

# SELF

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to hips  
by March 31



# Exercises for a sexy hip dimple

One of the most coveted fitness payoffs—the sexy hip dimple, below—can emerge if you're conscientious about leg-lifts. On the other hand, performed incorrectly (as lifts often are) they're not likely to make much improvement and may leave you with a sore lower back, say fitness pros Stephen Poul and Elissa Hyman of New York City's Vertical Club. Here are their tips on getting the rewards, risk-free.

★ **Zero in on the "glutes."** You carve out a dimple by concentrating on hip and buttock muscles (the gluteals, or glutes)—without relying on leg muscles. Try this simple strategy to keep the exercise emphasis where it belongs: Relax the lifting foot.

★ **S-q-u-e-e-z-e.** To put more resistance on the glutes, clench buttocks into a "fist." (Squeezing also helps keep hips and buttocks stable—a back-saver.) An image to help you keep the form: You're trying to prevent a \$1,000 bill from being snatched from between cheeks.

★ **The water trick.** Pretend to balance a glass of water on your outer thigh (see photo, below) and you focus in on glutes three ways: To prevent water from sloshing out to the side, keep your lifting leg parallel to the floor. To keep water from spilling behind you, don't lift leg much higher than shoulders. And to assure the glass doesn't crash, take it slow and steady (fast and "flailing" means momentum does more of the work, muscles less).

★ **Four more ounces of back protection.** To avoid rolling backward: "Stack" hips so the top one is directly over the bottom, tighten abdominal muscles, square off your shoulders and tuck your pelvis.

★ **Sweat your dimples out, i.e.,** add on calorie-burning aerobics—running, racewalking, aerobic dance. Granted, some bodies develop deeper dimples than others, but layered under body fat, you'll never get a chance to flaunt the ones you have.

# HEALTH WATCH

ALL THE NEWS TO KEEP YOU FIT

## FILLINGS: NEW AND IMPROVED ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

**T**ooth-colored composite resins, already favored for up-front dental repairs, are now rivaling silvery amalgam as the most-used filling material for back cavities. That's understandable, but the American Dental Association cautions that composite fillings are not always the best choice for back teeth, where chewing pressure is greatest and appearance counts least. Because some dentists blame patient demand for composite overuse, talk over these questions with your dentist before deciding:

● **How long will it last?** Composites are not as strong as metal and so tend to wear down faster. Also, the bigger the cavity, the more prone the filling is to fracture, says Ronald Goldstein, D.D.S., clinical professor of restorative dentistry at Medical College of Georgia.

● **How much experience do you have with composites?** Special skill in handling is critical to good results. One difficulty: getting a tight junction between the filling and the adjacent tooth—poor fit leaves a space where food can lodge, setting up decay.

● **How much will it cost?** Because the tooth must be specially prepared and the composite applied in stages, the procedure takes extra time. And time plus skill can cost you: The charge is two to three times that for an amalgam.

Composites are being improved and more dentists are gaining experience in the demanding technique, but for now, says Dr. Goldstein, their aesthetic appeal shouldn't blind us to their limitations.

*Continued*



A hip dimple peeking from beneath a bit of satin, left, is the sexy payoff of perfect leg-lifts. Two quick checks to assure dimple-making muscles are working to their max, above: To test buttocks' "squeeze" power, put thumb on one cheek, fingers on the other, top. Pretend to do the water glass-balancing trick, bottom—that way leg stays parallel to floor and the exercise emphasis stays on hips.

Photographs: Drew Carolan. Left: Top pants: Calvin Klein. Underwear and Slingshot.