

## a sexy back and shoulders

With this supereffective gym workout, you'll stand taller, look slimmer and feel more confident in anything strappy. BY STACY WHITMAN

### THIS MONTH'S GOAL

Create sexy definition and reverse a chronic slouch with exercises for your upper back and rear shoulders.

### Why these moves work

Many women neglect their upper back and shoulders in order to spend time on their thighs, belly and other "problem areas." The result: They don't learn how to use those muscles to pull their shoulders back, which can prevent hunched-over posture, a protruding belly, and even back and neck pain. When you try the three innovative exercises here you'll zero in on this hard-to-target area and reap the rewards.



### MUSCLES TARGETED

upper back and shoulders:

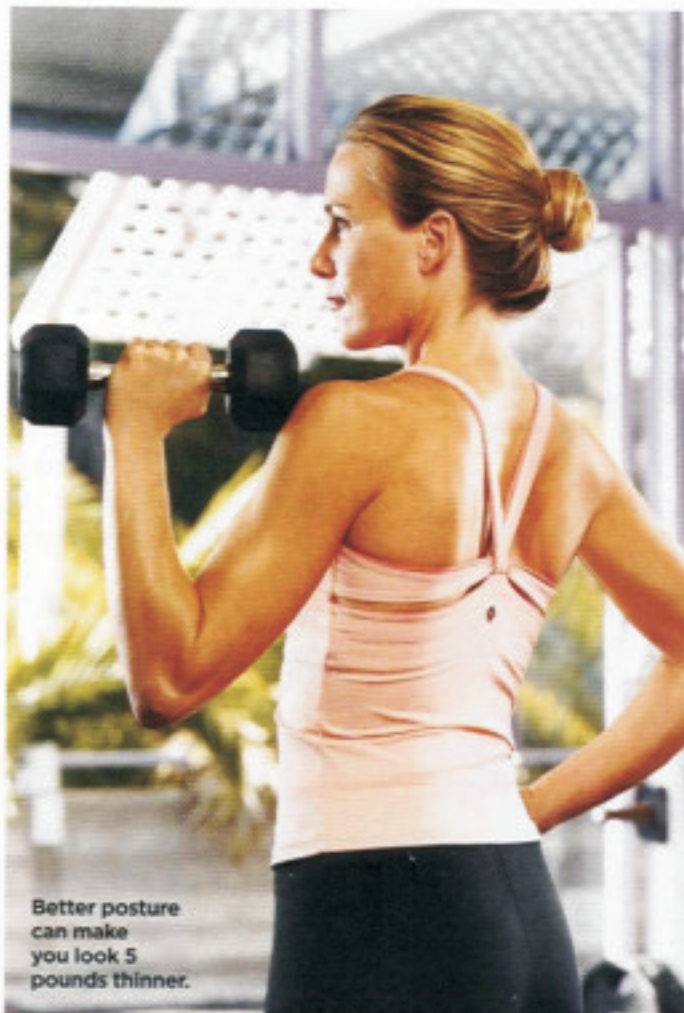
1. anterior deltoid
2. medial deltoid
3. posterior deltoid
4. trapezius
5. rhomboids
6. levator scapulae

### Muscle mechanics

Your deltoid muscle is composed of three parts: The anterior deltoid helps raise your arm forward and rotates it inward. The medial deltoid raises your arm to the side and assists the other shoulder muscles. The posterior deltoid moves your arm back and rotates it outward. The trapezius helps in overhead pushing actions and pulls your shoulders back and down (with the rhomboids). The levator scapulae helps lift or shrug your shoulders.

### Workout essentials

You'll need a bar secured on a rack, a lower-cable pulley machine with a short bar attachment and a set of 3- to 5-pound dumbbells. (For details and at-home options, see page 114.) Warm up with 5 minutes of cardio. Finish by stretching your shoulder and back muscles.



Better posture can make you look 5 pounds thinner.

**SHAPE READER MODEL** Amy Stec, 37, says, "Strength training helped me get back in shape after my pregnancies. Being strong and fit allows me to keep up with my family." She runs 4-5 miles 3-5 times a week and lifts weights twice a week for 45 minutes.



**TRAINER'S STRATEGY** > These exercises involve pulling motions similar to those you use every day, at work, at home or with the kids, says Rod Johnson, a certified trainer at Seal of Fitness in Atlanta, who developed this workout. > The bottom line Functional moves like these not only improve your posture, they strengthen your midsection by utilizing core stabilizing muscles and help to lower your risk of experiencing a painful back or shoulder injury.