

Fitness Evaluation



In fitness it is important to record your results so that you can chart your success. In order to do this you need to have a starting point.

General Fitness Guidelines:

A starting point will help you:

1. Access strengths/weaknesses.
2. Have a baseline for gauging improvement.

Prior to beginning any fitness program it is important to consult with your health care provider.

Readiness for Exercise Quiz:

The Readiness for Exercise in Appendix A will assess your readiness to begin a fitness program. Please read the questions carefully and answer each one honestly.

The exercises in this class are to be performed at your own risk. Be careful as you do the work.

Exercise Tips:

It is important to dress properly for exercise: loose-fitting, comfortable clothes and athletic shoes are appropriate. Your shoes should still have “bounce” in them and the front, back and mouth of the shoe should have cushioning. Look for cross training shoes if you decide to buy something new.

Try to eat prior to exercise and drink water as well. This will help give you energy to complete each workout.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issues guidelines to help Americans live a healthy lifestyle. More information can be found at <http://www.healthierus.gov> but here are the exercise recommendations for healthy adults:

Basic Exercise Recommendations for Adults (aged 18–64)

- Adults should do 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate-intensity, or 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity. Aerobic activity should be performed in episodes of at least 10 minutes, preferably spread throughout the week.

- Additional health benefits are provided by increasing to 5 hours (300 minutes) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, or 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both.
- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups performed on 2 or more days per week.

If you haven't been active the above suggestions might seem overwhelming. Start slowly and build upon your activity level. The important thing is to start!

Did you know?

Exercise is movement designed to increase your fitness level.

Fitness level is the physical condition you are in.

Physical activity is any activity that requires movement.

Tips for meeting the guidelines:

With busy work schedules, family obligations, and packed weekends, it can often be difficult to get the recommended amount of physical activity. Try these tips for incorporating fitness into your life:

- **Split up your workout into small bites.** You can accumulate moderate-intensity physical activity throughout the day in 10-minute bouts, which can be just as effective as exercising for 30 minutes straight. This is useful if you can't find one solid block of time in your day.
- **Mix it up.** Combine moderate and more vigorous exercise. For example, you can walk briskly for 30 minutes twice per week and run on two other days.

- **Set your schedule.** Make a plan ahead of time for when you will exercise. Put it on your calendar, just like work and school. You may need to work out first thing in the morning before the day gets going or maybe it is easier for you to work out during your lunch hour. Regardless, pick the time and activity ahead of time so that you have a plan.
- **The gym is not the key.** Don't dismay if you don't belong to a gym. All you need are some running shoes to walk, run, or bike. Make your neighborhood your gym!
- **Add kids for more fun.** This is a good way to encourage your kids to be physically active and get them committed early to a lifetime of health. You can also include your spouse, pets, or friends with you during exercise to add some fun to your routine.

In addition, consider your personality type when choosing your fitness plans:

- **Are you competitive?** Consider a recreational league, entering races, or contests. Also make sure you set time and distance goals for yourself. Keep track of your fitness activity in writing.
- **Are you social?** Think about group exercise classes, joining a health club or running group, or working out with friends. Sometimes, it is easier to exercise if you are going to meet up with a group of friends.
- **Are you more introverted?** Grab a book or your iPod and head for the bike/treadmill. Try out an at-home fitness video or an eFitness class.

- **Are you aggressive?** Go for cardio kickboxing or work out with a partner and lift weights. Team sports like football, hockey, and basketball might be a great form of exercise for you.

Bottom line: Find something you like to do, and do it!

Check out Appendix B and take the Exercise Personality Assessment to help you choose an activity.