

Exercise Basics

Lesson 4

DETERMINING YOUR HEART RATE

Aerobic activities can strengthen your heart. For an activity to be considered aerobic it must be performed at an intensity that makes your heart work harder than it normally does. The intensity of an activity can be estimated using your heart rate. Calculate your heart rate in the space provided.

1. Subtract your age in years from 220 to estimate your maximum heart rate.

$$220 - \text{My Age} = \text{Max HR}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

2. Multiply your maximum heart rate by 60% to find the lower limit of your aerobic intensity and by 90% to find the upper limit.

$$\text{Maximum heart rate } \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times .60 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ beats/minute}$$

$$\text{Maximum heart rate } \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times .90 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ beats/minute}$$



For the best heart-strengthening effects your heart rate during an aerobic activity should be between these two numbers. Exercising continuously for 20 minutes, 3 days per week is the best way to improve your heart fitness. Exercising longer (30 – 60 minutes) is more helpful for weight reduction.

WHEN INJURIES OCCUR

1. If an injury causes radiating or severe pain and makes moving the affected body part difficult, and/or if swelling or numbness occurs, see your physician as soon as you can.
2. For pain that develops gradually, REST. Stop exercising for a few days to let your muscles recover. Remember the following tips for treating minor pain and injuries:

ICE: Cold reduces swelling and relieves pain. Keep ice on an injured area for 10 – 20 minutes. Ice left on longer than 20 minutes can damage the skin and nerves. Reapply every few hours for 48 hours.

COMPRESSION: A towel/elastic bandage wrapped around the injured area helps reduce swelling and bruising.

ELEVATION: If you injure a limb, prop up the leg or arm to reduce swelling. Do not use heat. Heat increases blood flow and makes swelling worse. When swelling decreases, usually within 48 hours, use heat (20 – 30 minutes) a few times a day to relieve pain, relax the muscles and reduce stiffness.

3. Once you're pain free, resume exercising lightly, include flexibility exercises in your program and gradually increase our activity level over the course of 2 – 3 weeks. To prevent re-injury, determine what originally caused your injury and correct the problem, if possible.

ACTIVITY

Increase your walking program to 15 minute walks, 4 times per week. If you're already at this level, try a 20 minute walk, 4 times weekly. Remember to warm up and cool down. On the days you don't plan to walk, do at least two stretching exercise and continue to do the activities you started during Lesson 1. To assure that you are benefiting from the walking program take your heart rate before, during and after your walking routine.

Lesson 4

Your pulse is the rate at which your heart beats. As your heart pumps blood through your body, you can feel a pulsing in some of the blood vessels close to the skin's surface.

The usual resting pulse for an adult is 60 to 100 beats per minute. Certain illnesses can cause your pulse to change, so it is helpful to know what your resting pulse is when you are well. To find your resting pulse, count your pulse after you have been sitting or resting quietly for at least 10 minutes.

You can easily check your pulse on the inside of your wrist, below your thumb.

- Gently place 2 fingers of your other hand on this artery
- Do not use your thumb because it has its own pulse that you may feel
- Count the beats for 30 seconds; then double the result to get the number of beats per minute

Try to achieve a heart rate between the two numbers you calculated above. If your heart rate is below the lowest number, try walking a bit faster to increase the intensity of your walk (and your heart rate). If your heart rate is above the highest number, **CAUTION**, decrease the intensity of your walk to lower your heart rate.

