnasts, athletes who use chins and dips as key exercises in their conditioning programs. And how about all those magnificent Greek Olympians of ancient times? The Greeks built their impeccable physiques with basic calisthenic exercises such as chin-ups and dips. Oh, and let's not forget those brave soldiers who defend our country who get fighting trim with bodyweight exercises.

From an anatomical standpoint, the chin-up works the latissimus dorsi, teres major, posterior deltoid, rhomboids, the sternal portion of the pectoralis major, the lower portions of the trapezius, and the elbow flexors. How you position your hands determines which muscle groups are emphasized. For example, chins with your hands about six inches apart will emphasize the biceps brachii, while pull-ups with the same hand spacing will focus more on the brachialis and



On the BFS Assisted Chin/Dip machine, a footplate is connected through a pulley mechanism to a selectorized weight stack. The more weight you add to the weight stack, the more upward force is applied to the footplate and the less strength is required to perform the exercise.



Illustrations from *Bodybuilding Anatomy* by Nick Evans, Human Kinetics, www.humankinetics.com

brachioradialis. Also, performing the exercise with a parallel grip (so your palms face each other) increases the stress on your rhomboids and lats.

Dips affect many of the same muscle groups as the bench

press: anterior shoulders, pectorals and triceps. They also strengthen upper back muscles, such as the trapezius, as they are involved in providing stability as the exercise is performed. Dips are probably the best single exercise to develop the triceps. The triceps consists of three heads: lateral, long and medial. According to research by Per A. Tesch, PhD, dips are superior to close-grip bench presses for developing all three heads of the triceps.

The BFS Solution

Many individuals cannot perform chin-ups and dips because the minimal resistance level is a person's bodyweight. Women, overweight individuals and larger athletes often will have problems

performing these types of exercises. However, BFS has recently introduced a machine that effectively reduces bodyweight resistance. It's called the BFS Selectorized Assisted Chin/Dip Machine.

This heavy-duty machine has you perform dips and chin-ups while standing on a footplate. The footplate is connected through a pulley mechanism to a selectorized weight stack. The more weight you add to the weight stack, the more upward force is applied to the footplate and the less strength is required to perform the exercise. When your strength increases, you can fold back the footplate and perform the exercises with bodyweight, or you can attach a weight belt around your waist for even more resistance. However, when you get to this level, you may find that you are more stable if you cross your ankles when performing these exercises.

The following are the major types of exercises that can be performed on this exciting, versatile new machine.

Regardless of the type of chin-up or pull-up or dip you perform, your legs, torso and upper arms should remain in line and your legs should remain straight, with the feet centered on the footplate.

History has proven the effectiveness of chin-ups and dips in building overall upper body strength. Everyone from athletes to those who just want to improve their overall physical fitness can benefit from performing them. And now, with the BFS Assisted Chin/Dip machine, you have another good reason to add these exercises to your workout program!

Dips

There are two basic types of dips: a *triceps dip* and a *chest dip*. With the triceps dip you stay as upright as possible throughout the exercise to emphasize the triceps, and with the chest dip you lean forward at the finish of the exercise to place more emphasis on the pectorals. For both variations your upper arm should descend below

horizontal, but those with shoulder problems may need to reduce the range of motion. As for breathing, inhale as you lower your body and exhale as you straighten your arms.

Chin-ups

Let's go over a few basic concepts. Chin-ups are performed with your palms facing you (supinated grip). Pull-ups are performed with your palms facing away from you (pronated grip), and one advantage is that they work the forearm muscles more and tend to put less stress on the wrists.


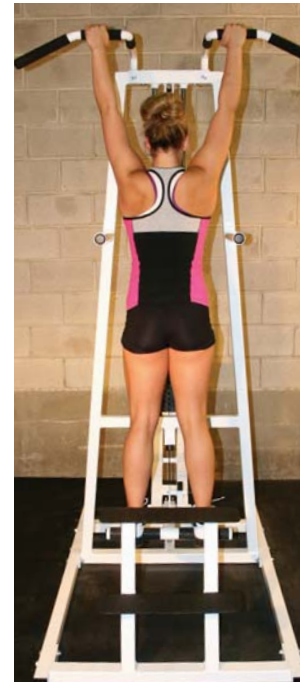


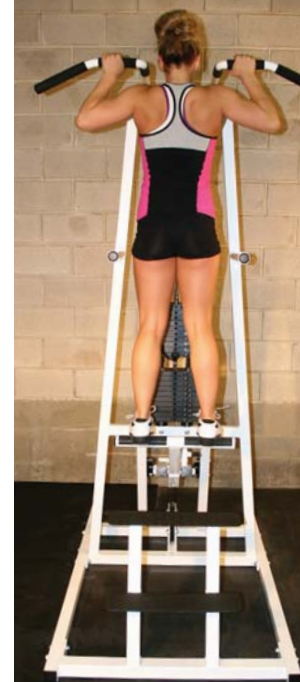
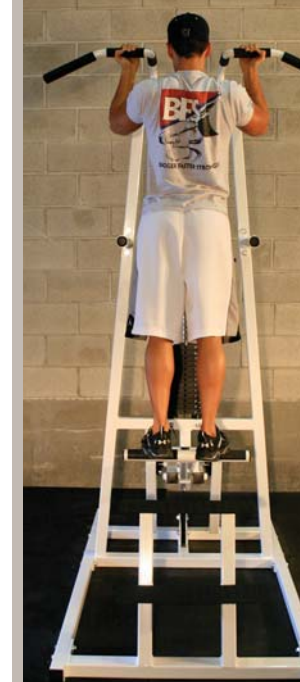
Regardless of the type of chin-up or pull-up you perform, to achieve the fullest range of motion and thereby increase the amount of muscle mass recruited during the exercise, at the start position your arms should be straight and your shoulder blades elevated. Begin these exercises with the combined bending of the elbows and *squeezing* of the shoulder blades, and finish with a full contraction of all the muscles at the end of the exercise. As

for breathing, inhale (or hold your breath) as you begin pulling and exhale as you lower yourself. Wrist straps can be used if you find that your grip fatigues before your upper back. However, you should always perform at least one set of chins without straps to strengthen your grip.

When your strength increases, you can fold back the footplate and perform the exercises with bodyweight, or you can attach a weight belt around your waist for even more resistance.



Here are several variations possible on the BFS Selectorized Assisted Chin/Dip machine.

			
			
<p>Parallel Grip Chin-up A parallel grip provides greater overload for the muscles that extend your shoulders. You will also find that this grip creates the least amount of stress on your wrists, elbows and shoulders.</p>	<p>Chin-up, Medium Grip This variation increases the overload on the elbow flexors. In fact, if you include chins in your workout, you may not need to perform specific biceps exercises!</p>	<p>Pull-up, Medium Grip Because the biceps brachii have a less effective line of pull compared to having the hands in a supinated position, this grip increases the overload on the brachialis and brachioradialis muscles. In other words, it is more of a forearm exercise.</p>	<p>Pull-up, Wide Grip This variation primarily emphasizes the outer portion of the latissimus dorsi. BFS</p>

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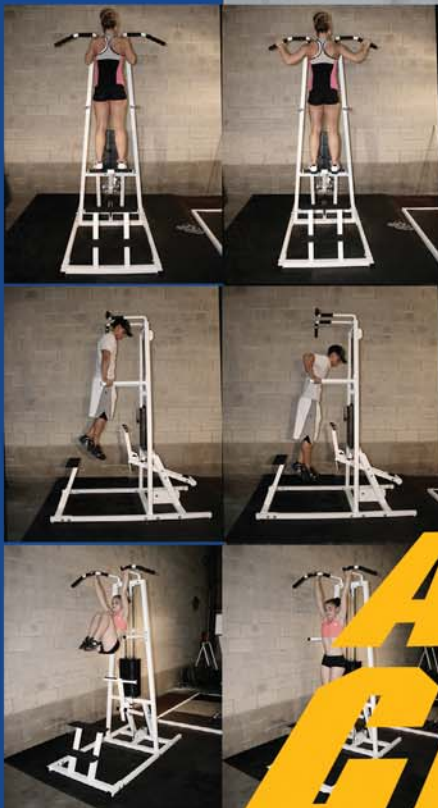
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The shoulder dip should be performed on the parallel dip section and emphasizes the triceps and shoulders, whereas the chest dip should be performed on the V-dip section and emphasizes the pectorals and the lateral head of the triceps.

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