



If you find measurement and specific goals valuable, the following information may help you develop your exercise routine:

Target heart rate

Your target heart rate is the rate you want to strive for when you do aerobic exercise—the rate you need to achieve to strengthen your heart. Your target heart rate is 60–80 percent of your maximum heart rate. To calculate this rate, first subtract your age from 220. (This result is your maximum heart rate.) Then multiply the result by 60 percent and 80 percent. For example, if you are 50 years old, your maximum heart rate is 170; your target heart rate is 102–136. To strengthen your heart, you should do aerobic exercise intensely enough to reach your target heart rate.

Body mass index (BMI)

Another way to measure your efforts is through your body mass index. BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women. It is usually a reliable indicator of total body fat, which is in turn related to your risk of disease and death. However, BMI is not perfect. It can overestimate the amount of body fat in athletes or people with a muscular build, and it can underestimate body fat in the elderly or people who have lost muscle mass. To calculate your BMI, visit www.mercyiwacuity.org > Services > Heart and Vascular Care > Heart health tools.

10,000 steps a day

The average person walks 2,000–3,000 steps every day—a rather sedentary rate. But boost that to 10,000 steps per day and you will be doing yourself a world of good. A pedometer clipped to your belt or waistband can help keep you on track. If you need to increase your steps, aim for an additional 500 steps

per day for one week; then add another 500 steps the following week.

Warm-up and cool-down

Begin your workout with 5 minutes of warm-up, and conclude it with a cool-down that is twice as long—10 minutes.

Exercise and nutrition

To make the most of your exercise and fitness routine, it is important to drink enough water and eat a balanced diet.

Water makes up about 60 percent of your body weight and is involved in almost every bodily process. Most people should drink at least eight cups of water each day. Also be sure to drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after your workout to stay hydrated and avoid overheating.

Cool water is best to keep you hydrated during workouts or events lasting an hour or less. Sports drinks (i.e., 6–10 percent carbohydrates) are useful for longer events; these should be diluted approximately 50 percent with water. Here are more tips:

- Drink even if you are not thirsty. Thirst is not a reliable way to tell if you need water.
- Drink small amounts of water frequently, rather than large amounts less often.
- Drink cold beverages to cool your core body temperature and reduce sweating.
- Pay attention to the amount and color of your urine. You should excrete a large volume that is nearly colorless. Small amounts or dark colored urine can indicate dehydration.

Fuel sources. The right combination of fuel (calories) from carbohydrates, proteins, and fats gives you energy for achieving fitness.

Carbohydrates. The most important fuel source—carbohydrates—comes in fruits, vegetables, pastas, breads, cereals, rice, and other foods, and should provide about 60–70 percent of daily calories.

