

# The Fitness Assistant

Tips & tools to help you succeed

## Orientation

### get the most bang for your fitness buck

#### Introduction

We're not talking center square footage and brand names of treadmills anymore ladies and gentlemen. You're standing here in the weight room with an "elliptical cardio trainer" and a weight bench staring right back up at you wondering what in the heck to do next. Well hold on to your water bottles and grab a towel as we break down the simplest, most effective ways to get the most calorie burning, health and fitness improving bang for your fitness buck in our brand new, state of the art center.

#### "Cardio"

To walk the walk, it helps to talk the talk, so get familiar with gym lingo. "Cardio" refers to any physical activity that challenges the cardiovascular system, that is, your heart and all the veins and arteries running to and fro. When you hop on a "cardio machine" like the treadmill and walk 4 mph for 30 minutes, you are doing a ½ hour "cardio workout".

This is as simple as standing on the sides of the treadmill (or carefully on the pedals of an elliptical, or sitting on a stationary bike) and hitting the green **QUICK START** button. All of the pieces have a quick start and an emergency **STOP!** button.

Hold on to the handles first on the treadmill, and don't worry, it will begin you at 0.5 mph, (very slow), and bump up the speed button one point at a time until you are walking closer to 3.0 mph. Your goal is to walk a sustained 2.6 - 4.0 mph.

Performing 20-40 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at about 60-80% intensity (effort level should be 6-8 out of 10), 3-5 times per week should be enough to keep the rust off and heart pumping good and strong.

#### Strength / Resistance Training

Mother Nature is only trying to strip us of our muscle mass and bone density, therefore, strength training is A MUST! The best way to get used to the strength training equipment is to put 10 lbs or less on a machine, sit down, and check out the convenient little picture located on the machine. Slowly attempt to do what the picture depicts.

Worried about proper form? Pick up the December *Fitness Assistant*, "perfect form, no trainer required - 5 keys to perfect form" (at the trainers' table outside of the personal trainers' office.) Until you've read that, just remember to maintain good posture, make sure you are safe and secure on the padded seat, and control the weight, do not let the weight control you.

OK, so here comes some more gym lingo. If you perform an exercise for 15 repetitions, we call this 1 "set" of 15 "reps". Your goal is to perform 3 upper body, and 2 lower body strength exercises, 2-3 sets of 15 reps per exercise. (Read that again before continuing.) Whether getting an orientation or not, walk around and discover the different lower and upper body exercises.

You should adjust the weight appropriately (simply turn the dial on the Nautilus machines) so that you feel challenged as you approach the 15th repetition. Sometimes a weight may feel pretty light until you reach the 10th, 11th, or 15th repetition. Rest 30+ seconds, and perform another set of a different exercise. After performing another different exercise, come back to that first one and repeat this until you have done all 5 exercises (3 upper body, 2 lower body).

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### Fitness Tips / Recommended Workout

OK, so you just got back from the doctor and he said you should be exercising “at least” 3 times per week. Here’s a great beginning workout for you to get going on ASAP:

1. **Warm Up** Hop on a bike or treadmill and pedal or walk for 10 min. to get some blood flowing in your knees, raise your body temperature, and prepare you for more activity.
2. **Strength Training** Locate each of the machines you plan to use first, so you can continue moving from one exercise to the next. To keep your heart rate elevated during the workout, never perform the same exercise two times in row. Instead, perform 1 set of 15 reps, then move to another machine, and continue moving around from one piece to another until you’ve performed 2 lower and 3 upper body exercises, 2-3 sets of 15 reps. This should take you 20-30 min.
3. **Cardio** Hop back on a treadmill, elliptical, or bike again for a longer bout, enough to maintain an elevated heart rate for more than 20-30 minutes. Experiment with the levels of intensity. For example, if you are walking on a treadmill, maintain a 2.6-4.0 mph walk, and bump the incline up to 2% to feel the hill. Maintain this incline walk for a minute or two, then bring it back to 0%. The “speed” and “incline” buttons are both found next to the start and stop buttons.
4. **Cool Down / Stretch** Finish with a few light stretches for your legs, and some shoulder rolls forward and backward to relieve the stress from your neck, shoulders, and postural muscles. Head home and have a piece of fruit with a serving of protein to help replenish energy and rebuild all of the muscles you just finished challenging.

As with anything else, you will soon develop a comfort level within the weight room and be able to move through an effective, efficient exercise session in under an hour.

### Gym Etiquette / Misc. Tips

Speaking of developing a comfort zone in the fitness center, here are a few quick tips to help you get a good workout in while minimizing any awkwardness and intimidation that is too often seen in most weight rooms.

1. **Can’t we all get along?** If someone is doing a machine that you are waiting for, simply ask, “can I work in with you?” or “how many sets do you have left?” Gym members often “work in” with each other taking turns doing sets.
2. **Danger!** Please put any weights away where you found them, as tripping and other safety hazards are already commonplace in the weight room.
3. **Keep that heart rate up!** Please do not sit too long on any one machine, as you should be moving from one to the next. Please be aware of anyone who may be waiting for the same piece of equipment.
4. **Keep it clean!** Please wipe down the equipment after using it with a single wipe located in one of the canisters.
5. **Enjoy the silence!** While music and an occasional grunt or groan from a weight lifter is commonplace in a fitness center, cell phones are increasingly becoming an issue. Not only do they disrupt some of the electronics on the cardio machines, but they can annoy other patrons. Please keep your ringers down or off and take calls outside of the center.

\*These tips and recommendations are all given to help orient members into our new fitness center. They are general recommendations to safely get you started in the right direction. If you have more individual questions concerning your health and fitness goals, please call or email today to schedule a consultation. And look forward to future publications of the *The Fitness Assistant*.