

Activity 13.1: Overall Fitness Assessment

Use to clarify benefits of exercise, what you want to accomplish and to overcome common obstacles to exercise.

Part 1: Benefits of exercise⁵⁷

Suggestion. Place check marks next to all the reasons that are concerns or problems for you that could be improved with more physical activity. Place stars next to all the reasons that motivate you to exercise.

- be fit, able to sustain activity with vigor
- be strong so I can lift objects with less strain
- be agile and flexible
- lose weight or maintain my weight
- lower body fat; maintain or build muscle mass
- better control my blood sugar
- lower my blood pressure and improve my cholesterol levels; decrease risk of cardiovascular disease
- decrease risk of breast or colon cancer
- strengthen bones; decrease risk of osteoporosis and fractures
- enhance stability and agility; decrease risk of falling
- reduce pain and/or stiffness
- sustain my energy through the day: be more energetic
- feel happier, enhance my mood, and reduce my anxiety
- sleep better
- increase my mental alertness
- improve my appearance
- gain confidence
- have fun
- improve the quality of my life
- live longer
- other _____

Part 2: Exploring my inner athlete

Do you have a specific fitness goal (e.g., walk a mile, run a 5K, play basketball for an hour, hike for two hours, bench press xxx pounds, do a triathlon)? If so, what are they?

What do you think would happen three years from now if you either met or exceeded recommendations for physical activity; or just met your fitness goals? What impact would that have on your life?

How great would you look? Consider your weight, waist, pant size, body composition, tone, and muscle.

⁵⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Benefits of Exercise," Retrieved on June 9, 2016 from <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/>.

If you increased your physical fitness would it affect any measures for health e.g. blood pressure, fasting blood glucose, blood lipids? What specific targets would you like to achieve?

How would other aspects of your life change, such as your relationships and your work performance?

Part 3a: Self-assessment based on recommendations.

Place check marks next to all of the following that apply to you right now.

- I meet recommendations for physical activity and sit no more than three hours a day.
- I walk either five miles or take ten thousand steps a day.
- I actively pursue alternatives to prolonged sitting, such as getting up for ten minutes after fifty minutes of prolonged sitting, working while standing, walking stairs, actively moving during my breaks, or either walking or biking to commute to work.
- I do the equivalent of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise a week.
- I do strength (resistance) training at least twice a week.
- I stretch regularly to enhance flexibility and reduce stiffness and pain.
- I do some type of functional training (e.g. balance, coordination, stability training) twice a week.
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Note. *If you checked few or no items don't feel bad, just keep going.*

Part 3b: Optional actual physical fitness assessment

If want to do a real physical fitness assessment complete Activity 13.4 before proceeding.

Part 4: How fit am I?

Overall, how are you doing? Should you change any physical activity habits? Based on knowledge of recommendations, your motivation and assessment, what are the most important things to start doing?

What would your goals be? What specific changes in body composition would you like to achieve?

How much time each day or week could you commit to making this happen? For example, can you commit to a minimum of thirty minutes a day or 3.5 hours a week? More?

Part 5: Overcoming obstacles to exercise.

One of the keys to maintaining physical fitness is being able to overcome all the real and perceived obstacles that can undermine your determination to be active. While a key step is maintaining your motivation, there are a lot of logistical and personal issues that also need to be considered. Ten of the most common obstacles are presented with just a few of the ways these obstacles can be overcome. Two more rows have been added for any additional personal obstacles you may have that get in the way of you either starting or expanding your physical activity. Use this generic list as a starting point to build your personal plan for overcoming hurdles to more activity. Start by checking off which obstacles are most likely to be challenges at this time, and working on how you could overcome them.

Overcoming Obstacles to Exercise

Obstacle	Ideas for how I could overcome this obstacle
Insufficient time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Break up activity into smaller increments that I accumulate daily. – Develop a plan; prioritize two to three key sessions a week. – Keep good walking shoes in your car or at work so you're always ready to walk. –
Lack of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Talk to key friends and family members about your commitment. – Invite others to join you. – Develop friendships at the place of the activity you choose to do. –
Lack of energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Schedule activity when you are most motivated. – Take a ten-minute rest before you get started. – Just do it. Start easy. Remember: a body in motion stays in motion. –
Lack of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Play your favorite tunes while you work out. – Invest in a trainer or coach. – Give yourself a reward like playing a game, a bath, or if you have the funds a new piece of workout clothing when you've accomplished a milestone
Fear of injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stick with low-impact exercises in a gym. Stay seated if you need to – Buy the protective gear you need. Go slow. –
Lack of skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Join a class or gym. Ask a friend to show you how. – Invest in a trainer or coach. –
Lack of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on walking, hiking or jogging. – Do activity at home, in a park, and/or at a community center. –
Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Join an indoor gym or class you can do indoors. – Buy equipment you can use at home or use videos. –
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Explore. Hike. Swim. Use the fitness center at your hotel. – Stretch. Do yoga or calisthenics in your room. –
Family obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Invest in a baby stroller or jogger. – Find a gym that provides day care.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Seniors: Find a senior fitness group, or walk at the mall
Others	