



YOUR FITNESS GOALS FOR 2018

Do you struggle to catch your breath as you walk up a flight of stairs or feel winded when you tackle tasks of a physical nature? Have you considered your physical fitness? This refers to your body's ability to carry out various tasks including daily activities, work-related activities and various sporting disciplines. It's your body's ability to perform effectively and efficiently, without leaving you panting for breath, fatigued or with painful muscles the following day.

How is fitness measured?

How someone looks on the outside is not an indication of how fit or healthy they are. Fitness is made up of a number of different aspects, including how well your heart and lungs work to provide oxygen for your body during periods of activity, body fat percentage, your flexibility and the strength and endurance of your muscles.

Good reasons to get fit

- › You can take part in competitive sports
- › You can lose weight
- › You can maintain your weight
- › You will cope better physically with daily tasks
- › You will have better endurance
- › You can tone and firm up your muscles
- › Your energy levels will improve
- › You will sleep better
- › You will feel happier
- › You can reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease
- › You can reduce your risk for some cancers
- › You can reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes
- › You can reduce your risk for high blood pressure
- › You can reduce your risk for osteoporosis and strengthen your bones
- › You will likely live longer



Questions to ask when creating a fitness plan

What are your fitness goals? Do you want to lose weight and get fit?

If weight loss is very much part of your fitness goal for this year, you need to sign up for a weight loss programme of your choice and get started on your new eating plan. If you don't change your diet, you are unlikely to lose weight with exercise alone.

What lifestyle changes can you make?

Make a pledge to get moving instead of spending free time watching TV or playing video games. Cut back on sugary drinks to quench your thirst and switch to plain water. Aim to eat healthy meals every day which contain fruit, vegetables, lean protein and low fat dairy products. If you smoke, make a pledge to quit for the sake of your health. Cut back on alcohol. Get enough sleep at night.

How fit are you now?

There are a number of tests you can do to gauge your current fitness. These include checking your heart rate or doing a number of push-ups in a prescribed time. Check the Internet for ways to test your fitness level.



Resources:

www.cdc.gov
www.webmd.com
www.draxe.com
www.medlineplus.gov
www.study.com
www.realsimple.com

What should I eat before and after a workout?

Pre-workout (choose one)

- › Yoghurt with berries
- › A handful of nuts and raisins
- › Peanut butter and banana
- › Peanut butter on toast
- › Oats with milk and a piece of fruit

Post-workout (choose one)

- › Smoothie – milk and fruit
- › Yoghurt with berries and some chopped nuts
- › Ham or chicken wrap
- › Salad with any lean protein

Source: www.eatright.org and www.greatest.com

Types of exercise

Different exercises play a role in physical fitness and target different areas of the body.

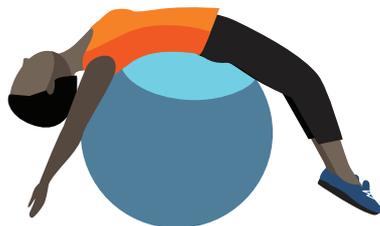


Endurance

- › Aerobic exercise
- › Moves big muscles – strengthens heart/lungs
- › Sport and various activities

Strength

- › Aerobic exercise
- › Builds muscle strength
- › Good for daily task



Flexibility

- › Stretches muscles
- › Improves flexibility/ range of motion
- › Less likelihood of injury

Balance

- › Improves stability – more steady on your feet
- › Improved co-ordination
- › Less likelihood of injury



SET YOURSELF A FITNESS GOAL

Find a fitness programme, then determine your fitness goal. Let's look at the following example:

Step 1:

Your goal. For example, to run a 5km charity fun run.

Step 2:

Dissect the goal. Is your goal realistic? Experts say that you should be able to build up your fitness to run 5km in 30 minutes over an eight week period. The goal is realistic if you have eight weeks to train before the race. Some people are able to achieve this in six weeks, but this would depend on your age and current fitness level.

Step 3:

Drill it down. Set smaller goals for yourself for the next eight weeks. Write them down. Plot routes to run. Buy yourself a pair of good running shoes. Tell someone what you plan to do and ask them to hold you accountable.

Step 4:

Be deliberate. If you failed on a previous fitness goal, do you know the reason why? Have you tried to get fit before? What prevented you from achieving your goal? What measures can you put in place now to prevent this from happening again?

Step 5:

Determine how to measure your goal. Find ways to gauge your progress, for example, at the end of four weeks, you should be able to run 10 to 15 minutes quite easily.

Step 6:

Don't give up. There will be times when you don't feel like getting up to run. Find ways to motivate yourself during these slumps. Visualise yourself crossing the finish line at the 5km run. Hear the cheers from the crowd. Feel the positive emotions.