

Some tips for staying active:

- Choose activities you like! You're more likely to stick to it if you're having fun.
- Vary the types of activities to prevent boredom from setting in.
- Set small realistic goals in the chosen activity, like "by next week I'll walk for 30 minutes, instead of 20."
- Plan for physical activity – you are more likely to exercise if activities are scheduled into everyday routines.
- Be active with friends or family. This way, people can motivate and encourage one another and have a social reason to persist.
- Reward yourself! A pat on the back is deserved for a job well done.
- Get a pedometer. It's a fun way to count your steps and challenge yourself. Aim eventually for 10,000 steps a day.



Resources

www.americanheart.org

Local Resources:

Cardiovascular Professional Services
1600 E Jefferson St.
Seattle, WA
(206) 860-6660

Cardiovascular Consultant of Washington
1560 N 115th St. Seattle
(206) 386-6191

Al-Shifa Clinic

Email: alshifa@u.washington.edu
Website: <http://students.washington.edu/alshifa>

Exercise and Cardiovascular Diseases

A healthy heart, a healthy life



Exercise and cardiovascular diseases

Physical inactivity is a major risk factor in developing cardiovascular diseases and many other complications including obesity, high blood pressure, high triglycerides, a low level of HDL ("good") cholesterol and diabetes. Even moderately intense physical activity such as brisk walking is beneficial when done regularly for a total of 30 minutes or longer on most days.

Regular exercise can help control blood lipid abnormalities, diabetes and obesity. It can also help reduce blood pressure.

The results of many studies show that people who modify their behavior and start regular exercise after heart attack have better rates of survival and better quality of life. Healthy people — as well as many patients with cardiovascular disease — can improve their fitness and exercise performance with training.

Overall, exercise plays a role in both primary and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease.



Benefits of exercise

- Increases exercise tolerance
- Reduces body weight and body fat
- Reduces blood pressure
- Reduces “bad” (LDL) & total cholesterol
- Increases “good” (HDL) cholesterol
- Helps prevent diabetes
- Improves muscular function and flexibility
- Increases body’s ability to take in oxygen.
- Builds healthy bones, muscles and joints, and reduces the risk of colon cancer

- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety, improves mood and promotes a sense of well-being.

How much exercise is enough?

It is recommended that every adult should participate in 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity activity on at least 5 days of the week.

Moderate activities include things comparable to walking briskly at about 3 to 4 miles per hour. These may include a wide variety of occupational or recreational activities, including yard work, household tasks, cycling, swimming, etc. A good rule of thumb for moderate exercise is if talking is comfortable, but singing would be too hard.



What are the risks of exercise?

Exercise is considered to be an extremely safe activity for cardiovascular health. However, there may be some physical risks associated with exercise that are worth considering. It is a good idea to be aware of the warning signs or symptoms that may indicate a problem: chest discomfort (pain or pressure in the chest, jaw, or neck, possibly radiating into the shoulder, arm, or back), unusual shortness of breath, dizziness or light-headedness, and heart rhythm abnormalities (sensations of heart beat skipping, palpitations, or thumping). If one of these symptoms occurs, medical attention should be sought immediately.

Also, you should “warm up” your body prior to exercise to loosen up muscles and increase blood flow. Try walking for 3-5 minutes first.