

14A HEALTHY BODY/HEALTHY MIND

Success of exercise programs depends on style

By Vince & Yolanda
SPECIAL TO THE POST

Do you feel like you're listening to a foreign language when people start using fitness terms. To improve your fitness vocabulary read on.

Repetitions: The number of times an exercise is completed through a full range of motion. For example, one leg lift equals one repetition of that exercise movement.

Set: A designated number of repetitions. Doing 10 bicep curls before taking a brief rest period equals one set.

Curl: A curling exercise works the muscles by shortening it. This is accomplished by bending the joint to contract the muscle. Curling exercises include bicep curls, leg curls and wrist curls.

Extension: An extension exercise works muscles by lengthening the muscle while it is working. This is done by straightening the joint. Extension movements should never straighten to the point of locking or overextending the joint itself. Examples of extension exercises include leg extensions and tricep push downs.

Low Impact Aerobic Dance: Aerobic dance exercise in which one foot is always in contact with the floor. Low

impact exercising eliminates jumping, hopping and running movements. Instead, marching movements, side steps and lots of arm movements are used to make this workout effective. Low impact aerobics are a good alternative for those who can't run jump or hop due to injury. It's also good for the healthy injury free person because it reduces your risk of injury.

High Impact Aerobic Dance: High impact aerobic dance uses skipping hopping and running movements. This type of workout can be very effective but unfortunately puts you at a relatively high risk for injury due to repetitive stress and constant changes in movement directions.

Intensity: The amount of energy expended during a workout. You can increase your intensity by taking less time between exercises, running or biking more miles in the same amount of time and doing more than one exercise with no rest between them.

Range of Motion: The distance through which a limb can travel during a repetition without extending past normal limitations. For example, a full range of motion for a bicep curl would start with your arm fully straight and at your side.



Holding a dumbbell with your palms facing front raise the weight until you can't raise it any further. Then lower the weight back to your side with a straight arm. This would be

one repetition through a full range of motion.

Static Stretch: A static stretch is a slow sustained stretch of a muscle. You should never bounce or jerk while

stretching. If you do, you can cause injuries such as pulls or tears. Instead, hold the stretch for a few seconds then exhale slowly and deeply as you extend the stretch a little further. Stretching should never be done before you warm up the body with some type of continuous movement such as walking or light jogging for five to 10 minutes.

Flexibility: The range of possible movement in a joint or group of joints. Flexibility is accomplished through stretching. This type of routine requires that you practice good form so you don't cause pulls, tears or joint problems.

Body fat Percentage: The portion of the body that is not lean muscle mass or water. Body fat percentage is measured with an instrument such as a caliper, ultrasound and underwater submersion. Body fat can also be measured by a machine which uses electrical impulse to calculate the amount of body fat a person has. It is possible for a person to be small and carry more body fat than a person who appears heavy. A high percentage of body fat will give the body a flabby appearance. Measuring body fat is a realistic alternative to measuring body weight. Since a pound of

fat takes up more space than a pound of muscle a well toned person can weigh the same as a flabby person but be much smaller. The ideal body fat for women is between 12 and 20 percent. For men, ideal body fat is between 10 and 15 percent.

Warm-up: The process of getting the body ready to do more strenuous exercise by increasing the amount of oxygen and blood flow in the body. When you warm up it's best to do a slow or light weight version of the exercise you're getting ready to perform; For example, if you are using swimming in your workout program do a few slow laps to get the body ready. If you're lifting weights do a few light sets to get the muscles ready to do more strenuous lifting.

Cool-down: A cool down is just as important as a warmup. It allows the body to recover gradually from the stress of exercise. A general indication that the body has cooled-down is that you have stopped sweating heavily and the heart rate is below 100 beats per minute. Avoid saunas hot tubs and hot showers immediately following exercise sessions.

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Study: Transcendental Meditation lowers blood pressure in older black men



OAKLAND, Aug. 6 — Results published in the August issue of the American Heart Association journal Hypertension show that the Transcendental Meditation

technique significantly lowered blood pressure in older African American men and women who were at high risk for one or more major risk factors.

The study was the first of its kind to investigate the application of stress reduction techniques to African American subgroups who displayed major hypertension risk factors including obesity, high alcohol use, low exercise level, psychological stress, and high sodium intake.

Research at the West Oakland Health Center in Oakland, CA, monitored 111 subjects, ages 55 to 85, who were randomly assigned to three groups: the Transcendental Meditation (TM) program, Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), or a lifestyle modification education control group.

After three months, subjects in the TM group showed significant reductions in blood pressure at both high and low

risk levels for all five major hypertension risk factors, and for smoking, a major cardiovascular risk factor. Whereas subjects practicing the TM program with the highest combined risk profile decreased significantly in blood pressure, educational controls with the same profile significantly increased in blood pressure over the same time period.

Other findings of the study include:

- Of the two stress-reduction techniques, Transcendental Meditation was approximately twice as effective as Progressive Muscle Relaxation in reducing hypertension.

- Women in the TM group reduced systolic blood pressure (SBP) by 10.4 points and diastolic blood pressure (DBP) by 5.9 points, compared to con-

trol women; women in the PMR group did not show a significant difference.

- Men in the TM group reduced SBP by 12.7 points and DBP by 8.1 points, compared to control men; men in the PMR group reduced DBP only.

The blood pressure reductions found in the TM subgroups were similar to those commonly found with antihypertensive drugs. Comparable blood pressure reductions in drug trials over the long-term have been associated with 35-40 percent less strokes and 30-45 percent less coronary heart disease.

"These findings are important because they show that even in the worst case scenario — when someone has multiple risk factors for hypertension

and heart disease — the Transcendental Meditation technique can effectively reduce high blood pressure and thus help prevent cardiovascular disease and death," said Charles Alexander, Ph.D., coauthor of the study and Professor of Psychology at Maharishi University of Management (M.U.M.) in Fairfield, Iowa.

Previous studies have found that intensive, multidimensional lifestyle changes in diet, exercise and stress management can help prevent coronary heart disease (CHD) if maintained over the long-term.

"Our findings indicate that use of the stress-reducing TM technique by itself — independent

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WOMAN'S HEALTH

YOUR HOSPITAL DISCHARGE CHECKLIST

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For mothers and newborns, a reasonable hospital stay following an uncomplicated vaginal delivery is 48 hours, according to The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Yet some insurers are limiting hospital stays to as short as 24 or even 12 hours. In response, some states have passed laws requiring insurers to observe ACOG and AAP guidelines, and a similar federal bill has been proposed. Regardless of what your insurance policy covers, here's what you should know before you leave the hospital.

1. **Your Baby's Condition is Stable.** Your baby should have an appropriate birth weight, normal exam results, and be in a stable condition. The baby should have urinated and passed at least one stool before discharge, and should be able to maintain a normal temperature and suck and swallow normally.

2. **Lab Tests Have Been Performed.** All necessary lab tests should be done on your baby before discharge. If your baby is discharged during the first 48 hours of life, then the baby should be tested within 48 hours after hospital discharge. These tests include a Hepatitis B vaccine, and heel-stick tests to screen for conditions that if not detected and treated early could

lead to mental retardation or other problems — conditions like phenylketonuria (PKU), hypothyroidism, and sickle cell anemia. If your baby was tested for PKU before 24 hours of life, which may be too early, get the infant retested at a follow-up visit within 48 hours after discharge.

3. **You've Received Instruction on Newborn Care.** You should be told about basic care such as how to breast or bottle feed, how to position your baby for sleeping, and how to properly use an infant car seat.

4. **You Have Information on Complications and Emergencies.** You should be told about possible problems with your newborn — including symptoms of jaundice and dehydration. Have the names and numbers of persons to call in an emergency.

5. **You've Made an Appointment for a Follow-Up Visit.** If your baby was discharged within 48 hours of birth, this visit should be within 48 hours of discharge. If the baby had a longer hospital stay, his or her appointment will be within the first month of birth. Your own appointment with your doctor will probably be within two to six weeks.

6. **You Have Instructions for Your Health.** You should know how to care for any stitches you have, and whether you need prescription medicine. Finally, don't forget to plan for contraception.

Next Week: Can I Treat This Over-the-Counter?

Why the new food labels are important

HOUSTON—Experts are predicting a moderate 1996-97 influenza season, but people most at risk for life-threatening flu complications should still get vaccinated — and the sooner the better.

"The elderly and people with chronic underlying health problems should get vaccinated every flu season," said Dr. W. Paul Glezen, epidemiologist at the Influenza Research Center at Houston's Baylor College of Medicine.

Influenza B will likely be the dominant strain this season, Glezen said, but there could also be an appearance by A/Wuhan (H3N2), a new variant.

Glezen advises people in the high-risk groups to get inoculated as soon as the vaccine becomes available, usually in early autumn.

In North America, flu season usually begins in earnest after Thanksgiving, but, as happened in 1991, it can come earlier.

"If it hits early, the elderly and people with chronic underlying health problems need to be protected," Glezen said.

Every year thousands of people, most of them elderly, die

from pneumonia resulting from influenza, he said, and many, perhaps most, of the deaths could have been prevented by vaccination.

Among the people at high

risk for possibly deadly flu complications: people with heart disease; lung disease, including asthma and chronic bronchitis; diabetes, chronic kidney disease; chronic anemia, including sickle-cell dis-

ease and immune-system disorders.

Influenza usually strikes suddenly and produces fever, generalized muscle pain, severe weakness and fatigue, a sore throat and a dry, hacking cough.

To reduce fever and pain, adults may take aspirin or aspirin substitutes; children should take acetaminophen, if needed, said Glezen, a pediatrician. All flu victims should get plenty of bed rest and liquids.

The vaccine is about 85 percent effective in helping people avoid influenza, he said.

Some people worry that they will get the flu from the vaccine, but that is not possible, Glezen said, because the vaccine is made from killed virus.

The vaccine has been shown to significantly lower the risk of hospitalization for influenza and pneumonia in people 65 and older.

