The 90 Year Old Vegan Who Just Set A World Record Transcript

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Ann Esselstynu2019s record attempt

Hi everyone, Ann Esselstyn has just set a world record. She's nearly 94 years old and has just set the new world record for the oldest woman to dead hang. >> Ann, it's go time in about 4 hours. How you feeling? Nervous. [music] >> [laughter] >> Well, this is where it's going to happen. Right there on that bar.

And uh you've been practicing for how long? A month. About a month, starting February 1st. >> Yeah. Yeah. >> [music] >> Um what do you think? You think you'll be able to get it?

Guess I have to, right? >> [laughter] >> Before she does it, has anyone got anything to say? Feel like our exercise physiologist could weigh in on how hard a dead hang actually is. Well, grip strength, right? It's an indicator of grip strength. And this actually has been proposed and validated as a clear biomarker of aging. Yay, Ann! What it really does here is it provides an objective indication of a medical status that goes far beyond just like grip, hand strength itself, right?

Why grip strength matters

Grip strength really integrates a multitude of things. We're talking about neuromuscular integrity. We're talking about hormonal health, inflammatory load, central nervous system function. I mean, nutritional status, something that somebody left out. But really, it's a great indicator of all cause mortality, a great criterion for sarcopenia, age-related skeletal muscle loss.

There's so many things that we can delineate from grip strength alone that it doesn't surprise me to see Ann Esselstyn, 93, vegan and thriving, exercising daily, being a perfect example of what optimal health looks like. That was really well said. Sarah, what are your thoughts on this? Yeah, I actually saw an X post from Andrew Huberman, who we spoke about before, and I believe he is a carnivore advocate, but he said, "93 years and 231 days old, Ann Esselstyn dead hangs for 2 minutes 52 seconds to set a new world record.

Maybe we can call it live hangs instead now, instead of dead hangs. Distal strength reflects many things, as Shabnam just said. But what he failed to mention is the fact that she's vegan and has been vegan for what, over 40 years now? Is that true? For those of you who don't know, Anne Assustain is Dr.

Caldwell Esselstyn's wife, who's like a well-known researcher showed that you can reverse the progression of heart disease on a plant-based diet, works at the Cleveland Clinic, was Olympic rower, many, many things. So that is the context. She's been living plant-based for a very, very long time. You must know that as a researcher, obviously, Shabnam, right? Oh, yes. I mean, she's a cardiologist. She's very big on not consuming a lot of seed oils or oils in general, keeping fats nominal, eating a lot of whole food plant-based, and exercising rigorously multiple times per week. All of the things that showcases in longitudinal data that this is what reaches for optimal health, right?

Decreased risk of mortality and morbidity. The way you can live, how it impacts your life, your death, and whether you live with disease.

Annu2019s plant-based health background

And so, I think Anne is just the golden child of this, and I I and I want to call her golden child. 93, but a kid doing dead hangs. >> You know, I used to teach kinesiology at Cal State University, Northridge, and I would ask my students how long they could hang. They're like, "Why?" I'm like, "Well, we're on the top floor. We have a lot of earthquakes here. Would you be able to hang? Would you be able to hold your own body weight for prolonged period of time if it meant that your life depended on it?" And guess what, people started training on that strength. And what we ended up seeing because the research showcased the various effects, the correlations that we see with increased strength, right, grip strength. I mean, I think the one study that I I was always referring to, this one

meta-analysis basically calculated the pool hazard effect ratio 1.16 per 5 kg reduction in grip strength for all cause mortality. So basically what that means, for every 5 kg you lose in grip strength, your mortality risk climbs by 16%. And so I always preface to people, doesn't matter how old you are. If you're going to be carrying your groceries, are you the person that does one bag at a time, keep on going back to the car, or you the person that takes all 17 bags, key in your mouth, trying to open the door, kicking it open with your foot? You're the person that incorporates grip strength in activities of daily life.

Why? Because it translates to activities of daily life. Carry heavy things, be able to carry your own body weight. It it shows that it has great impacts on mortality. My name is Anne Cryle Asselton, and I am attempting to break the oldest female to hold a dead hang. My goal is to hang longer than the acquired 2 minutes as indicated by the Guinness World Records. And on top of that, I am plant-based.

>> [laughter] >> She's so awesome.

The successful dead hang

I remember when I went to Upstate New York, I interviewed her husband, a cool wall Asselton, and they've got a lake in their garden, and so I'd go there every morning because I was staying in an Airbnb nearby. I'd go there every morning just for a swim, but it's just the most amazing property ever. They're just so kind, made us lunch and everything, but kind, compassionate, and also very strong.

>> That whole family, right? From and Britt, all of them. They're just wonderful, wonderful people. I think they walk the walk and talk the talk. >> Have you seen the other activity that she does? No, what's the other activity?

She attaches a tire to her and then drags it up and down her hill near her house. It's basically her new obsession as of a couple of years ago. Again, it's a it's a it's a weighted carry. It's a way to engage in high intensity cardiovascular exercise, but she's brilliant.

>> Let's go to the video. I did it.

Grip strength, aging, and cognition

>> [laughter] >> Wow, 253. That is incredible. Impressive. That is so impressive. Wow. She didn't even look like she was struggling, you know? I want to be like that, but I'm 93, 94. And I think another thing that is important to note here in the research that I didn't get to talk about is Anna's older, an older adult, but poor grip strength has been shown in research to be associated with a higher risk of cognitive decline and dementia. I think it's very interesting that we start to see that kind of correlation between elevated risk of both Alzheimer's and non-Alzheimer's dementia subtypes with grip strength. What they were saying in the research is that these proposed mechanisms actually kind of share this inflammatory pathway, basically. So, this reduced cerebral perfusion, what they say is associated with like low muscle mass, and the fact that grip strength is not only an indicator of muscle strength, but technically more biological vitality, more broadly speaking, you know, there's something to be said that start carrying more things.