

SELF

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Jennifer Garner Wears These Toning Shoes - Should You? We Played Guinea Pig.
Monday, May 23, 2011 at 12:00 PM

| posted by [Nora Zelevansky](#)

I don't know about you guys, but nothing starts me on an exercise bender like an accidental glimpse of my [butt](#) in the mirror pre-[bathing suit season](#). The resulting meltdown is like a scene from *The Exorcist*, only more disturbing.

And yet I tend to have a memory like a goldfish in this department -- and I know I'm not alone. One minute we're lamenting our spreading thighs and the next we're bypassing [pilates](#) for pepperoni pizza.

Even in the face of poolside humiliation, it's hard to rally to exercise. Still, we all run errands and walking is pretty manageable, even for the most dedicated couch potato, right?

So, as celebrity trainer Jennifer Cohen's weighted [NGR sneakers](#) have recently rolled out in black, I decided (with special tips from Jennifer) to spend a week testing them out at the supermarket, on walks in my hood and on actual hikes.

Here's what I found about getting toned throughout the day:



First of all, I need to clarify that these NGR [toning sneakers](#) are not like many of the other fitness-enhancing shoes you've seen. They don't have rounded bottoms that supposedly promote balance and stimulate muscle groups.

Instead, these work in a relatively uncomplicated way that seems like common sense: There are weighted insoles that get slipped inside the sneakers. That extra weight simply makes walking more strenuous, so [leg muscles](#) get [toned](#).

The minute I slipped these shoes on (which, btw, you should probably buy a half-size larger than normal, as they run small with all those insoles), I noticed that they improved my posture. (Also, they made me closer to my husband's height, which is

just a perk.)



Following The Rules!

I wore them around for about a week, following the included instructions:

1. Walk with loosely clenched fists. You don't want to forget about the rest of your body!
2. Look straight ahead and pay attention to where you step. I do this anyway with all the dogs in my neighborhood!
3. To increase pace, let your arms swing 90 degrees and propel you forward.
4. Whether you're power walking or just going about your day, don't increase the distance too dramatically from wearing to wearing.

Okay, if I'm honest, I sort of ignored the last rule. But then rules were meant to be broken, especially if I'm going to be able to give an accurate picture of the experience. First, I [walked](#) a mile to Whole Foods. The next day, I walked about two miles and kept a fast pace. Then, I cleaned my house, while wearing them. Then, lastly, I took an actual canyon hike in the sneakers. Cohen also suggested some other moves, "Try leg lifts, walking lunges and floor work moves like the [Jane Fonda](#) days!"

Here's what I found by the end of the week: I had taken a lot of walks and actually got my house cleaned. In all seriousness, a recent American Council on Exercise study wasn't positive about balance shoes, but mentioned that they did seem to inspire people to get out and walk more. Jennifer Cohen's sneakers are totally different and weren't included in that study, but they definitely motivate the same way. Taking a walk to the dry cleaner feels very virtuous in these suckers.

According to the company's cited research, the wearer burns to **25-50% more calories** than usual. I can't speak to the validity of those numbers or to the "healthy infrared waves" that are supposedly emitted from a top insole made from Asian yellow soil or LOESS Derivatives.

But I can say that I felt soreness that indicated muscles had been used, though not the debilitating kind of pain. And I felt that tenderness right where a lot of women want to tone: My [inner thighs, quads and butt](#).

I wish I could tell you that I now have the lower body of **Jennifer Garner**, **other celebrity devotees like Denise Richards, Courtney Cox and Mary J. Blige** or even Jennifer Cohen (see below). I think I may need more than a week for that.

But at least these NGR sneakers may help me approach bikini season with less fear. After all, I have no desire to relive *The Exorcist*.



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