

Climb to Beat Breast Cancer ~ Ben Lomond Challenge

THE PHYSICAL CHALLENGE

No prior climbing/mountaineering experience is necessary, but experience with hiking, backpacking, etc. is a huge plus. You must be in good health and strong physical condition. The one-way hike to the top is almost 7.6 miles and will take approximately six hours to reach the summit; plan on a 10-hour roundtrip adventure. The elevation is 3,700 feet.

It is imperative that trip members be in good physical shape. Do not plan on getting into shape while on the mountain! The level of fitness needed for this trip requires regular aerobic exercise for at least one hour, four to five times a week. This may include aerobic fitness classes, power walking, jogging, and cycling on hills, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Additionally, you must be able to sustain exercise for prolonged periods. Your endurance training will be just as important as your strength. We recommend that you start a moderate training program *several months* before departure, then build up to a very strenuous level. Since training is highly sport-specific, include some hiking or running in your program.

Consult your physician prior to starting this or any exercise program.

TRAINING

Assess your condition. The first step is to assess your current fitness state by doing a comprehensive assessment, preferably three months before your climb.

Areas to look at:

- Blood pressure
- Aerobic fitness
- Body weight/body fat % (the more fat you have, the more "gear" you will carry)

BASIC PROGRAM

Monday-Wednesday-Friday (Aerobic) – 3 days per week or more often

Do an aerobic activity, like brisk walking/jogging/cycling and stair climbing for 30-40 minutes. Try to aim for working out at 70% of your maximum heart rate.

Every weekend do one 2-hour hike (up and down hills if possible; treadmills are a great option).

Strength Training - Optional

Leg Extension

Seated on a table or chair, lean back slightly with hands grasping the sides. It is best if each leg is done individually. Extend your foot forward and upward, pausing momentarily in the extended position, and then recover to the starting position. Resistance is applied on the front side of the ankle. Keep your buttocks on the table or bench at all times and do not lean forward. If this bothers your knees, reduce the weight, and do not extend your leg out as far.

Leg Press (inner thighs)

Sit on Leg Press machine and position your feet with your heels about 4-6 inches apart, toes facing out. Take a deep breath and then lower the platform slowly, keeping your knees in line with your feet. When you've covered the platform as far as comfortable, push out in a controlled manner to return to the starting position, exhaling as you do so. As you return to the start, do not lock out your knees. This technique will provide continuous tension on the thigh muscles to make them work harder. If this exercise bothers your knees, try reducing the range of motion so you do not come down too far.

Lunge Walk (thighs, hamstrings and buttocks)

These should be done to fatigue, without additional resistance. You'll need a large space, such as the perimeter of a gym or aerobics room. Using long, controlled steps, lunge forward in a walking motion. Keep your torso erect and drop your hips as low as comfortable. It's good to perform near a wall to assist with your balance.

Reverse Lunge (thighs, buttocks and extra emphasis on hamstrings)

This is one of the most neglected of the lunge series, but because of its additional emphasis on the hamstrings, it is one of the most important. It is the same as the Lunge Walk but backwards. Begin with your feet nearly shoulder-width apart, torso erect. Take a slow, controlled step backward with one leg, lowering your hips so that your forward thigh becomes parallel to the floor. Your knee should be positioned directly over your ankle and foot. Your front foot should point straight ahead and your trailing knee should be extended to stretch your hip flexor muscles. The exertion phase of the exercise occurs when you push off your rear foot and step back to return to the starting position.

Standing Calf Raise (calves)

Position yourself on a standing calf machine by placing your feet so that your heels can extend below the toes; this will enable you to get a full stretch on the muscles. With your legs straight, lower your heels as far as comfortable and then raise your heels as high as possible to achieve maximum contraction. Pause momentarily in this position. Toe position can be varied to change the emphasis. Because this exercise has the potential to make your calves especially sore, for your first several workouts you should use light weights. As you become more accustomed to the movement, you may want to perform extra repetitions until you feel the "burn."

Strength Training – Optional (continued)

Flexibility

Stretches to do on a daily basis:

- Hamstrings
- Quads
- Calves

Equipment familiarity: Weekend hikes should be done with equipment to get used to it (boots, daypack and walking stick).

Mental approach: Very important, build up knowledge about the mountain by reading available literature. Be fully prepared.

The Science of Staying Warm with the LAYERING SYSTEM

The rules about "layering" (what you wear and how you wear it) have changed. "Intelligent" materials are here, and they rely on physics, chemistry, and even biology to be more effective - and work better when layered above or below another material. The goal of these "smart" clothes is to simplify and reduce, by making clothing more efficient. Stay away from cotton or cotton blends. Cotton dries very slowly and will not hold as much heat for your body once it is sweaty. Stick to wool or synthetic fabrics *ONLY!* Examples are "fleece," "polypropylene," "Lycra," "Nylon."

Now one piece can do the work of two or work over a broader temperature range. No longer do you need to pile on thick layers of fabric as the weather gets colder; if it gets cold, today's techno fabrics will hold more heat, and when you heat up, they will cool you off.

Layers

Outdoor gear manufacturers make many different types of synthetic fabrics that all work quite well. The layers listed below vary from brand to brand. The important thing is to know that your layers will allow you to regulate your body's temperature appropriately. Everyone is different in this regard. You need to be sure that you are comfortable with the combinations of layers so you heat up and cool down as necessary. We recommend that you test your own personal layering system in real temperature situations.

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