

Fit Facts

FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EXERCISE

The Right Exercise Program for You Starts Here

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF AN EXERCISE PROGRAM?

What you want to get out of an exercise program has everything to do with the kind of program that will work best for you in the long run. Ask yourself, "What do I want to accomplish?" Do you want to lose weight? Get in shape and stay in shape? Maybe you'd like to reduce some of the stress in your life. Or perhaps you're serious about improving your overall health or increasing your muscular strength.

The good news is every one of those goals can be accomplished. Each one can be the start of a fun exercise program you can enjoy and benefit from.

Is your goal weight control? Then start with a low-impact or no-impact aerobic activity and work up to at least 30 minutes almost everyday. If your goal is strengthening your muscles, there are plenty of strength-conditioning programs that include the use of free weights, weight machines, exercise tubing or calisthenics. Or if what you hope to gain from exercise is improved flexibility, you could try yoga or a simple stretching routine that covers all your major muscle groups.

Maybe you know what you want to accomplish, but don't know how to get started. That's where we can help. The American Council on Exercise has more than 30,000 certified aerobics instructors and personal trainers all over the world who can help you get started with the program that best meets your goal. Call us toll-free, and we'll help you find one near your home.

But before you take that step, check with your doctor, especially if

you're over 40, or if you have any health problems, like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, a family history of heart disease, or even if you smoke. It's a good idea to have your personal physician give the idea of an exercise program a thumbs-up before you begin.



WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE TO EXERCISE?

What's better: your home or a health club? Actually, one place isn't better than another. The choice really comes down to where will you be most comfortable and best able to accomplish your exercise goals. Here are some things to consider when you're making your decision.

HOME EXERCISE ECONOMICS

Exercising at home can be more economical than exercising at a health club. Invest in a good pair of running or walking shoes, some adjustable dumbbells and an exercise mat, and you're ready to go. For some people, the best part of home exercise is the privacy.

If you're the kind of person who can stick with an exercise program alone at home, that's your answer. But if you do better

with the stimulation of others, or if you enjoy being with a group who shares your interests, consider a full-service club.

MORE EQUIPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE AT A CLUB

For some people, a health or fitness club works a lot better than home. Clubs have a variety of exercise options, professional fitness instructors to keep you working in the right direction, and other people who share a common interest one of the nice things about a club is that you can work it into your schedule. Go early in the morning before work. Or stop off on your way home.

The only drawback could be the cost of health club membership. You'll have to weigh the expense with what you can afford and what you want to accomplish.

ONE MORE OPTION: A WORKDAY ROUTINE

There is still another direction you can go in, and that's to get together with co-workers during lunch to walk or jog. Many people have a good chance of sticking with a regularly scheduled lunch-time exercise program. You just might be one of them.

Deciding where to exercise comes down to picking the place that offers you the greatest comfort, and the one that works best with your lifestyle.

For more information, please call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Physical Activity Hotline: **1-800-952-6637**

If you are interested in information on other health and fitness topics, contact:

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