

Get Healthy with Your Benefits: Exercise

VEBA online



The importance of regular exercise

No matter what your age, exercise is crucial for a healthy lifestyle. Regular exercise — at least three to four times per week — can keep your weight under control, provide protection against chronic diseases, increase your bone strength, and lower your risk of depression.

The major areas of fitness

A well-rounded exercise routine should include:

- Resistance/weight training (at least 20 minutes twice per week)
- Stretching (at least 10 to 15 minutes twice per week)
- Aerobic activity (at least 30 minutes each day).

Getting started

Be sure to get a physical examination before you begin an exercise program. Work with your doctor to set up a program that consists of the three major areas of fitness: stretching, weight training and aerobic exercises. Start out slowly, and pay attention to how you feel. If you're gasping for breath or your heart is pounding, you are overexerting yourself.

Staying motivated

One of the hardest things about exercise is staying motivated. Try working out with friends or make exercising fun by doing what you enjoy — like walking, running, swimming, biking or playing soccer. And, keep searching for new ways to get exercise or change the order of your routine.

It's best to schedule your workouts, so that they become a regular part of your daily routine. No matter how busy you are, you can squeeze in a 20- to 30-minute workout most days of the week.

online resources

A good place to learn more about exercise is your medical plan.

To help you stay fit, Kaiser Permanente medical centers offer exercise and fitness classes, such as Pilates, walking programs and yoga. Go to www.kaiserpermanente.org to view their health classes directory, and see which classes are offered in your area.

PacificCare provides tools that can help contribute to your overall health and well-being and reward you each step of the way. Complete a health risk assessment and learn more about fitness club discounts, *HealthCredits* and the *VirtualHealthClub* at www.pacificare.com.

No time to exercise?

Go to <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/82/97478.htm> for some exercises to try at your desk, or search About.com's Web site for "exercises at work" — www.stress.about.com.