



How to be a Dynamo When Others Are Dead On Their Feet

By Dr Peter Holsman

This article is written to inspire you to increase the amount of physical activity in your life so that you enjoy greater health, energy and stamina.

Most people, at some stage, have made a commitment to exercise or go to a gym.

But, if you are like most people, you didn't continue, did you?

But if you had kept going, how fit would you be now?

What health problems might you have prevented?

The secret is to know why you, as distinct from anyone else, want to find the time and make a commitment to increase your physical activity.

The odds are that people who are unfit will do nothing about it unless they have a reasonsomething to motivate them.

So why would **you** want to review or include exercise in your life?

Perhaps some of the following reasons are important to you:

Some personal reasons:

You want to live to enjoy retirement.

Watch your grandchildren grow up.

Add life to your years.

Better endurance and energy.

Improved mood.

Reducing stress levels.

Slow down the aging process.

Improve libido.

Sleep enhancement.

For fun, meeting people and making friends.

To improve your physical health:

Decrease the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Improve cholesterol and blood pressure.
Weight loss
Help diabetes control.
Reduce the risk of some forms of cancer.
Have healthy bones and avoid osteoporosis.

How much is enough?

The Australian government Physical Activity Guidelines state:

“Everyone should try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week”.

Thirty minutes activity has been shown to maintain good energy levels and overall health.

You can break it up into two 15 minute sessions or three 10 minute sessions if you are starting to increase your activity levels or time is an issue.

Activities such as brisk walking, working in the garden and going for a swim are popular forms of moderate physical activity. Expect to get lightly puffed but still be able to hold a conversation. If you are too puffed to talk, then you are overdoing it.

Vary your activities to help you stay motivated. For example, walking or cycling along a different route adds interest.

See your Doctor for a check up before you start an exercise program.

There are three types of exercise:

Aerobic exercise is where you give your heart, lungs and blood vessels a work out. Ideally this is for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. People starting an activity program can begin with as little as 10 minutes at a time and build up gradually.

The following are examples of aerobic activities:

Brisk Walking	Swimming	Playing golf	Cycling
Gardening	Tennis	Dancing	Aerobics
Jogging	Team sports		

Exercise intensity must be relevant to your current fitness level. Start slowly, taking into account any precautions recommended by your Doctor. Use the talk test and heart rate chart to help you avoid over doing it. Aim at moderate physical activity.

The Talk Test:

Light intensity – can talk comfortably.

Moderate to Hard – can answer questions but do not wish to hold a prolonged consultation.

Very Hard – can't answer questions due to being "out of breath".

If you are too puffed to talk, then you are overdoing it.

The Karvonen Formula:

Calculate your exercise heart rate range:

Estimate your maximum heart rate.

Take 220 minus your age=..... (Maximum heart rate)

Determine your lower level exercise heart rate.

Multiply your maximum heart rate by 0.6

Determine your upper level exercise heart rate.

Multiply your maximum heart rate by 0.9

Your exercise heart rate range is between your upper and lower limits. Exercising in the lower range for a longer time is generally safer and more effective than exercising at the higher end of the range for a short time.

Resistance or strength training that typically uses weights or exercises to strengthen your muscles and bones. Resistance training promotes the formation of lean muscles. This increases your ability to burn fat and contributes to a toned and trim physique. In addition the amount and percentage of lean muscle mass is a key predictor for living longer.

The reason resistance exercise builds muscle is that the resistance e.g. weights causes microscopic tears in muscle fibres. This then stimulates the repair process with the body adapting to produce a slightly larger and stronger muscle. Resistance exercises should be done two to three times a week so the muscles have time to rebuild in between sessions.

Choose at least one activity from the following:

Weight training.

Climbing stairs

Digging in the garden

Callisthenics such as squats, push ups and sit ups

Pilates

Yoga

Flexibility activities that help you move more easily. They include gentle reaching, bending and stretching. So next time you find yourself having a stretch on the couch, think about doing a few more!

Examples include:

Yoga

Dancing

Tai Chi

Gardening

Three Practical tips:

Take more steps for your health:

Get a **pedometer** and walk 10,000 steps a day. A pedometer is a small device with a pendulum in it which clips on to your belt or waist band and measures how many steps you take.

Lots of people are amazed by how a pedometer has boosted their walking. They are a fantastic way to motivate, monitor and increase your level of activity. The recommended 10,000 steps daily is based on research which showed that 10,000 steps a day corresponds to significant health and energy benefits. How far is 10,000 steps? It is about 8.5 kilometres. Most people working in an office average between 2000 and 3000 steps a day.

Think about it.

What if you are only taking 2000 steps a day?

By the end of one week, you are potentially 56,000 steps behind in your quest to add quality to your 100 years.

Wear appropriate shoes:

A lot of people anxious to get fit after heart attacks drop out of their rehabilitation program in the first 4-6 weeks because of injuries suffered due to the wrong footwear.

Choose walking shoes that comfortably support your feet. Many people find that their feet roll in (pronate) and that this in turn puts stress on their ankles, knees and hips. Check the soles of your shoes for undue wear or visit a sports store or podiatrist that can measure the foot pressure patterns.

Goal Setting: A Written Plan:

Goals are dreams with dates on them. The problem with dreams alone is that they exist only in your mind and you can change them as easily as you change your mind. Put your physical activity goals in writing and make them happen.

A calendar on the fridge or a note in your **diary** is a great way to make physical activity part of your life.

Be specific with your goals, for example:

I am going swimming three days a week.
I am walking the dog every morning for half an hour.
I am going to lose 10 kg by this time next year.

Statistics:

Breast cancer patients who exercised three to five hours a week reduced their odds of dying by half.

The number of cars and station wagons registered in Australia in 2003 was 10.4 million.

It was 76,000 in 1920.

People who do no physical activity are twice as likely to die of a heart attack as those who participate in moderate physical activity.

Quotes:

You don't have to take exercise seriously, just regularly.

"If exercise could be packed in a pill, it would be the singly most widely prescribed and beneficial medicine in the nation". Robert N. Butler.

The Australian Physical Activity Guidelines

Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.

Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most preferably all days.

Be active in as many ways as you can.

If you can, also enjoy some regular vigorous exercise for better health and fitness.

Interesting Statistics on Benefits of Exercise:

A decreased resting heart rate due to exercise, significantly decreases the work of your heart.

A normal trained resting heart rate = 60 beats per minute=86400 beats per day.

An untrained resting heart rate =70 beats per minute =100800 beats per day.

This equals 14,400 beats per day difference=432,000 beats per month

=5,184,000 beat per year

Dr Peter Holsman is an accomplished medical practitioner and enthralling public speaker who enjoys helping people stay young and energetic. His entertaining and actionpacked presentations are for every one who wants to get the most out of life and for organisations that want to put life back into their people. For more information visit www.liveto100.com.au or phone Your Health Camberwell on 03 9882 5151.