

WALKING TOWARDS WELLNESS



Finding Your Target Heart Rate

If your goal is to improve the fitness of your heart and lungs, you can find out how hard to exercise by keeping track of your heart rate. Your maximum heart rate is the fastest your heart can beat, per minute, while exercising safely. Exercise above 75% of your maximum heart rate may be too strenuous unless you are in excellent physical condition. Exercise below 50% gives your heart and lungs minimal conditioning. Therefore, the most beneficial activity level is 50 – 75% of your maximum heart rate. This range is called your Target Heart Rate Zone. Your maximum heart rate is about 220 minus your age. Use the chart below to identify your Target Heart Rate Zone.*

Age	Target Heart Rate Zone (beats per minute) 50-75%	Average Maximum Heart Rate (beats per minute) 100%
20 years	100-150	200
25 years	98-146	195
30 years	95-142	190
35 years	93-138	185
40 years	90-135	180
45 years	88-131	175
50 years	85-127	170
55 years	83-123	165
60 years	80-120	160
65 years	78-116	155
70 years	75-113	150

*The figures provided are averages. Use them as general guidelines, only.

Adapted from the American Heart Association publication Exercise and Your Heart, 1999.

How to check your Heart Rate...

To see if you are within your target heart rate zone, take your pulse immediately after you stop exercising.

- Place the tips of your first two fingers lightly over one of the blood vessels on your neck, located to the left or right of your Adam's apple. Another convenient pulse spot is the inside of your wrist just below the base of your thumb.
- Count your pulse for 10 seconds and multiply by 6 (to get beats per minute).
- If your pulse falls within your target zone, you're doing fine. If it's below your target zone, exercise a little harder. If it's above your target zone, exercise a little easier.

Some people find that exercising within their target zone seems too strenuous. If you start out lower, that's OK. With time you'll become more comfortable exercising and can increase to your target zone at your own rate.

