

SHAPE UP AND LIVE

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This article has been condensed from the pamphlet *An Introduction to Physical Fitness*, with permission of The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, Washington, D.C.

To look your best, to feel your best, and to be able to do your best, you must exercise regularly. That is man's nature; technology can't change it.

As Scouters, we know that regular, vigorous exercise increases muscle strength and endurance. It also improves functioning of lungs, heart and blood vessels; promotes joint flexibility; releases mental and physical tensions; and aids in weight control.

Medical research demonstrates that active persons have fewer heart attacks than sedentary persons. If they do have attacks, they recover faster.

10 More than half of all lower back pain is due to poor tone and flexibility of the back and abdominal muscles. Often, this problem can be prevented or corrected by proper exercise.

In short, exercise makes a difference. The options are mere existence or a full life. The choice is yours.

Before beginning any exercise program, it is advisable to have a medical checkup. If you have not had an examination in the past year, are past 30, are overweight, or have a history of high blood pressure or heart trouble, such an examination may help you to avoid serious consequences.

Chances are your physician will be able to give you an unconditional go-ahead. If not, he may be able to modify the exercises.

There are a few persons who, for medical reasons, should not undertake any exercise program, unless and until these reasons have been eliminated.

Only a qualified physician can say for sure if the exercise program outlined here is advisable for you.

If your physician has not already selected an exercise program for you, the tests described here will help you make the right choice. They will measure your present exercise tolerance, which determines where you begin in the walking-jogging program.

Exercise capacity varies widely

among individuals, even when they are similar in age and physical build. That's why your program should be based on your personal test results, rather than on what you think you should be able to do.

WALK TEST. This test is to determine how many minutes (up to 10) you can walk at a brisk pace, on a level surface, without undue difficulty or discomfort.

■ If you cannot walk for five minutes, you should begin with the **RED** walking program. P. 13.

■ If you can walk more than five minutes, but less than 10, you should begin with the third week of the **RED** walking program. P. 13.

□ If you can walk for the full 10 minutes, but are somewhat tired and sore as a result, you should start with the **WHITE** walking-jogging program. P. 13.

If you can breeze through the full 10 minutes, you are ready for bigger things. Wait until the next day and take the Walk-Jog Test.

WALK-JOG TEST. In this test you alternately walk 50 steps (left foot strikes ground 25 times) and jog 50 steps for a total of 10 minutes. Read the Jogging Guidelines on page 13 before taking the test.

Walk at 120 steps per minute. Jog at 144 steps per minute.

□ If you cannot complete the 10-minute test, begin at the third week of the **WHITE** program. P. 13.

□ If you can complete the 10-minute test, but are tired and winded as a result, start with the last week of the **WHITE** program before moving to the **BLACK** program.

■ If you can perform the 10-minute test without difficulty, start with the **BLACK** program. P. 13.

If during these tests you experience nausea, trembling, extreme breathlessness, pounding in the head, or pain in

the chest, stop immediately. If the symptoms persist beyond temporary discomfort, check with your physician.

The symptoms described are signs that you have reached the limits of your present exercise tolerance. The point at which they occur will indicate where you should begin in the program. **YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAM.** The routines described here employ the most up-to-date information available on exercise physiology. They are equally beneficial for men and women.

The program consists of three parts: Warmup, Conditioning Exercises, Circulatory Activities.

Each of the parts is divided into three levels—**RED**, **WHITE** and **BLACK**, with **RED** the least strenuous and **BLACK** the most difficult.

Warmup. Always begin your workout with adequate warmup. This is very important. It will increase your body temperature and heart rate, which is essential to efficient and safe functioning of the lungs, heart and blood vessels during more vigorous exercise. It also makes your joints more flexible and muscles more elastic.

Conditioning Exercises. These exercises will improve muscle tone, produce an increase in strength, promote good posture, and contribute to flexibility, coordination and balance.

In the warmup and the conditioning routines, begin each exercise with the minimum repetitions recommended and gradually increase them. When you can do the maximum repetitions with ease, move to the next level.

Circulatory Activities. These activities improve the efficiency and the capacity of your cardiovascular vessels. The progressive nature of the workouts will gradually increase exercise tolerance and push back fatigue limits.

The walk at the end of each workout will help you "cool down." This taper-