

Fall Fitness Challenge 2013



Components of a Basic Exercise Program Adapted from: IntelliHealth

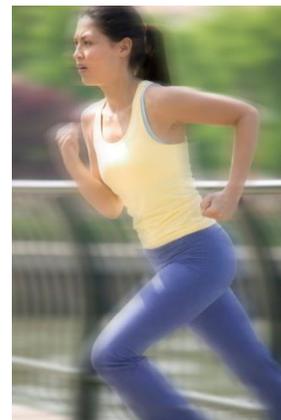
A well-rounded exercise regimen should include activities that develop the three major areas of fitness: resistance training, aerobic activity and stretching and flexibility exercise. Below are the starting points for a basic fitness program:

- **Resistance (strength) training.** Try to perform about 20 minutes of resistance training (such as lifting barbells, doing calisthenics that require working against your body weight or using weight machines) twice a week. A basic program would include 8 to 10 different exercises using the major muscle groups of the legs, trunk, arms, chest and shoulders.
- **Aerobic activity.** Incorporate 30 minutes of brisk walking (or its equivalent) on all or most days of the week.
- **Stretching and flexibility exercise.** Perform 10 to 15 minutes of stretching at least 2 times a week. A basic stretching routine would include 8 to 10 exercises working all the major muscle groups.

How much is enough?

Current research shows that to reap the health benefits associated with exercise, you should burn between 700 calories (bare minimum) and 2,000 calories (optimum disease-fighting benefit) per week in moderate aerobic activity. (Exercising beyond the 2,000-calorie mark is not a waste of time; you may still see improvements in appearance and athletic performance.) Here is one possible way to meet this recommended caloric expenditure:

- Walking briskly (about 4 miles per hour) burns approximately 100 calories per mile.
- Thus, to burn 700 calories in a week, you need to walk a total of 7 miles, or about an hour and 45 minutes.
- And to burn 2,000 calories in a week, you need to walk 20 miles, or about 5 hours. In addition, you should supplement your aerobic activity with resistance training and flexibility exercises.



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How hard should you work?

To gain the benefits of aerobic activity, you need to work hard enough to rev up your breathing and heart rate. However, today's emphasis is on longer and more frequent sessions of moderate activity, rather than on few bursts of high-intensity exercise, as recommended in the past.



There are a number of reasons for this shift. First, it appears that to reduce your risk of disease, your total quantity of aerobic activity is more important than the intensity of that activity. In addition, moderate activity is safe for just about everyone, whereas vigorous pursuits, such as running, carry a higher risk of muscle and joint injuries. Also, high-intensity activity may place too much stress on the heart, especially for individuals who are middle-aged or older or who have cardiovascular disease.

So, how can you tell what is moderate exercise? One of the best ways to judge your level of exertion is also one of the simplest — pay attention to how you feel. The earmarks of moderately vigorous activity include deeper than normal breathing, a faster heartbeat and, at the higher end of this range, light sweating. If you find that you are gasping for breath, your heart is pounding or you are perspiring profusely, you have exceeded the moderate level and moved into heavy exertion.



You can also gauge how hard you are exercising by [measuring your heart rate](#). Moderate exertion falls in the range of 50% to 60% of maximum capacity. To get an accurate reading, it is important to count your heartbeats while you are still exercising, because your pulse goes down rapidly as soon as you stop.

