

Cardiovascular Issues and Exercise

Improving cardiovascular fitness is the easiest way to lower your risk of complications associated with heart disease and the related conditions including high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

What can exercise and lifestyle changes do for me?

- Exercisers exhibit improvements in blood sugar, blood supply to muscles, and increased capacity of muscles and the liver to store carbohydrates in the form of glycogen.
- Decrease in resting blood pressure; increase functioning of the body and the brain.
- Mood elevation, heightened energy levels, enhanced self-confidence, and lower anxiety.

Precautions

- Stop if you feel pain in your chest, arms, or legs.
- Do not exercise in extreme heat or humidity.
- Call your doctor if your condition changes abruptly.

Your exercise prescription for cardiovascular/endurance training

- Always warm up and cool down.
- Work at a level where you feel comfortably challenged.
- Listen to your body and adjust as some days you may be able to do more than on other days.
- Start slow; gradually increase the time you are doing cardiovascular activities (walking, etc.) before you increase the intensity.

Your exercise prescription for strength training

- Remember to exhale when you are pushing against resistance.
- Strengthen the muscles that you use most; back, legs, and abdominals.

Principles for Success

- Set small reachable goals that will bring you to where you hope to be.
- Use a calendar or log to mark your progress.
- Reward yourself when you reach a goal.
- Avoid comparing yourself to anyone; just do the best you can each day.
- Remember some days will be harder than others. Listen to your body.
- Choose activities that are fun.
- Make exercise a part of our everyday routine.

