

Exercise Guide



Active For Life

Regular exercise is a necessary part of losing weight and maintaining weight loss. The benefits from Exercise are many including disease prevention, mood improvement and long-term success on your weight loss program

Before beginning any exercise program, be sure to check with your doctor to ensure that your exercise plan is right for you.

- If you do not currently exercise, it is recommended that you wait three weeks before you begin. This will give your body time to adjust to the changes that you are already making on the Medifast program. After three weeks, gradually increase your exercise routine.

- If you already have an exercise program in place, we recommend you cut your routine in half during the first three weeks, then gradually build it back up.

This guide will help you to learn more about exercise and why it is so important. You will find many tips on how to incorporate activity into your life.



ARE YOU READY TO GET BACK YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE!

Inactive

Some people view the active life as medieval torture. Unfortunately, those who are inactive are destined to suffer a penance of:

- ◆ fatigue
- ◆ depression
- ◆ frailty
- ◆ disease
- ◆ early death

The rest of us are expected to pay their bills and pick up the pieces of their lives.

Active

Learning to understand the benefits of an active life can help you to embrace it as a gift, not torture. With the active life you will:

- ◆ feel better
- ◆ look better
- ◆ improve your physical health
- ◆ improve your psychological health
- ◆ increase your energy and productivity

If you stick with the active life, you'll delay or skip over chronic illness, enjoy your grandchildren and great grandchildren and live a life of vitality.

DEPRESSION

A comprehensive statistical review of studies related to activity and depression concluded that activity significantly decreased depression for all age groups and fitness levels. A study evaluated the effects of treadmill exercise and found substantial rapid improvement in mood in patients with major depression. It is safe to say that an increase in activity levels will undoubtedly have a positive impact on one's health and mental well-being.

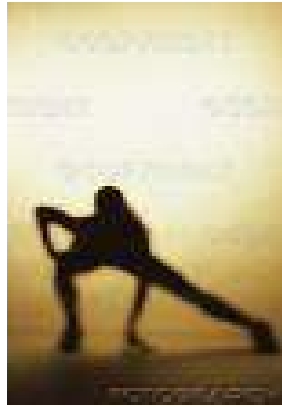


WHY EXERCISE HELPS:

Regular activity serves as a positive coping strategy, a diversion or time-out from the problems and stressors of everyday life. Activity occupies the mind, allowing the passage of time during difficult periods. It allows the substitution of good habits for bad ones, positive addictions for negative ones. Activity is a form of meditation.



Benefits of Exercise



We all know exercise can help you lose weight and stay in shape, but don't forget the tremendous health benefits as well.

- ◆ Helps prevent chronic diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes)
- ◆ Improves your overall mood
- ◆ Reduces high blood pressure
- ◆ Reduces stress
- ◆ Strengthens muscles, bones, and joints
- ◆ Improves metabolism and increases your energy level
- ◆ Strengthens immune system
- ◆ Helps prevent depression
- ◆ Increases bone density, which helps prevent osteoporosis

3 The basic areas of fitness

Cardiovascular Exercise
Muscular Strength
Functional Fitness

Cardiovascular exercise will strengthen the heart, lungs and respiratory system, so it is necessary for optimal health and fat loss. During a cardiovascular workout, the heart, lungs and blood vessels respond by increasing the amount of oxygen available to the working muscles. In essence, during an aerobic workout, you are slightly starving your body of

oxygen. This signals your heart and lungs to start becoming stronger and tells your muscles that they need to manufacture more aerobic enzymes so that they can process more oxygen.

Muscular Strength Training is essential for burning body fat. For every pound of muscle you gain, your body burns 30 to 50 additional calories per day. If you gain 5 pounds of muscle, you'll be burning up to 250 additional calories per day. Another important, yet often overlooked benefit of strength training is the way it combats the loss of bone mass (osteoporosis).

Functional Fitness refers to two areas:

Flexibility - Flexibility relates to the amount of movement that can be accomplished at a joint. Tight muscles can create imbalances. For example, tight hamstrings can contribute to low back pain.

Core strengthening - Core strengthening is critical as we age. So many individuals develop back problems as a result of a weakened core. Loss of core strength can contribute to poor posture and injuries.

Exercise Tips

- **Set realistic goals** – Make sure you have a very specific goal. Make sure it is realistic and quantifiable.
- **Be consistent and persistent** – Get a minimum of three and a maximum of six days of exercise. One day of rest is important.
- **Get moving** – Just get going. It doesn't take a lot of time to do beginner's level weight training and cardiovascular exercise. During your workout, focus on form, technique, precision and breathing correctly.
- **Educate Yourself** – Learn the concepts such as repetitions, set, cardio, etc. It is important to have basic knowledge.
- **Find exercise/activities you enjoy** – If you hate the treadmill, but love spinning class, then go for the spinning. Don't judge an activity until you have tried it. You may actually love Yoga.
- **Don't get discouraged** - If you experience an exercise plateau, don't get discouraged. It happens to every one.
- **Find a Buddy** – This will hold you accountable and it can make it more fun.
- **Let the music move you** – Studies show that individuals increase the intensity of their workouts when they incorporate music.
- **Do it for life** – Every age group has different needs and preferences when it comes to health and wellness. You can weight train, perform cardio, stretch and compete in athletic events at any age. Just ask Jack Lalanne.



To calculate your target heart rate, subtract your age from 220. Then multiply that number by .60 to .85. This will reflect a healthy range for your heart.



220 - _____ = _____

.60 of target heart rate is _____

.85 of target heart rate is _____

WHY IS A TARGET HEART RATE IMPORTANT?

What is body fat?

Your body fat percentage is exactly what it sounds like... it's the amount of fat on your body. It's what people REALLY want to lose when they say they want to lose weight. "Weight" can be a lot of things. Weight can be water, weight can be muscle, and weight can be body fat. When you step on a scale, you only see weight.

Why should I know what my body fat percentage is?

Whether your goal is weight loss or weight gain, whether you are looking to lose fat, increase muscle or a combination of both, one of the most important things you need to know is your body fat percentage. People pay so much attention to scales and tape measures, yet they neglect the most accurate way of tracking progress. Imagine your weight is like a globe... and your body fat percentage is more like a street map. One will show you a very general direction, but the other will show you exactly where you're going.

Instructions for using Calipers:

Method 1: Measure skinfolds at the Abdomen, Suprailiac, Triceps, and Thigh

Method 2: Take only 3 measurements.

Men - Chest, Abdomen, Thigh.

Women - Triceps, Abdomen, Suprailiac

Stand relaxed with your arms hanging comfortably by your sides - do *not* flex! When taking the thigh measurement, shift your weight to the leg that you are *not* measuring.

Walking Your Way to Health

Walking may be the ultimate form of exercise. It can provide just as much of a workout as running—even cross-country skiing - without the inconvenience, expense or risk of injury.

With a few simple alterations to your stride, walking is also a great way to melt away pounds and strengthen muscles. And of course, walking is a weight-bearing exercise (good for bone-building) ... and it can be done anywhere. All you need is a decent pair of shoes.



OPTIMIZING YOUR STRIDE

According to a Columbia University study, conventional walking is mostly momentum. Only in the final third of the stride do the muscles produce power for forward movement. To boost the fitness value of walking, you must put more muscle to work.

- ◆ **Make the muscle work earlier.** Instead of just applying power to the end of each stride, start extending a backward force against the ground the instant your heel touches down. Think of pulling the ground under your body with your leg. This action engages the back of the thigh (hamstrings) and the buttocks (gluteals). Together, these muscles are up to five times bigger than your calf muscles. End each stride with a push-off as you normally would.
- ◆ **Swing your hips.** Most people use only the legs to carry their feet forward. It is better to reach forward with the hip of the leg that is coming forward for the new stride. Picture a line through your hips, running from left to right. If you're strolling, this line stays perpendicular to the direction of travel. In aerobic walking, the line should be at a 45 degree angle to the direction you are headed. This change allows to also work your abdominals.
- ◆ **Boost Your speed.** Focus on acceleration as soon as your heel strikes the ground. Imagine your eyes on the level plane. As you walk, keep them level, with no bouncing. Look at a lamppost, tree or another object that is relatively close to you. Walk so smoothly that the object does not jiggle.

BODY BENEFITS

Put more muscle mass to work, and you will quickly derive the benefits of walking - better fat metabolism, improved glucose tolerance, a lower resting heart rate, reduced stress, etc. The difference between plain walking and aerobic walking is dramatic.

GETTING STARTED

To reduce your risk of injury, start your walking program gradually. You can begin by taking a 10 to 20 minute stroll, three or four days a weeks, even if you are already fit.

Add five minutes a week, working up to an average of 40 to 50 minutes a session. this is the ideal workout length for weight loss and health benefits.

As you increase workout time, also increase your speed. You will know you have readed the proper intensity if. . .

- ◆ **You are slightly out-of-breath** throughout the workout.
- ◆ **You are a bit above the comfort zone** but are able finish the workout. On a scale of 5 (resting) to 20 (all out effort), your level of exertion should be about 14.
- ◆ **You are able to talk in phrases only**, not complete sentences.

PICKING THE RIGHT SHOES

Look for moderate cushioning. . . a low-beveled heel. . . roominess in the toe box. . . flexibility. . . an "Achilles notch" at the back of the collar to allow speace for your Achilles tendon.

Have a knoweledgable salesperson check the wear pattern on your old shoes before he/she recommends a new pair.

MODERATE EXERCISE IS BEST

For the average American, it is clear that moderate exercise is best. Moderate exercise minimzes the risk of musculoskeletal injury. It is a realistic level of exercise for most people, it's easy and it doesn't have to take a lot of time.

At the Cooper Aerobics Center, they have shown that moderate activity reduced deaths from heart attack, stroke, diabetes and cancer by 55% - and increases longevity significantly.

The best exercises to perform to obtain health and longetivty benefits, in no particular order, are walking, cross-country skiing, swimming, running, cycling.



THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Many of us are looking for that magic potion, crème or pill. The real “Fountain of Youth” lies within our day to day habits – eating right, drinking water, getting plenty of rest, managing stress and exercising. There are no guarantees in life and even fewer in death. A recent article in AARP Magazine highlighted the following:

◆The most dramatic declines due to aging are in muscle strength. Unless you do resistance exercise - strength training with weights or elastic bands – you lose 6lbs pounds of muscle a decade.

◆The loss of muscle mass not only saps our strength; it also lowers our metabolism and exposes us to greater risk of age related diseases.

◆The loss of muscle and increase in body fat puts extra strain on the heart and can tip the balance of healthy lipids in the blood, leading to heart attack and stroke.

◆Building muscle is much easier than you might imagine. Strength training just 20 minutes a day, three times a week, for 10 – 12 weeks can rebuild three pounds of muscle and increase your metabolism by 7%.

◆A boost in metabolism can make you feel more energetic, more alert, more vital and alive. Plus the added muscle has a halo effect on many systems of the body.

◆Added muscle can reduce blood pressure, improve your ability to use glucose from the blood by 25%, increasing bone mass by 1 to 3 percent.

◆A regular exercise program at least three days a week can reduce your risk of dying in the next 8 years by 40%, improve brain function, cut your risk of alzheimer’s disease by up to 60% and blunt the symptoms of depression.

◆What is it about physical activity that makes it such a panacea? As scientist learn more about how the aging process work, their find that exercise both aerobic exercise and strength training has a tremendous impact on every cell in the body, reducing inflammation, increasing blood flow, and even reversing the natural declines in oxygen efficiency and muscle mass that comes with aging.

IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO START

Consider a study done at a nursing home in Orange City, Florida. Nineteen men and women with an average age of 89, most of whom used wheel chairs, did just ten minutes of strength training a week. After 14 weeks almost everybody was out of their wheelchairs. One woman moved back into independent living. The results appeared in Mature Fitness Magazine.

EXERCISE YOUR OPTIONS - Tips for everyday life

- Join a walking group in the neighborhood or at the local shopping mall. Recruit a partner for support and encouragement.
- Push the baby in a stroller.
- Get the whole family involved—enjoy an afternoon bike ride with your kids.
- Walk up and down the soccer or softball field sidelines while watching the kids play.
- Walk the dog—don't just watch the dog walk.
- Clean the house or wash the car.
- Walk, skate, or cycle more, and drive less.
- Do stretches, exercises, or pedal a stationary bike while watching television.
- Mow the lawn with a push mower.
- Plant and care for a vegetable or flower garden
- Play with the kids—tumble in the leaves, build a snowman, splash in a puddle, or dance to favorite music.

At work:

- Get off the bus or subway one stop early and walk or skate the rest of the way.
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to go with you.
- Take part in an exercise program at work or a nearby gym.
- Join the office softball or bowling team.

At play:

- Walk, jog, skate, or cycle.
- Swim or do water aerobics.
- Take a class in martial arts, dance, or yoga.
- Golf (pull cart or carry clubs).
- Canoe, row, or kayak.
- Play racket ball, tennis, or squash.
- Ski cross-country or downhill.
- Play basketball, softball, or soccer.
- Hand cycle or play wheelchair sports.
- Take a nature walk.

Most important – have fun while being active!