

SELF

Tone Up With These 6 Power Moves for Your Mind and Body

By: Erin Bried

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These toners also boost mental focus, says Sarita Allen, Linda Celeste Sims's pilates teacher (and an Ailey Extension instructor). Try them three times a week.

Warm-Up Breathing

Stand with your back against a wall, heels touching, and inhale, reaching arms out to sides and overhead. Pause, then exhale and squeeze lower abdominal muscles, pulling them toward the spine as arms float down. "Firing up your abs is like turning a key in the ignition for the rest of your practice," Allen says. Continue for 1 minute.



Abdominal Scoop

Sit on a mat with knees bent, feet flat, spine long and hands grasping hamstrings. Inhale, then exhale as you round lower back, pulling sitz bones together while very slowly and deliberately scooping abs toward spine, rolling backward until arms are straight. Hold 5 seconds; return to start. Do 10 reps.

Pelvic Lift

Lie on a mat, feet hip-width apart. Press arms and palms firmly into mat and lift hips, keeping shoulders on mat. Hold 10 seconds, pressing hips up and pulling abs in, toes pointed forward and knees, hips and ankles aligned. Roll down one vertebra at a time from neck to tailbone, taking time to elongate and separate each segment of the spine. Do 10 reps.

Leg Circle

Lie on back with legs straight and feet flexed. Inhale and lift right leg, toes pointing up. Exhale as you move right leg across body, down and up to center in a sweeping oval, keeping hips square and flat on the floor. Do 10 reps, then reverse direction. Switch legs; repeat.

Curl-Up

Lie on back, bring knees to chest and hands behind head. Curl up so shoulder blades come off floor; inhaling, stretch legs out at a 45-degree angle from floor to engage inner thighs, abs and buttocks. Exhale, pulling knees back to chest and curling body a little higher. Do 10 reps, using abs to curl higher each time.

Roll Down

Lie on back with legs straight, feet flexed and arms extended overhead, stretching long. Inhale and reach arms to ceiling. Exhale, tuck chin to chest and roll up one vertebra at a time. As arms reach toward toes, pull waist back. Slowly reverse movements to return to start; do 10 reps.

Linda Celeste Sims' Day of Power Eating

The Alvin Ailey dancer performs constantly—so when she isn't on stage, Sims is prepping for her next big starring role by eating right. Here, a day in her diet. Plus! Tone up with these 6 power moves for your mind and body.

Breakfast

Coffee

Plain Yogurt With:

- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Ground Flax Seed
- Slivered Almonds
- Honey

Green Juice with:

- 5 Kale Leaves
- 5 Carrots
- 3 celery stalks
- 1 cucumber
- 1 apple
- Dash of fresh ginger



Snack

Piece of Fruit

Lunch

Spanish Chicken with Home Sofrito (ingredients below; add to any protein for a major flavor boost!):

- 20 garlic cloves
- 1 1/2 cup white wine vinegar
- 1 Spanish Onion
- 3 plum tomatoes
- 3 cubanelle peppers
- 7 acejitos

Dinner

Since I'm usually not home till the end of the night, I'll treat myself to a glass of wine only or if I'm absolutely starving, some cheese and crackers.