



THE **LEAN** BERETS

AVENGERS OF HEALTH!

Restorative Arts Training



“Restorative Arts” (orthopedic gymnastics) were a major part of classical physical education during the Golden Era of American fitness from 1885-1920. The idea was to first establish proper structure, posture, control of movement, safety, and “physical literacy” before adding more load, volume, and intensity. There were three major content areas of classical physical education during this era.

1. **Restorative Arts** (Structure, Posture, Orthopedic Gymnastics, Safety)
2. **Martial** (Self/National Defense)
3. **Pedagogy** (Sports, Theory, Games, Dance, Play)

Restoratives were prioritized rationally because it was not efficient to move fast or load the body with heavier weights if good control of movement was not in place whether it was in martial applications or sport settings. Good movement built the ability for efficient self-defense and efficient athletes. Without quality movement, a martial artist is limited. Without quality movement, an athlete in any sport is less than efficient. While our elders participated and enjoyed sports and other areas in the pedagogy content area, they understood the importance of maintaining balance in training, training for injury prevention, and having restorative tools for healing purposes in the event of injury or strain. ALL sports create imbalances—they knew this and did their best to prevent postural, strength, and flexibility imbalances with the restorative arts.

Restorative art methods and tools were used to help create the best generations of fitness America has ever known. We are using these again today to accomplish the same objectives of quality movement, safe movement, and balanced training that creates high levels of physical literacy. Common restoratives were instructor driven and involved the use of body weight with fundamental movements like crawling, rolling, hanging, and calisthenics tools like light dumbbells, Indian Clubs, medicine balls, and health wands. “Using gravity” with off the ground training to realign posture and create higher levels of fitness was also common with pull up bars, horizontal bars, parallel bars, climbing ropes, vaults, and especially Swedish stall bars. Many of the classic systems also prioritized “foot fitness” as an important foundation of efficient movement.

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