

Two considerations (work on one or both):

1) Daily activity (count your steps using a pedometer)

- a. Assess your needs, how much do you move?
 - ☐ Do you sit behind a desk or on a piece of equipment for much of the day?
 - ☐ Are you a laborer on a road crew?
- b. A pedometer measures your daily activity counting your “steps”.
 - A recommended target number to improve or manage your health is 10,000 steps, however, improving your baseline has significant health effects. For example, if your baseline is 3,000 steps per day try to increase that number to 4,000 steps per day.
 - Those sitting at a desk may find their baseline step total is low. A pedometer may be a good tool to monitor activity.
 - A laborer may find their totals are high and not necessarily beneficial to track, however, it may be a useful tool in the “off-season”.

2) Heart Pumping Exercise

- a. Step 1 - Get a resting heart rate by counting your beats per minute (bpm). Find the pulse in your wrist or neck, place your fingers on the correct spot and count how many times it beats over the course of one minute. Many smart watches and Fitbits have a feature that tracks your heart rate.
 - A healthy resting heart rate range is 60-100 bpm.
- b. Step 2 – Elevate your heart rate slightly. During exercise you should be slightly winded but able to carry on a conversation. The Karvonen Formula can provide target heart rates:
 - $220 - \text{your age} \times 0.8 = \text{exercise heart rate}$
 - For example, I am 53 years old, my exercise heart rate would be:
 - $220 - 53 \times 0.8 = 134 \text{ bpm}$
- c. Note: this measure is far from perfect, but it provides a reference to monitor. For example, when I walk the stairs for 30 minutes it is “comfortably challenging”. I get sweaty and my legs get slightly fatigued, however, I can carry on a conversation. Upon completion of the 30 minutes, my heart rate is usually around 140 bpm.
- d. In contrast, when I do the stair stepper at the gym, my heart rate goes up to 170 bpm. I can only maintain that for 5-10 minutes. My breathing is labored, and my heart rate is uncomfortable (not recommended).
- e. Most of us do not need to get our heart rate into high ranges, instead focus on raising your heart rate slightly above your resting rate. In my case, my heart rate goes from a resting rate of 80 bpm to a “comfortable” exercise rate of 140 bpm (see Steps 1 & 2 above).
- f. How do I get my heart rate elevated? Where I live it is very flat and when I go out to walk, I will typically “stroll” at a very comfortable pace and find it difficult to push myself. I have tried running but never liked it and tend to overdo (leading to injury). I recommend walking up and down stairs or uphill, it is low impact and naturally elevates your heart rate. A stationary bike with a little resistance added is also effective in being low impact and raising your heart rate.
- g. The American Heart Association recommends 150-minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week. For most, that is a very lofty goal. **Even 5 minutes of “heart pumping” exercise has health benefits.** My advice is do what you can, but try to do something 3-5 days per week!