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USEFUL STUFF

# Men's Health

**THE  
PROTEIN  
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WHAT TO EAT WHEN...  
FOR YOUR LEANEST  
BODY EVER

7 WAYS TO SAVE THE  
PLANET WITH YOUR  
**BICEPS**

**INVEST IN  
YOURSELF**

**SHE WILL LIKE YOU EVEN  
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**OUTSMART  
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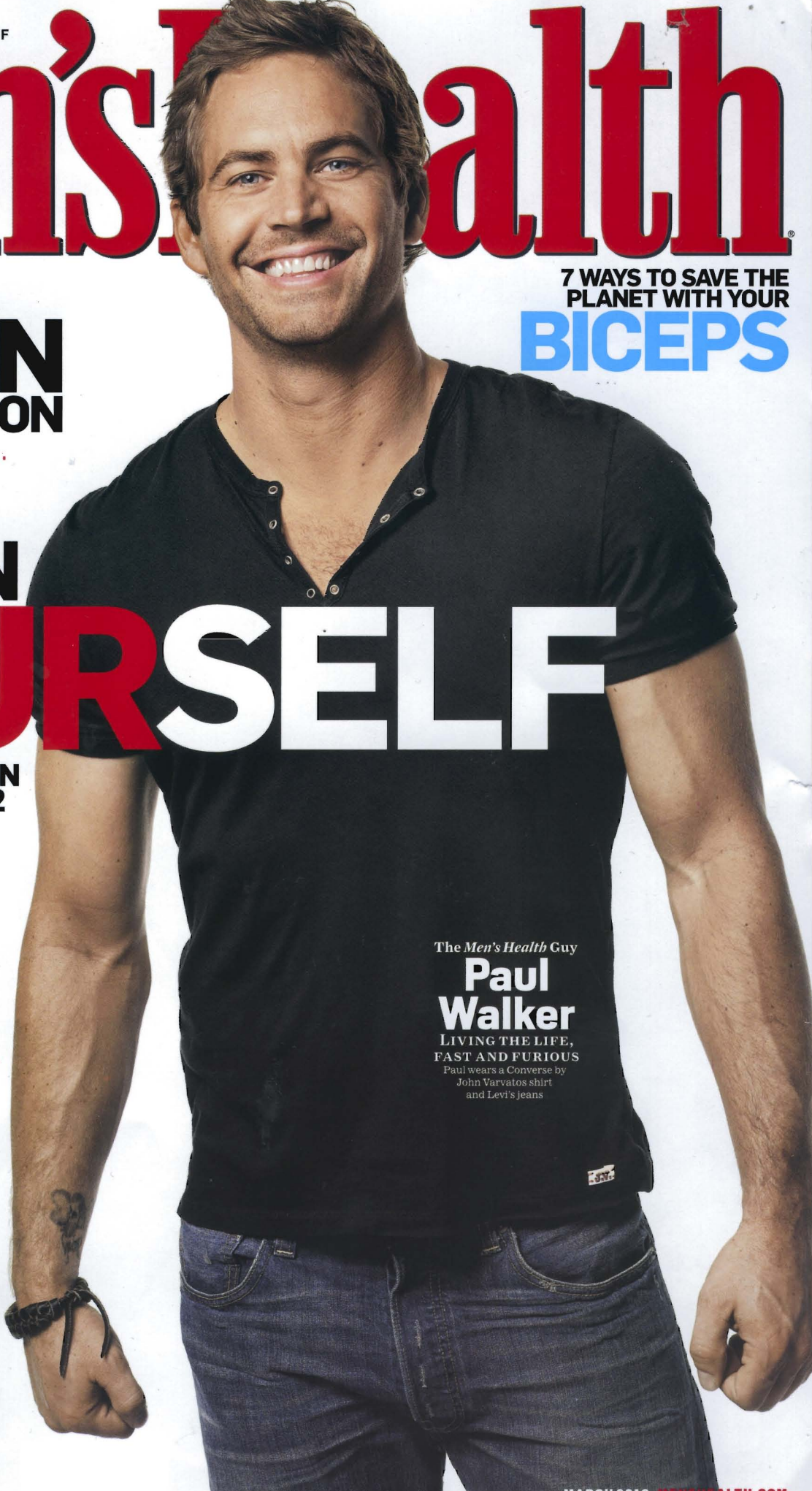
**COOK  
THIS,  
NOT THAT!**

**BLAST FAT & HAVE A BLAST**

**"I WANT MY  
CANCER BACK"**  
A BIZARRE MEDICAL  
MISADVENTURE

**1,742**

**WAYS TO GET BETTER—  
AT EVERYTHING**



*The Men's Health Guy*

**Paul  
Walker**

**LIVING THE LIFE,  
FAST AND FURIOUS**

Paul wears a Converse by  
John Varvatos shirt  
and Levi's jeans



# Find Your Balance

Actor Paul Walker knows life's greatest pleasures are earned, not bought

BY DAN JONES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINO MUÑOZ

## ONE MAN'S DUMP IS ANOTHER'S PARADISE.

So it is with Paul Walker's vacation home: a construction site in Indonesia clogged by jungle brush. The neighbors are terrorists and the place is accessible only via clandestine transport by local villagers. Call it a fixer-upper. • "It's been a lot of work," says Walker, 36, of his latest project. "I came here thinking it would be my own secret island—heaven on earth. But there wasn't even access from the road; I literally had to bulldoze one. But it's worth it. This place is one of the most beautiful on earth, if not *the* most beautiful—especially for the price." • Walker, who dodged cars and braved flames filming the upcoming heist pic *Takers*, knows the difference between relaxing and retreating. And when he's finished shaping his refuge, he'll be surfing 15-footers, diving for octopus, gathering fruit from the thousands of trees on his property, and washing his meals down with fresh water from the spring out back. • Why should you care? Because most guys with Walker's bank account would have brandished a black card to reach that kind of Valhalla. But his philosophy—that life's greatest pleasures are earned, not bought—applies to anyone, no matter how thick the billfold. He's spent his life honing this approach, in fact. Turn the page to find out how he balances his life—and how you can do the same.

Paul Walker has earned a vacation: His action movie *Takers* opens this spring.

## Make what you love

Surf or no surf, a vacation on a construction site isn't everyone's idea of R&R. But sculpting life's creature comforts—food, lodging, entertainment—trumps swiping a credit card any day, Walker says.

"It's warm here, but it just pisses rain non-stop—lightning storm after lightning storm," he says. "And working in the rain, I have to tell you, is not easy. I don't have electricity. I use candlelight. I cook over an open fire, the traditional way. I harvest my rice, dry it out, beat it, and cook it up. I dive for lobster and octopus. If I did that year round, the novelty would wear off, but to come here for a couple, 3 weeks at a time, it's perfect."

**Your takeaway:** Jetting to Indonesia might not be in your budget, but it's easy enough to collect the same kind of DIY dividends at home. Instead of buying precooked BBQ for the weekend soiree, bury a whole hog in the ground for a smoke session. Ditch the Geek Squad and set up your own entertainment center. Or become an apprentice to your contractor: He can handle the tough stuff while you tile the backsplash and sand the drywall. You'll blow off steam banging a nail or two or basting the beast. And you'll end up with a finished product you're proud of instead of just pleased with, and learn a few things in the process.

## Extinguish your ego

A swollen head can cramp thoughts. That's why Walker looks for ways to shed the comfort his success has conferred. The best way yet? Sharks. Really big ones. "Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to be a marine biologist," he says. "As you go through the grind and the distraction of a career, it's easy to lose sight of your dreams."

Enter Walker's unlikely turn as a deckhand in the National Geographic Channel's *Hooked: Great White*. Around the time his movie *Fast and Furious* was shattering box-office records with a \$71 million opening weekend, the actor

was elbow-deep in chum, the rookie on a team of scientists and fishermen tagging great whites to track their migration and mating.

"I didn't want the pressure of being the focal point or the center of attention, or anything like that," Walker says. "This wasn't about me. I'm another grunt, I'm running around on the boat. People watching the program want to see the damn shark, not me."

For Walker, there's no better way to expand than by playing the smallest part in a larger production. "There has to be a synergy, and a trust that takes the edge off," he says. "You have to trust that everyone is competent. Everything is happening so fast that you become really dialed in and focused. It isn't until you let the shark go that you look at each other and say, 'Holy shit, what did we just do?'"

Walker's not abandoning ship anytime soon—he's already planning new expeditions with the crew. "I'll miss a couple of upcoming shark-tagging trips because of work, but I make as many trips as I can, and it's something I'm committed to for the next 5 years."

**Your takeaway:** Finding new teams to join is the fastest way to make yourself a better individual, whether you're sparring with sharks, jamming with a band you pieced together on Craigslist, going five-on-five for full-court scrimmages every Wednesday, or enlisting with your local volunteer fire department.

## Create a training tool kit

Walker's roles require him to stay fit, but he's allergic to the elliptical trainer. Instead, he's built a tool kit of training options, all aimed at rewards, not punishments.

"It's about keeping as many irons in the fire as you can," he says. "There's no gym out here, so I just do whatever I can to stay physical. It's condition-dependent; if there's no surf, I dive or stand-up paddle or canoe-surf or swim, or even do pullups from tree branches if I have to. And of course, there's surfing."

**Your takeaway:** Varying your sweat session the way Walker does will do more than just help you stick to a workout regimen. It'll keep your brain online, too. Instead of zoning out to the ESPN playing on the TV above your treadmill, mix it up—in or out of the gym—and you'll see better results, faster.

## Focus on the ride, not the bumps

Walker took up surfing in high school, and found a way to blend his first love with his acting career when he signed on to film the surf epic *Into the Blue* alongside actress Jessica Alba. (Tough work!) His focus on the board, he says, has helped him choose a line in life, too.

"The more you're under fire, the cooler you are," Walker says of surfing. "Fifteen feet is now where I draw the line. But 15 feet is big—you're on the edge, and the water is only 6 or 7 feet deep until it's jagged coral. It's inevitable: I always get cut, on my feet, on my arms, and on my hands. It's like hitting concrete. And that means you have to be on your game. If you hesitate, you go down hard." The same principle guides Walker when he's out of the water: Be aggressive, or stay home.

**Your takeaway:** Your coral might be a middle manager, a flight delay, a highway detour, or a monster mother-in-law, but focusing on the opportunity and not the obstacle can help you reach the shore with stories to tell.

## Make the right kind of mark

Walker's a father, and he's mindful of leaving his daughter the right kind of legacy. "We're only on the earth for a short period of time," he says. "Movies aren't enough. I want to take my success and parlay it into something bigger and better."

For Walker, that step up is REACT (Rapid Emergency Assistance Care Team), a group of EMTs and health-care professionals that he helped found. The group's goal is to air-drop into disaster zones the minute the news hits the wires—ahead of the larger, less mobile emergency teams.

"I'm a doer, and whether it was the tsunami in Sri Lanka or the earthquake in Indonesia, I was always saying, 'I should be there; I should be helping out,'" Walker recalls. So he connected the dots. "My mother's a nurse, my sister's going to nursing school right now, and my friends have construction backgrounds. God willing, the next time there's a natural disaster I'm going to be there with 11 or 14 people and a handful of doctors," he says. "And the next time, it'll be 150 people with 30 to 35 doctors."

**Your takeaway:** By starting small, asking for help, and connecting the skills he's collected in life, Walker is on the verge of making something much more powerful than an action blockbuster. And that's something every man can do. "It's not even really about giving back," he says. "It's just what I'm built for." ■

## Is your life too lopsided?

Here's how to rebalance your checkbook, career, and diet

### YOUR PAYCHECK

**Lopsided** Plowing 10 percent into your 401(k) and spending the rest

**Balanced** Cushion your retirement first, but before you spend a dime, consider investing a percentage of your income as a separate account. "In this economy, safer accounts [like CDs] basically park your money," says Ray Harrison of Harrison Financial Group in Citrus Heights, California. "Go for growth opportuni-

ties and let your earnings pay for your frivolous things." Consider shorter-term investments, like exchange-traded funds, mutual funds, or individual stocks, he says.

### YOUR CAREER

**Lopsided** Loading your boss's inbox with dozens of brilliant e-mails

**Balanced** Schmooze with office power players, too, says Marie McIntyre, Ph.D., the author of *Secrets to*

### Winning at Office Politics.

"It's not sucking up—it's building relationships that cushion future conflict," she says. "And you can't bond with your boss electronically." If an exchange exceeds two e-mails, walk across the office. You'll get face time and answers that are more honest; people are more easily deceived via e-mail than face-to-face, a Florida State University study found.

### YOUR MEALS

**Lopsided** Avoiding fat

**Balanced** According to a recent Washington University in St. Louis study, 38 percent of people claim to avoid fat. But eating fat may help you stay satisfied longer, says Alan Aragon, M.S. Each day, down ½ gram of fat and 1 gram of protein per pound of your target body weight, he says. The rest of your calories can come from carbs.

LAURA ROBERSON