

CARDIOVASCULAR FITNESS

Conditioning For a Healthy Heart



Fitness is a combination of muscular endurance and cardiovascular fitness. Cardiovascular fitness is the most important because it reflects the body's ability to use oxygen to release energy. By conditioning your cardiovascular system, you can decrease your risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and other life-threatening diseases.

Aerobics for Heart Health

Since the heart is a muscle, it can become bigger and stronger through exercise that progressively increases the body's demand for oxygen. This type of exercise is called aerobic which means with oxygen. Aerobic exercise involves steady, continuous motion of the large muscles which places a large and continuous energy demand on the heart. Aerobic activities –walking, running, swimming, cycling, etc., should be intensive enough to raise and sustain your heartbeat to a target heart range or THR (60-80% of its maximum capacity) for at least 20-30 minutes. For optimum benefits, you should exercise aerobically within your target heart rate zone for at least 20-30 minutes a minimum of 3 times a week. The well-conditioned heart is larger and stronger than average and can do more work with less effort.

A well-conditioned heart, like any muscle, is stronger and more efficient than average. By exercising within your target heart range for 20-30 minutes 3 times a week, you can condition your heart and enjoy the benefits of a more fit and healthy lifestyle.

