



# Exercise at Home

Wellness Educational Unit

*It's Your Life* Health Management Program  
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# Welcome

Welcome to the *It's Your Life* “**Exercise at Home**” educational module. Today we are going to talk about free or inexpensive ways to exercise at home. You'd be surprised how many things around the home can be turned into exercise equipment. Did you ever look at an empty milk jug and see a dumb bell? How about your stairs as a “stair master”? Today we'll talk about the 5 components of exercise and how you can incorporate them into your life at home, with little if any expensive to you.

## Warm-Up

The warm-up, done prior to exercise, is designed to slightly increase heart rate, increase circulation and get the muscles prepared for exercise. The warm-up should be done at a low intensity and last approximately five (5) minutes. The “warm-up” will prepare you both mentally and physically for your exercise, and reduce the likelihood of any muscle strains

### Examples of an “At Home Warm Up”:

- Walking around the block
- Jogging in place
- High steps marching in place

# Stretching

Stretching is the most often overlooked component of an exercise program, despite its effectiveness in eliminating muscle aches and strains. After the warm up, stretching will help loosen up the muscles preparing the muscle for exercise. This “loosening up” of the muscle decreases the likelihood of straining or cramping while exercising. You should stretch the muscle until you feel a slight pull, hold it for the count of 10-30 seconds, and relax the stretch. You NEVER want to bounce or violently stretch a muscle as this can lead to a serious injury. Stretching can be done throughout the day to help alleviate any post exercise pain.

## Body of Exercise

### ACSM guidelines for healthy adults under age 65

- **Option 1:** Do moderately intense aerobic exercise 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- **Option 2:** Do vigorously intense cardio 20 minutes a day, 3 days a week And do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, eight to 12 repetitions of each exercise twice a week.
- If short on time, research shows that moderate-intensity physical activity can be accumulated throughout the day in 10-minute bouts, which can be just as effective as exercising for 30 minutes straight.
- It should be noted that to lose weight or maintain weight loss, 60 to 90 minutes of physical activity may be necessary.

## **ACSM guidelines for healthy adults over age 65**

- **Option 1:** Do moderately intense aerobic exercise 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
  
- **Option 2:** Do vigorously intense aerobic exercise 20 minutes a day, 3 days a week  
*And*  
Do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, 10-15 repetitions of each exercise twice to three times per week  
*And*  
If you are at risk of falling, perform balance exercises  
*And*  
Have a physical activity plan

## **Cardiorespiratory**

Cardiorespiratory fitness can be simply defined as the following: the ability of the body's circulatory and respiratory systems to supply fuel and oxygen during sustained physical activity. During moderate-intensity aerobic exercise the participant should experience some increase in breathing or heart rate yet still be able to carry on conversation. Moderate-intensity aerobic exercise means working hard at about a level-six intensity on a scale of 10.

Any number of daily activities can be done at home for cardiorespiratory fitness, but the cheapest and easiest is walking. Walking or jogging around the block for at least 30 minutes is free, refreshing, and can be done most any time of the year. Walking in the local mall or a large grocery store is also free of charge and keeps you out of the elements. If the weather is really bad, and getting to the mall is not an option, you can use your bottom two stairs as a true “Stair Master”.

Some items or activities have some small start up costs. Perhaps you have an old bicycle out in the garage or a stationary bike in the basement that needs a few repairs. Other activities like skating, cross-country skiing, and swimming can be done seasonally and have certain equipment or membership costs associated with them. Overall, depending on your budget and likes or dislikes, one can start exercising at home relatively inexpensively.

## **Strength Training**

Resistance or strength training is one of the most misunderstood and most important parts of an exercise program. First of all, strength training is important for many reasons such as, maintaining muscle mass, increasing flexibility, maintaining and or increasing bone density, improving balance and coordination, as well as maintaining muscle tone. Strength training is important for all adults, but especially so for older adults, as it prevents loss of muscle mass and bone, and is beneficial for functional health. There are quite a few myths associated with strength training as well. For example, strength training is not just for men, in fact, strength training is highly important for women, especially those who have a history of osteoporosis in their family. Another myth is that you have to bulk up for strength training to be effective. While bulking up and strength training are often viewed synonymously, the type and amount of lifting you do will determine how it impacts your physique. Let's define a few terms, and get into the "heavy" stuff. The following terms will help you better understand the jargon of weight lifting and give you understanding of the type of program that is best for you and your needs.

**Repetitions** or “**Reps**”: The number of times you lift a weight, or do a certain exercise. For example: 15 bicep curls = 15 reps

**Set** or **Sets**: The number of a group of exercises. For example: 15 bicep curls and 15 tricep extensions for each arm would be a “set”. You may then do then do three sets of these exercises.

Now that you have an idea of the type of strength training we are focusing on today, I’ll give you several examples of household items that can be used for resistance training.

- Milk jug filled with water, sand or dirt
- Bungee cords
- Large cans of juice, soup or coffee

When doing strength- training exercises, it is important to exercise both the agonist and antagonist muscles. For example, if you plan to exercise the bicep muscle, which raises your forearm, you should also exercise the tricep muscles which extends four forearm. There are a few easy ways to divide the body, so as to complete all of the necessary exercises. The two easiest are front & back, or lower & upper. With the front & back method, you would exercise the main muscles on the front of the body one day, and the main muscle on the back of the body the next day. In the upper & lower method, one would do the upper body (waist up) one day, and the lower body the next day. This division of the body helps to endure that you exercise all of the major muscle groups.

The attached sheet of strength training exercises can help you build a program of your own. For those not wanting to use free weights or resistance training machines we have included various therapeutic ball exercises. Three instructional cards have been included to make sure the individual is properly fitted to the respective ball and has correct neural positioning.

## **Cool Down**

The cool down period of an exercise program is exactly what you might expect it to be, cooling the body down from exercise. This period allows the heart rate and respirations to slowly return to normal, and shunts the blood from your muscle back to the heart. Without a good cool down period, people may notice some dizziness or lightheadedness as your blood will pool in your large muscles of the extremities, rather than circulate evenly around your body. Much like the warm up, the cool down should be at least 5 minutes in duration, and about half the intensity of your workout session. The cool down helps to alleviate the likelihood of muscle aches and cramps. It can also protect against sudden drops in heart rate, which can be associated with some medications. Overall, the cool down helps the body transition from exercise to relaxation.

## **Flexibility**

Just as we do stretching prior to exercise, we want to do flexibility stretches after exercise. Following exercise, your muscles are now warm; therefore we can safely perform stretches and increase your flexibility. You can perform the same stretches you did before your exercise, and in the same manner, however you will probably notice that you can move the limb further now that the muscle has been warmed. Do the stretch until you feel a pull, hold it for 15-20 seconds, and relax. Despite the fact that the muscle has been warmed, we do not want to bounce as this can lead to muscle tears. Stretching can be performed several times and throughout the day to alleviate muscle aches and pains, and again to alleviate any cramping you may have.

# Other Tips

The following is a list of helpful tips encompassing everything from clothing to safety when exercising at home. Your “*It’s Your Life*” coach and or Wellness Center Staff can help you with any specific questions you may have.

## Clothing:

- Shoes: Properly fitted rubber soled tennis shoes
- Loose fitting cotton blends that breathe
- In cold weather: wear layers that can be removed as you get warm
- In hotter weather: wear light colors, a hat, and stay in the shade when possible

## General Safety:

- Outside at night: wear bright or reflective clothing so you are visible
- Exercise in safe places
- Carry I.D. with you
- Wear “Medic Alert” bracelet if you have any previous or outstanding medical conditions
- Try and exercise with a partner

## Exercise Safety:

- Drink water before, during, and after exercise to stay hydrated
- Listen to your body!! If you are fatigued, short of breath or feel pain (**especially in the neck, jaw, chest or arms**), stop exercising and rest. If any symptoms continue, contact your doctor or EMS
- Don’t be afraid to take a day off to rest if you need it
- Start slow, and progress over a period of weeks, not days!! (Your coach or wellness center staff can help you determine your starting points and schedule of progression)

## **Absolute Rules:**

- **Are You Ready to Exercise? Before You Begin Ask Yourself These Questions.**
  - Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?
  - Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?
  - In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?
  - Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?
  - Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
  - Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs for your blood pressure or heart condition?
  - Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?

\*\*\*If you answered “**yes**” to one or more questions, talk to your doctor before increasing you physical activity.

\*\*\*If you answered “**no**” to all of the questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can engage in moderate exercise.

\*\*\*If you are a man and over age 40 and a women and over age 50 please consult with your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

## **Sources:**

Guidelines for Physical Activity: Recommendations (American College of Sports Medicine). Available at:

[http://www.acsm.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home\\_Page&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=7764](http://www.acsm.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home_Page&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=7764)

Accessed October 25, 2007

\*\*Updated January 14th, 2009

**Shoulder Press Start**



**Shoulder Press Finish**



**Lunges Front**



**Lunges Side**



**Lunges Back**



**Bicep Curls Start**



**Bicep Curls Finish**



**Back Fly's Start**



**Back Fly's Finish**



**Squats “Shoulder Width” Start**



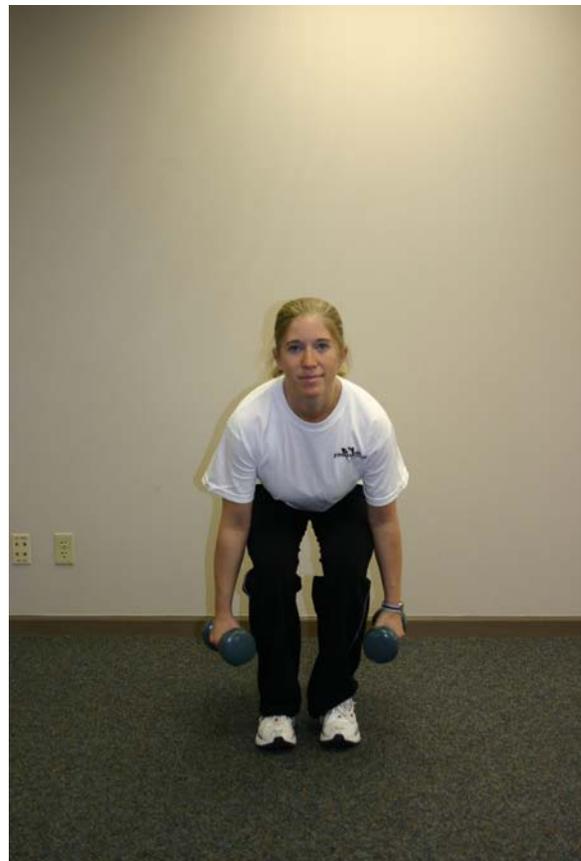
**Squats “Shoulder Width” Finish**



**Squats “Feet Together” Start**



**Squats “Feet Together” Finish**



**Tricep Extensions Start**



**Tricep Extensions Finish**

