

A background image of a gym with several black dumbbells hanging from a metal rack. The focus is on the dumbbells, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background.

Health and Wellness: Living with Prostate Cancer

EXERCISE RECOMMENDATIONS

UCSF

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHARED AUTHORSHIP.....	3
GET ACTIVE.....	4
Recommendations.....	4
Benefits of Exercise	4
STAYING SAFE AND INJURY FREE.....	5
How to Start Exercising.....	5
Tips to Stay Safe While Being Active.....	6
When to Stop Exercising	7
NUTRITION AND HYDRATION IN RELATION TO EXERCISE	7
BEFORE AND AFTER EXERCISE.....	8
AEROBIC EXERCISE	9
How Hard Should I Exercise?.....	9
What Is Light Exercise?	10
What Is Moderate Exercise?	10
What Is Vigorous Exercise?	11
RESISTANCE EXERCISE.....	12
How Much Should I Do?.....	12
How Hard Should I Exercise?.....	13
FLEXIBILITY EXERCISE	13
RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION DURING EXERCISE	14
TRACKING HEART RATE DURING AEROBIC EXERCISE	15
DOING MORE.....	16
STAYING MOTIVATED.....	17
SET SMART GOALS TO SUCCEED.....	18
WEEKLY EXERCISE PLANNING WORKSHEET	19

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GET ACTIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Build up to 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic (“cardio”) exercise OR 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic exercise OR a combination of both. Brisk walking, jogging, cycling, and swimming are popular forms of aerobic exercise and can be performed in a variety of different settings including your home, outdoors, or at a local gym.

More activity has more health benefits. Add time and intensity gradually. If possible, build up to 300 minutes per week of *moderate* activity or 150 minutes per week of *vigorous* activity.

Perform resistance training at least 2 days per week. For each session, choose 8-10 different exercises that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips/glutes, back, chest, arms, and core). Strive to do 2-3 sets of 8-12 repetitions for each exercise. Use a weight or resistance that allows you to perform 8-10 repetitions while maintaining proper form. Start with lighter weights that you can lift safely and properly 10-15 times. As you get stronger over time, slowly increase the weight until you can only complete 6-10 repetitions with proper form.

BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

Exercise is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Benefits of regular exercise include:

- Improved brain function
- Less fatigue
- Improved mood
- Reduced depression and anxiety
- Better sleep
- Improved balance and lower risk of falls
- Maintain muscle and bone mass
- Maintain or achieve a healthy weight



Our exercise recommendations are geared toward optimizing your health as a man living with prostate cancer.

STAYING SAFE AND INJURY FREE

Exercise lowers risk of prostate cancer progression and death from prostate cancer. Exercise may also help improve your tolerance to cancer treatment and decrease side effects. In addition to these benefits, exercise reduces the occurrence of several other common conditions:

- Other cancers
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Osteoporosis
- Depression
- Death

HOW TO START EXERCISING

The health benefits of exercise far outweigh the risks. However, it is best to check with your health care provider before starting a new exercise program and to begin slowly if you have not been active for a while. Before starting an exercise routine, tell your doctor about any chronic conditions you may have such as diabetes, heart disease, or osteoarthritis, any symptoms you may have such as chest pain, pressure, dizziness, or joint pain, and any medications/treatments you are currently taking.

Common conditions such as back pain, arthritis, and cancer-related fatigue often prevent people from exercising. Exercise has been shown to improve these conditions but you need to start out gradually and progress slowly. Begin exercising as soon as your health care provider says it is safe. Work your way up from 10 minutes to 30 minutes per session by adding about 5 minutes of exercise each week; and from 3 days a week to 5 or more days a week. Check with your doctor if you have any new pains or symptoms.

If you have not exercised recently, start slowly! Listen to your body – if you feel like your heart is beating too fast or you cannot catch your breath, stop or slow down. Doing too much too fast may lead to over-training and injury. Gradually increase the amount of time and intensity of your exercise over several weeks to months. If you currently have a higher level of fitness, more vigorous activities such as jogging may be appropriate for you. You can always modify the type, intensity, and duration of exercise to help achieve your goals, while taking into account your comfort and safety at all times.

If you ever feel any new or unfamiliar pain, stop what you are doing. Exercise may be uncomfortable and feel hard but it should not cause sharp or severe pain. If you have any questions, seek a consultation with your doctor and/or a certified exercise professional such as a physical therapist.



STAYING SAFE AND INJURY FREE

TIPS TO STAY SAFE* WHILE BEING ACTIVE



- Engage in short, light sessions at first to get your body used to exercise.
- Choose activities that match your fitness level. Gradually build up the time and intensity of these activities as your body adjusts. As your fitness continues to increase, try activities that require more effort.
- Try non-weight bearing, low-impact, aerobic activities such as swimming, biking, or rowing if you have muscle or joint problems or injuries that prohibit you from walking, running, or jogging.
- Be sure to maintain good posture and form throughout all exercises.
- For resistance exercise, separate sessions by at least 24 hours to allow your muscles time to fully recover.
- Choose a safe place for exercise with good lighting, ventilation and space to move about. Exercise with a friend when possible.
- Wear sunscreen and a hat when exercising outdoors during the day. At night, wear reflective clothing and bring a flashlight or other light (such as a bike light) so cars and bicyclists can see you.
- Always wear a helmet when cycling outside.
- Adjust your plan based on the weather: if it is cold, wear layers of clothing, a hat, and gloves. If it is hot, try to exercise in the morning or evening, reduce the intensity of exercise and take frequent breaks as necessary. Wear a hat and appropriate cool clothing. Always apply sunscreen.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise.
- Wear comfortable and supportive shoes that are safe and appropriate for your activity.
- Above all, listen to your body. While exercise involves exertion and will feel challenging, you should never feel acute pain or overwhelming tiredness.

*If you are concerned or have a question about safety, please contact your doctor.

STAYING SAFE AND INJURY FREE

WHEN TO STOP EXERCISING

- You feel faint or dizzy
- You feel nauseous
- You have chest pain
- You have blurred vision
- You have a sudden shortness of breath
- You suddenly feel very weak or tired
- You experience numbness or loss of feelings in the hands and/or feet
- You have continued shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- You feel confused or disoriented
- You have sudden muscle, joint, or bone pain



NUTRITION AND HYDRATION IN RELATION TO EXERCISE

- Aim for well-balanced, nutritious meals. A meal 3-4 hours before exercise will provide your body with the fuel it needs to exercise.
- If you exercise first thing in the morning or if it has been more than 3 hours since your last meal, a light snack (e.g., banana with a tablespoon of nut butter or nonfat plain Greek yogurt and fruit) 30-60 minutes before exercise is a good option. Focus on carbohydrates with a small amount of lean protein.
- Avoid high fat meals immediately before or after exercise.
- After exercise, eat whole grains or fruits for healthy carbohydrates and lean protein within an hour. For example, a tuna sandwich on whole wheat bread is a great post-workout meal. The goal is to replenish glycogen reserves (stored carbohydrates), enhance everyday performance, replace lost fluids, and aid in muscle repair and recovery.
- Drink water before, during, and after exercise.
- Avoid sugared energy or “electrolyte” drinks and limit dehydrating fluids and foods such as alcohol, coffee, caffeinated teas and soft drinks (including “diet” soda), and high sodium (salty) foods.

BEFORE AND AFTER EXERCISE



Start with a short warm-up before you exercise.

A warm-up will raise your body temperature, increase blood flow to your muscles, and prepare your body for exercise, which may help prevent injury. It should produce mild sweating, but you should not feel fatigued to the point where you can no longer exercise.

- To warm up for cardio exercise, start at a slow pace and gradually increase your speed and intensity over 5-10 minutes.
- To warm up for strength training, start with 5 minutes of easy aerobic exercise such as walking, biking, or rowing. Then do 1-2 sets of your first exercise using a weight you can move easily for 10-15 repetitions. Increase the weight over 2-3 sets until you are up to your “working” weight. Your working weight should be a weight you can move well for 6-10 repetitions, but not more, before losing form.

Cool down after you exercise. It is important to gradually transition from exercise back to rest. The goal is to bring your heart rate and breathing back down to near rest before you finish your session. This can be done with 2-3 minutes of light aerobic exercise such as walking or cycling.



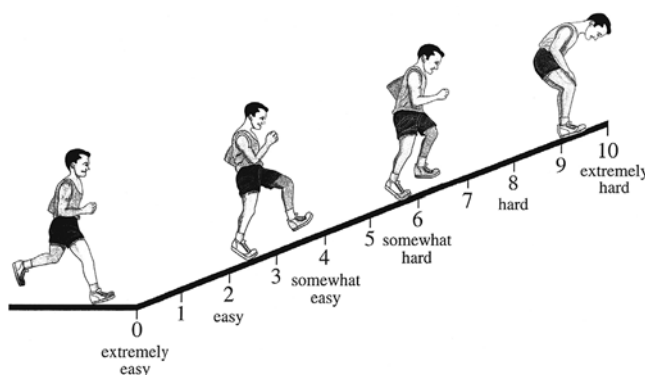
AEROBIC EXERCISE

Aerobic exercise — also known as cardiovascular, cardiorespiratory, cardio-pulmonary, “cardio,” or endurance exercise — gets you breathing harder and your heart beating faster. It involves repetitive movements of large muscle groups that can be maintained for a prolonged duration (many minutes). It helps your heart and lungs get stronger and work more efficiently.

HOW HARD SHOULD I EXERCISE?

Start slowly if you have not been active recently; use a slow speed and short duration. As your body adapts to the new routine, aim to work at a moderate to vigorous intensity (see below for tips on how to judge if you are doing moderate to vigorous exercise). Moderate intensity activities, such as walking, are recommended for overall general health and well-being. Research suggests that more vigorous exercise is needed to prevent prostate cancer progression. Vigorous exercises are those that cause you to sweat and increase your heart rate and breathing such that you are only able to speak a few sentences at a time before pausing for breath. This may occur during brisk walking for some individuals. Others may need to jog, run, cycle, swim, or row to reach a vigorous intensity level.

Work your way up to exercise that you would describe as “somewhat hard” to “hard,” or which you would rank as 6-8 on a 0-10 point RPE scale (see OMNI figure on this page and chart on page 14). There may be times when you find it difficult to reach this intensity and there may be times when you feel like you are really working hard. Adjust your workload (the speed of your walking, the weight you are lifting) each day as needed.



Adult OMNI-Walk/Run Scale of Perceived Exertion.
Figure used with permission. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*. 2004; 36(10): 1776-1780.”

You don’t need to run marathons to gain health benefits from aerobic exercise — any exercise is better than none. Aim to do aerobic exercise for at least 10 minutes at a time, and accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise per week. The more you do, the better you will feel!

AEROBIC EXERCISE

WHAT IS LIGHT EXERCISE?

Light aerobic exercise includes activities that do not cause you to break a sweat or produce shortness of breath. You could sing a song comfortably during light exercise. Examples include a leisurely walk, casual bike ride, tai chi, or some forms of yoga.



- **Tai Chi:** Tai chi is a low-impact, slow motion exercise that focuses on breathing and meditation and helps maintain strength, flexibility, and balance. Tai chi is typically classified as a light intensity physical activity; however, it may be of relatively moderate intensity for older adults. Some forms of tai chi may be muscle strengthening. Current research is examining the effects that tai chi may have on balance and physical function in older adults.
- **Yoga:** Yoga, a discipline that includes breathing control, simple meditation, and the adoption of specific bodily postures, is widely practiced for health and relaxation and can help improve balance, flexibility, strength, and coordination. Many different forms of yoga exist, and they range in intensity level from more meditative Hatha yoga to power yoga.

Therefore, yoga may include time that can be characterized as light or moderate-intensity physical activity. Yoga may also be considered aerobic activity, muscle strengthening, and stretching exercise, depending on the type and the postures practiced.

While light exercises address key aspects of fitness, they do not count toward your moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise goal. However, keep in mind that effort is relative. When measured as heart rate, these exercises may feel like moderate intensity work for some older or deconditioned adults.

WHAT IS MODERATE EXERCISE?

Moderate-intensity exercise means you are working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, but can still talk in complete sentences. Some examples include:

- Brisk walking (~3-4 mph)
- Biking on level ground (~8-10 mph)
- Playing doubles tennis
- Swimming laps (moderate pace)
- Some sports (baseball, volleyball)
- Kayaking or canoeing

AEROBIC EXERCISE

- Ballroom and line dancing
- Golf, if you are pulling or carrying clubs (not using a powered cart)
- Pushing a manual lawn mower or raking leaves

Some of these activities may feel vigorous for you, depending on your current level of fitness. The goal is to engage in exercise that increases your breathing and heart rate—the activity itself is less important. As you become more fit, you may need to increase the speed of the exercise or change to a different type of activity to achieve the same level of effort.

WHAT IS VIGOROUS EXERCISE?

Vigorous exercise means you are breathing hard and your heart rate is elevated. You can't say more than a few words without pausing for a breath. Some examples include:

- Brisk walking (this may be moderate or vigorous for you depending on your level of fitness, but is usually at speeds faster than 3 mph)
- Jogging or running
- Hiking uphill
- Riding a bike quickly (>10 mph) or on hills
- Playing singles tennis
- Swimming laps at a fast pace
- Playing squash or racquetball
- Sports with a lot of running (basketball, hockey, soccer)
- Fast dancing such as salsa dancing or aerobic dance
- Martial arts (such as karate)
- Heavy outdoor work, such as digging or chopping

Your breathing will become rapid when you exercise at a vigorous intensity but it should still be deep and regular. You should never feel like you are not getting enough air. If you run out of breath quickly, have a hard time catching your breath, or if you experience any chest pain while exercising — stop and consult a physician immediately.



RESISTANCE EXERCISE

Resistance exercise is a form of exercise where muscles work against resistance. Usually, this is in the form of a weight, such as dumbbells or weight machines, but also includes resistance bands and your own body weight. Regular resistance exercise is extremely beneficial to health and will help you preserve muscle and bone mass; this is critical for a healthy metabolism and physical functioning, and can lower the risk of falls and fractures. To avoid injury, learn proper technique for resistance exercises. If you belong to a gym, you can work with an instructor to make sure you are doing the exercises correctly. There are many videos online that also demonstrate proper technique. Here are some links to get you started:



Leg Press: https://youtu.be/xCQ-FY_bj9E

Chest Press: https://youtu.be/n8TOta_pfr4

Seated Row: <https://youtu.be/7qK7x-d8V2A>

HOW MUCH RESISTANCE EXERCISE SHOULD I DO?

According to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, adults should perform muscle strengthening exercise at least 2 days a week. These exercises should work major muscle groups (legs, hips/glutes, back, abs, chest, shoulders, arms). Resistance training can build muscle endurance (the ability to lift a weight many times) and muscle strength (the ability to lift a heavy object just once or twice).

- Most programs start with lighter weights and higher repetitions, then increase the weight and lower the repetitions. A repetition is one complete movement of an exercise, such as one squat or one sit-up.
- For the most health benefits, choose a weight that makes it hard to do the last repetition in your set but you are still able to complete it with perfect form. Start with 2 sets of 10-15 repetitions of 8-10 different exercises that work major muscle groups. Rest 1-2 minutes between sets.
- Add a 3rd set after about a month. Then begin to increase the weight for each of your exercises. You will not be able to do the same 10-15 repetitions after you increase the weight. Aim for 6-10 reps per set with good form.
- As you get stronger, try to squeeze out another rep approximately every week until you are back up to 10-15 reps. At that point, increase the weight again, and so on...

RESISTANCE EXERCISE

You can strengthen your muscles at home or the gym. Here are some activities to try:

- Do exercises that use your body weight for resistance (push-ups, sit-ups, squats, lunges).
- Work with resistance bands (long, wide rubber bands or tubing).
- Lift free weights, like dumbbells or kettlebells, or use a weighted vest.
- Use household items such as cans or water bottles as light dumbbells, milk or detergent containers as medium-weight dumbbells, and flour, rice, or dog food bags for heavier loads.

HOW HARD SHOULD I EXERCISE?

The goal is to work at a moderate to vigorous intensity when performing resistance exercise.

Use a weight that allows you to achieve your target repetitions with perfect form, but no more. For example, if you plan to perform 10 repetitions of an exercise, you should use a weight or resistance (or color if you are using exercise bands) that you could move for 10 repetitions but you would be unable to complete 11-12 repetitions. If you can do 11-12 repetitions easily, your weight is too light. As you keep training you will become stronger and will be able to do more than 12 repetitions of an exercise. If you are lifting more than 12 repetitions with every set you should increase the weight (or for resistance bands, go up to the next level of tension or color band) and go back to fewer repetitions; repeat this cycle over time. If you ever feel your form breaking down, you should stop immediately and choose a lighter weight or perform fewer repetitions next time.

Similar to aerobic exercise, strive to work your way up to sessions that are “somewhat hard” to “hard,” or 6-8 on a 0-10 point RPE scale (see table, pg. 14).

FLEXIBILITY EXERCISE

Flexibility exercises, stretching, and foam rolling are important for full range of motion and make it easier to perform activities of daily living. Perform flexibility exercises at least 2-3 times per week. Preferably, flexibility activities are performed on all days that aerobic or resistance exercise is performed. Complete at least 10 minutes of flexibility activities in one session, focusing on major muscle and tendon groups. Hold each static stretch to a point of feeling tightness or slight discomfort for at least 10-30 seconds. It should not hurt. In older adults, holding a stretch for 30-60 seconds may have greater benefits. Repeat each movement 2-4 times per session. Performing flexibility exercise after aerobic or resistance exercise, when the muscle is warm, is most effective.



RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION DURING EXERCISE

This 0-10 point rating of perceived exertion (RPE) scale, below, is used to measure the intensity of your exercise. Perceived exertion is how hard you feel your body is working. Over time, aim to rate your exercise sessions as “somewhat hard” to “hard” or 6-8 on the RPE scale.

Modified Rating of Perceived Exertion	Breathing	% of Maximum Heart Rate
0	No exertion	50% – 60%
1	Very light	
2	Notice breathing deeper, but still comfortable. Conversations possible.	60% – 70%
3		70% – 80%
4	Starting to breathe harder; more difficult to hold conversation	
5		80% – 90%
6	Breathing more quickly and deeply; can no longer hold a steady conversation	
7		90% – 100%
8	Deep & forceful breathing, getting uncomfortable, don't want to talk	
9	Extremely hard	
10	Maximum exertion	

Your heart rate, measured by your pulse, is the number of times your heart beats in one minute. Heart rate increases when you exercise to provide your muscles with more oxygen-rich blood. Your heart rate is a simple way to check how hard you are exercising. You can check your heart rate by feeling at your wrist (radial artery) or neck (carotid artery) – see below. However, a heart rate monitor is recommended as an easy way to get accurate heart rate data during exercise.

How do I check my heart rate?

1. Place the tips of your index, middle, and ring fingers on the palm side of your other wrist, below the base of your thumb.
2. Press lightly until you feel the blood pulsing beneath your fingers. Do not press too hard or you could slow your heart rate down.
3. Measure your resting heart rate by looking at a watch or clock with a second hand. Count the beats you feel for 10 seconds. Multiply this number by 6 to get your heart rate per minute.

TRACKING HEART RATE DURING AEROBIC EXERCISE

You gain the most benefits when you exercise in your target heart rate zone (see chart below). Maximal heart rate (HR_{max}) can be estimated as $207 - (0.7 \times \text{age})$.^{*} When using this equation, a 65-year-old has a $HR_{max} = 162$ and a target heart rate between 103-123 when exercising moderately and between 124-154 when exercising vigorously. If your heart rate is below your target zone, increase the intensity of your exercise; if above your target zone, decrease the intensity of your exercise. With all exercise, listen to your body and how you feel!

If you are on medication that is meant to slow down your heart rate (i.e., beta blocker), using your heart rate to gauge intensity is not appropriate. An exercise stress test, which checks blood flow through your heart while you exercise, can measure how hard your heart pumps while you're taking beta blockers. Your doctor can use this information to adjust the target heart rate you should aim for. If you don't have an exercise stress test or other type of baseline evaluation, you should use RPE as a way to assess your effort. Work your way up to exercise that feels "somewhat hard" to "hard" — it takes effort, but you can continue, or a 6-8 on a 0-10 point scale (see table, pg. 14). If you get to a point where it is hard to talk, you are probably doing too much.

Target Heart Rates (HRs) For Exercise Chart (in beats per minute)*

Age	$HR_{max} = 207 - (0.7 \times \text{age})$	Moderate intensity HR (64-76% HR_{max})	Vigorous intensity HR (77-95% HR_{max})
40	179	114 – 136	137 – 170
45	176	112 – 134	135 – 167
50	172	110 – 131	132 – 163
55	169	108 – 128	130 – 161
60	165	105 – 126	127 – 157
65	162	103 – 123	124 – 154
70	158	101 – 120	121 – 150
75	155	99 – 118	119 – 147
80	151	96 – 115	116 – 143

^{*}Gellish RL et al. Longitudinal modeling of the relationship between age and maximal heart rate. Med Sci Sports Exerc. 2007;39(5):822-9.

American College of Sports Medicine (2021). ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription (11th ed). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer.

DOING MORE



Good work so far! Remember, every little bit of exercise adds up! Here are some ideas for doing more when you are ready.

■ Add more variety

Consider other activities you've always wanted to try, or alternate between activities you already like to do.

■ Increase the intensity

Have you been walking for 30 minutes 5 days a week? On 2 days, try walking uphill or add a little jogging mixed in with your walk. For example, walk briskly for 10 minutes, alternate 30 seconds of jogging with 4 1/2 minutes of walking for the next 15 minutes. Walk for the last 5 minutes. If this feels like too much, shorten the jogging sessions and lengthen the walking sessions. As it begins to feel easier, you can shorten the walking segments and lengthen the jogging segments.

■ Add more strengthening exercises

If you are doing resistance exercises 2 days per week, try adding an extra day to get even stronger. Include new exercises that target smaller muscle groups to challenge your muscles and avoid boredom. Make sure to include at least one day of rest or aerobic exercise in between resistance exercise training days.

■ Be active with friends or family

This is a great way to get more activity into your life and add variety. For example, invite a friend along on a day you don't feel like going for a walk on your own. Having a support network can help you stay motivated to meet your goals.

■ Join a fitness group

Most cities have walking, cycling, or running clubs. Gather friends and join a club in your area.

Running in the USA: <http://www.runningintheusa.com/Club/>

Road Runners Club of America: <https://www.rrca.org/find-a-running-club>

Running in San Francisco and the East Bay:

<http://www.runninginsanfrancisco.com/Running-in-San-Francisco-Clubs.html>

STAYING MOTIVATED

People who stick with a new behavior for six months usually make it a habit.

Here are some tips to help you stay in the game:

■ **Set attainable goals**

Make sure they are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely. Re-evaluate your goals at least once per month.

■ **Monitor your progress**

Keep an exercise log so you can measure how you are doing. Give yourself honest feedback and make changes to accomplish your goals.

■ **Make it fun**

Invite family members and friends to join you. Join a gym, take a class or find a community.

■ **Think positively**

Find positive statements to counter negative thoughts and repeat them to yourself whenever you find yourself getting negative. “I know I can. I know I can.”

■ **Plan for exercise**

People who plan for exercise are more likely to do it. Re-evaluate how you did at the end of each week and think about strategies to help you overcome any challenges to getting regular exercise. If you use the calendar feature on your phone, try setting up reminders and notifications to be active.



SET SMART GOALS TO SUCCEED

SMART

The SMART approach to setting goals works for anything you want to achieve. Set SMART goals to get where you want to go:

- I will walk at a brisk pace 30 minutes five days a week this week.
- I will complete a resistance exercise session 2 days a week for six weeks.



SPECIFIC

Be as specific as possible. “Get fitter” can mean all kinds of things – lose weight, lower blood pressure, have more energy — just to name a few. For example, lose 1/2 lb per week.



MEASURABLE

When you can measure your efforts, you can stay on top of your progress and see yourself improve. “Exercising more” becomes measurable by specifying that you’ll walk 30 minutes a day.



ATTAINABLE

It is important to make your goals a good fit for you – challenging but achievable. Find the sweet spot between setting yourself up for success and pushing yourself to improve. Hit each milestone then reach for another. Increase the time, intensity, and number of days you exercise to improve your fitness and strength.



RELEVANT

Make sure what you are trying to achieve is worthwhile to you. It is a common misstep to make someone else’s goals your own. Focus on what is important to you.



TIMELY

Include a timeframe in your goals. A timeframe — by the vacation, by July 1 — gives your goal a sense of urgency and helps keep you accountable. Make most goals short-term (e.g., in the next week, 2 weeks, month) and 1-2 long-term goals (e.g., in the next 6 months or year). For example, if you decide you want to tackle a 15-mile hike in the next year, your short-term goal might be to go for a 3-mile hike this week. Then, add one mile to your long hike each week.

WEEKLY EXERCISE PLANNING WORKSHEET

3 reasons why you want to exercise:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

What are your goals for this week?

Check if your goals are SMART goals. Tell a family member or friend about your weekly exercise goals. Ask them to check in with you during the week to see how you are doing. Having accountability may help you progress faster.

When do you plan on exercising? Track your progress with a checkmark.

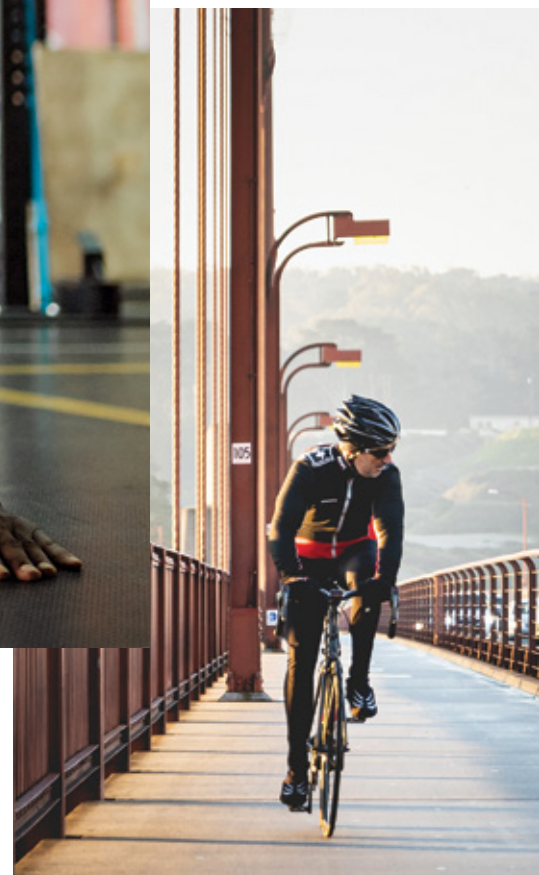
Day of the Week	Time of the Day	Planned Exercise	Goal Met
Monday			<input type="radio"/>
Tuesday			<input type="radio"/>
Wednesday			<input type="radio"/>
Thursday			<input type="radio"/>
Friday			<input type="radio"/>
Saturday			<input type="radio"/>
Sunday			<input type="radio"/>

Did you meet each of your weekly goals?

✓ **YES** What did you do that was most helpful in accomplishing it?

✗ **NO** What was the biggest obstacle that prevented you from meeting it?

✗ **NO** List 2 strategies to help you overcome these challenges:



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