



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

September 2020

What does it mean to be fit?

To be physically fit is being in a state of good health and well-being. There are many definitions for each of these, and they may mean different things to different people.

Health is a state of physical, mental, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or infirmity. Good health helps us live a full life. Some basic health factors you may have regularly evaluated at a wellness physical are your height, weight, temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, glucose levels, and cholesterol levels. Your doctor will also look at all bodily systems to assure everything is working properly from your heart, to your kidneys, liver, etc.



Well-being is the state of being healthy, safe, comfortable, and happy. There is a physical and psychological component to well-being. According to the World Health Organization, "Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

Physical fitness is defined as the body's ability to function efficiently and effectively in work and leisure activities, to be healthy, to resist disease, and to react to emergency situations. Think of all the things you need to do throughout the day and the leisure and sport activities that you enjoy. A physically fit person will be able to do all these things without too much difficulty. Physical fitness has many areas that can be objectively measured such as cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, muscle flexibility, percent body fat, etc. Athletes may even go further and have other areas measured and developed such as power, speed, agility, etc.

So, what does this all mean for you? Think about what you want to achieve for your health and well-being. Decide what goals you wish to achieve for yourself and formulate a plan. Anything is possible with awareness, planning, and follow-through.

Exercise FITT Principle



Now that you know what you want to achieve for your health and fitness, one way to assure a safe and effective exercise program is to use the FITT Principle. This can be used for planning any type of exercise such as cardio, muscle strength and endurance, and muscle flexibility. It can also be adjusted according to your goals and changing needs. FITT stands for:

Frequency - How often you will exercise or do a certain type of exercise such as cardio or weight training. It is recommended to accumulate at least

150 minutes a week of moderate intensity CV exercise or 120 minutes a week of high intensity CV exercise or a combination of each. This may be anywhere from three to five times a week depending on the duration of each workout. Muscle conditioning should be planned so that you work each muscle group at least twice a week to maintain your current level, or more to improve muscle tone and strength. Muscle flexibility refers to stretching exercises, and a full body stretch should be done daily.

Intensity – How hard you work doing a certain type of exercise. CV intensity can be determined many ways through heart rate, talk test, etc. You may wear a heart rate monitor to determine your target heart rate or simply see if you are able to sing or talk during your workout. If you can sing, you are not working hard enough. If you can talk but are a little winded, that is moderate intensity. If you can't carry on a conversation without difficulty, that is high intensity. Stretching intensity can vary with how deep you go into a stretch and hold it. Go to the point of feeling a stretch but not pain. If you have a trouble area, you may do more than one stretch for that muscle or group. Lower back, Piriformis, or hamstrings are common trouble areas.

Time – How long each workout will last. Your cardio workout may last from 20-60 minutes depending on your intensity and the frequency of your workouts. You may do 20-minute high intensity cardio or 60-minute lower to moderate intensity cardio. Strength training time will depend on your goals and how many days a week you are working each muscle group. A full body workout may take an hour whereas it may be less if you only work certain parts on certain days. A full body stretch should only take about 15 minutes. A more intense stretching regiment for trouble areas can take longer.

Type – What kind of exercise. The type of exercise can be different for cardio, muscle conditioning, and flexibility training. Cardio may consist of running, biking, any variety of cardio machines, jumping rope, etc. Muscle conditioning may be done using exercise bands, hand weights, weight stack machines, or using your own body weight for resistance. Flexibility may be done with general stretches, yoga, Pilates, etc.

Change any of these areas to add more variety to your workouts or to focus on a different goal like gaining muscle rather than maintaining muscle. If you have any questions, ask your health coach or a local fitness professional to assist you with your goals and workout plan.

Roasted Pear and Butternut Squash Soup

Ingredients

- 4 cups of pears, d'Anjou or Bartlett variety
- 4 cups of diced, peeled, and seeded butternut squash
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of diced red onion
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon of ground black pepper
- 32 ounces of broth (chicken or vegetable)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Place pears, squash, and onion on a large sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Toss gently to combine, then spread out into one layer on sheet pan. Roast in oven for 35 to 40 minutes.
2. Remove from oven to cool. Place pear-squash-onion mixture into food processor fitted with blade and add broth, just to cover. Process until smooth, then transfer to stock pot. Add remainder of broth and mix through. Season with additional salt and pepper, to taste. Simmer soup gently for about 15 minutes and serve.



Health Tip:

Sticking with a Physical Activity Program

- *Start small.* Walk on your lunch break and take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- *Set weekly goals.* Look at the week ahead to keep goals more manageable.
- *Find a workout buddy.* Motivate each other to stay on track.
- *Try something new.* Mix up your activities so you don't get burnt out.

Action: *Keep a physical activity log to remind yourself of your accomplishments.*

Goal Setting



While setting goals might be simple, it's not always easy for most people. We often lose focus and become distracted with the perfection of setting our goals and lose sight of their true meaning. Goals are meant to help propel you forward, identify what you truly want, hold you accountable, and help you believe in yourself.

When setting your goals, try thinking about who you want to be. Describe the type of person you want to be at the end

of your journey, not what you want to achieve. Does this person use their break at work to take a quick walk, make better eating choices, or pack their lunch?

Once you've identified who you want to be, think about what that person does every day. Start with making a list and identifying their healthy habits. Once you've made a list, start with picking just ONE of those healthy habits to practice. Ask yourself if you are confident that you can practice that habit every day for two weeks. If not, make it smaller and make it work for you. Picking one habit to start with gives you the momentum you need to get started and keep going.

Lastly, find a trigger you can rely on to remind you to practice that habit, whether it is an alarm, a friend, or your health coach. Find your support and use it!

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach. Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, well-being & legal issues.

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