

## Training Tips - Getting Started

**Getting Started:** Know what you want to get out of an exercise program and set your goals accordingly. There are many compelling reasons to begin an exercise program and knowing your personal motivations is essential to identifying the appropriate program and for setting attainable goals. Below are some criteria that will help you set yourself up for fitness success?

Below are six key steps in embarking on and more importantly succeeding with your fitness regime:

- 1) **Build a support system:** Enlist your family, friends and co-workers by letting them know about your new routine and asking for their continued support. Remember you are your own best supporter.
- 2) **Take small steps:** Establishing small measurable and attainable goals will keep you on track while you work towards your larger long-term goals.
- 3) **Be Realistic:** Make sure your action plan is realistic and is workable given your current time requirements. Plan your workouts at times that are convenient and that have the highest degree of potential success.
- 4) **Be creative:** Try to find ways to exercise while also accomplishing other goals. Maybe one of your goals is to spend more time with your spouse or your kids. Get the whole family out for a bike ride or a hike. Another way to multi task your fitness into your life is to do your crunches and or stretches while you are watching the news.
- 5) **Change for yourself:** All your goals should come from a sincere desire to change for yourself. Recent research has shown that negative feelings are a frequent cause of relapse in behavior-change programs. Goals should be perceived as positive changes that will help you reach optimal health and well-being.
- 6) **Anticipate roadblocks:** Don't let a missed day or two through you completely off target. Instead, do your best to get back on track as quickly as possible? Which should not be extremely difficult if you have set realistic goals.

## **Three Things An Exercise Program Should Have:** A

complete exercise program must include aerobic exercise, muscular strength conditioning and flexibility/ stretching.

**Frequency:** Three to four days of aerobic activity is good for general health. If your goal is weight loss shoot for four or more days being sure to take one day off.

**Duration:** Work your way towards 20 minutes or more per session for general health and for weight loss work up to 45 minutes or longer at low to moderate intensities.

**Intensity:** Keep the pace comfortable and use the talk test for a quick and easy check on your intensity.

**Before you start:** If you are a man over 40 or a woman over 50 and are planning to participate in vigorous activities you should receive a medical exam first. The same is true for individuals of any age with two or more coronary artery disease risk factors. The coronary artery disease risk factors are as follows:

- Age – man 45 woman 50
- Family history of heart attacks or sudden death
- Current cigarette smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Physical inactivity

**Always Warm Up:** A gradual warm up will not only lesson the on-set of injury but it will also increase the effectiveness and efficiency of your work out. Here's how:

- Leads to efficient calorie burning by increasing your core body temperature
- Produces faster, more forceful muscle contractions

- Increases your metabolic rate so Oxygen is delivered to the working muscles more quickly
- Prevents injuries by improving the elasticity of your muscles
- Improves joint range of motion
- Allows you to work out comfortably longer because all of your energy systems are able to adjust to exercise preventing the build up of lactic acid in the blood

The warm up should consist of two phases. One that utilizes the muscles you will be working during your work out through progressive aerobic activity and secondly flexibility. Performing your stretching after the warm-up will produce a better stretch due to the rise in muscle temperature, increased circulation and greater muscle elasticity.

**Don't forget the cool down:** Cool down after vigorous exercise. A 10 to 15 minute cool-down period allows heart rate and breathing to return to normal. Slow walking will prevent blood from pooling in the legs. Blood pooling can cause dizziness and blackouts. Do stretching exercises again to prevent the muscles from getting sore and stiff.

## **Nutrition Essentials – Before, During and After Exercise**

While the human body's nutritional demands can vary considerably depending on the sport you're involved in, not to mention the level at which you're performing (professional, amateur, weekend warrior, etc.), all athletes can benefit from keeping a few basic nutritional considerations in mind. The world-renowned Mayo Clinic offers the following tips for maximizing athletic performance.

**1 When to eat:** Exercising immediately after a large meal may make you feel sluggish or lead to an upset stomach, cramping or diarrhea. Why? Because your muscles are competing with your digestive system for energy. To avoid these complications, eat a large meal at least three to four hours before exercising, or a small meal two to three hours before exercising.

**2 How often to eat:** Skipping a meal can cause low blood sugar, which can make you feel weak and lightheaded. If you can't eat a true "meal" before working out, and your choice is candy or nothing, eat the

candy – believe it or not, from an energy perspective, it’s better than eating nothing. Just remember that candy is high in sugar and low on nutrients; eating yogurt or a banana will provide more lasting energy and better overall nutrition.

**3 What to eat:** Carbohydrates are your primary source of fuel. Cereals, breads, pastas, rice and fruit will give you the energy you need to exercise. Within two hours of finishing your workout, eat a meal that contains carbohydrates *and* protein, to help your muscles recover. Fats also provide fuel; however, they remain in your stomach longer, which can make you feel full during your workout.

**4 The water factor:** During exercise, your body produces heat, which leaves your body as you sweat, taking valuable electrolytes – potassium, sodium, chlorine, etc. – with it. Having an adequate water supply allows you to sustain your workout while avoiding dehydration. How much should you drink? When exercising, drink at least one glass before your workout, one glass every 10-15 minutes during your workout, and at least one glass after your workout.