

## General Principles of Exercise Prescription

Congratulations on realizing the importance of engaging in physical activity and exercise for your health and well-being!

### Tips for Exercise Beginners:

- Find activities you enjoy, and begin gradually!
- Speak to an exercise professional. We are happy to help!
- Follow "[Physical Activity Basics](#)" and/or the "Exercise Programming" information below.

In order to engage in a safe and effective exercise program, complete the following steps:

### Complete the [Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire for Everyone \(PAR-Q+\)](#)

The health benefits of regular physical activity are clear; more people should engage in physical activity every day of the week. Participating in physical activity is very safe for MOST people. The PAR-Q+ will tell you whether it is necessary for you to seek further advice from your doctor OR a qualified exercise professional before becoming more physically active.

## Exercise Programming

### General Cardiorespiratory Exercise Programming:

**Frequency:** For most adults, spreading the exercise sessions across 3–5 days/week may be the most conducive strategy to reach the recommended amounts of PA

**Intensity:** Moderate and/or vigorous-intensity or a combination

"The talk test is a simple way to measure relative intensity. In general, if you're doing moderate-intensity activity you can talk, but not sing, during the activity. If you're doing vigorous-intensity activity, you will not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath."– [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

**Duration:** Most adults should accumulate 30–60 minutes per day/week of moderate intensity exercise, 20–60 minutes per day/week of vigorous intensity exercise or a combination of moderate and vigorous intensity exercise daily to attain the recommended targeted volumes of exercise.

**Activity:** Aerobic exercise performed in a continuous or intermittent manner that involves major muscle groups is recommended for most adults.

- Each exercise session should include a warm-up and cool-down period

### General Resistance Exercise Programming:

**Frequency:**

- For novice trainers, each major muscle group should be trained at least 2 days/week.
- For experienced trainers, frequency is secondary to training volume, thus individuals can choose a weekly frequency per muscle groups based on personal preference.

**Repetitions:**

- For novices, performed for 8-12 repetitions are recommended to improve muscular fitness.
- For experienced exercisers, a wide range of intensities and repetition ranges are effective dependent on the specific muscular fitness goals

**Sets:** 2 to 4 sets

- For older adults and deconditioned individuals, use 1 set.

**Activity:** Multi-joint exercises. Single-joint exercises can be incorporated, typically after performing multi-joint exercise.

**Rest Intervals:** > 2 minutes between sets

- 48 hours or longer is recommended for any single muscle group

**General Flexibility Exercise Programming:**

**Frequency:** 2 to 3 session per week

**Intensity:** Stretch to tightness (not pain) at the end of the range of motion

**Duration:**

- Holding a static stretch for 10-30s is recommended for most adults.
- In older individuals, holding a stretch for 30-60s may confer greater benefit.

**Activity:** Static (after exercise) or dynamic (prior to exercise) stretch all major muscle groups.

*The information from the above pages was cited from: American College of Sports Medicine. G. Liguori, Y. Feito, B. Roy and C. J. Fountaine. (2021) ACSM's guidelines for exercise testing and prescription. 11th ed. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.*