

Hope & Healing

Exercise Beginning an Exercise Program

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

Introduction

Exercise is the only thing that will give you more personal energy. With more energy, you will have a greater ability to handle stresses at home and on the job. Exercise will help you develop a more attractive and streamlined body. Stronger muscles will give power to your hips and legs and spring to your step. You will feel in charge of your life. Exercise lowers cholesterol, blood pressure, and weight and it prevents heart trouble.

This exercise program is very safe. A treadmill stress test is not required. It is a good idea, however, to check with your doctor if there are special risks that require attention before you begin.

Four Decisions to Make About Exercise

- Decide what kind of exercises to do. All exercise is not the same. There is the fast paced moving kind such as walking and jogging. Then, there is the kind where you lift weights. Fast walking and the like are aerobic exercises. Weight lifting is an isometric exercise. Stretching is also a form of isometric exercise.
- Decide how often to exercise. We recommend a minimum of three days a week and maximum of six.
- Decide how long to exercise. We recommend 20 minutes for each session as you begin and a gradual increase to 40 minutes each session over a period of 12 weeks.

- Decide how hard to exercise as you proceed. Many plans measure the pulse as an indicator of how hard you're exercising. We recommend the three-stop method that follows.
- Make exercise a part of your daily routine.
- Keep at your program for 100 days, until it becomes a habit.

A Three-Step Method to Keep Your Exercise Effort Within Safe Limits

- Watch your breathing. You shouldn't be so winded that you can't talk. Nor should you be so out of breath that you have to stop to get your breath.
- Notice whether you're sweating. Toward the end, you should have a light sweat.
- Be aware of whether you're comfortable. Do not continue to exercise if you develop chest pain or shortness of breath or muscle aches or pains.

Safe Stretching to Warm Up

The importance of stretching is twofold:

1. It helps prevent the loss of flexibility that comes with aging.
2. It builds muscles to protect your joints from injury. For safe stretching here are four guides:
 - Stretch until you feel tension, not pain.
 - Hold your stretch for 10 to 30 seconds. Relax. Then repeat.
 - Don't bounce into a stretch, slow and easy is the rule.
 - Start stretching only after you've

warmed up with a five minute walk.

The Stretching Routine

Step One

Lying flat on your back, raise one of your knees up toward your chest, holding it tight into the chest for a count of five.

Step Two

Straighten your leg and repeat the exercise with the other leg.

Step Three

Pull both knees to the chest, hold tight for a count of five. Straighten both legs and relax.

Step Four

Lying flat, push your lower back into the floor, thereby eliminating the back's normal curvature. Again, hold for a count of at least five.

Repeat these exercises for 3-4 minutes. With each exercise keep your head flat on the floor.

Muscle Building Without Weights

The rule of muscle is, "use it or lose it." These muscle builders can be done anywhere. They are excellent when you travel. They require no equipment; they use the weight of the body to build muscle.

Lower Body

Half-knee bends. Stand with your feet apart and your hands on your hips. Keep your back straight and your feet flat on the floor. Half-bend at the knees. Hold for a second or two. Straighten up. Repeat 10 times for a set.

Side-leg lifts. Lie on your right side. Stretch your right arm out straight. Balance yourself by placing your left hand flat on the floor. Raise your left leg about a foot from the floor. Hold for a second or two. Slowly let your leg down. Repeat 10 times. Reverse sides and repeat.

Middle Body

Crunches. Lie on your back. Clasp your hands behind your head. Bend your knees. Lift your head and shoulders off the floor. Ease back to the floor. Repeat 10 times.

Upper Body

Modified Pushups. Lie on your stomach. Place your hands on the floor at shoulder level. Straighten your arms. Push yourself up. Raise your head, shoulders, chest, belly, and hips off the floor, but not your knees. Hold for 12 seconds. Ease down. Repeat 10 times.

A 12-Week Program of Walking and Muscle Building _____

Walking has many advantages as an exercise program. You can find a place to walk almost anywhere.

Weeks One through Three

1. Walk for 20 minutes on a flat surface in a traffic-free area three days a week. Walk slow for five minutes at the start, then do brisk walking for 10 minutes. Finally, cool down with a slow walk for five minutes.
2. Do one set of each of the muscle builders every other day. Do stretching after the five minutes of slow walking and during the muscle building sessions after you have warmed up.

Weeks Four and Five

Fast walk for 15 minutes each time. Don't change anything else.

Weeks Six through Ten

Fast walk 25 minutes each session. Increase your walking to four days a week. Increase your muscle building to two sets each session. Continue everything else unchanged.

Week Eleven

Fast walk for 28 minutes each session. Leave everything else the same.

Week Twelve

Fast walk for 30 minutes five days a week. Do muscle building two days a week. Do three sets each session. Keep the rest of your exercise the same.

Summary _____

The point is, you should get started now and as Winston Churchill said, "Don't give up. Never, never give up." If you faithfully continue for 12 weeks your routines will be ingrained into your schedule so that they're automatic. Then, exercise becomes a way of life for you. And, the benefits are yours.

Awaken the Miracles Within You

The Miracle of Courage

American pioneers went west in wagons bearing signs, "Pikes Peak or Bust."

They were determined to overcome whatever came their way: bad weather, accidents, wild animals, wild humans, whatever. The Bible gives the command, "Take dominion over all things."

The courage to face circumstances and problems is gained gradually, experience by experience.

We achieve dominion when we become convinced that there is no situation that can't be overcome with sufficient spiritual power.

The fact that we become conscious of a problem is proof that we can find a solution. We express our courage and faith by being more than equal to anything that pops up.

The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.