



Health Promotion Toolbox

May 2016: Physical Fitness Month

Message for Commanding Officers

According to the 2014 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment Annual Report, 27 percent of active duty Navy and 17 percent of active duty Marine Corps respondents indicated a lack of moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise in their routine.¹ A smaller percentage of active duty Navy and Marine Corps respondents indicated a lack of strength training exercises, 21 percent and 10 percent, respectively.¹ The positive picture is active duty Sailors and Marines exceed the general population in their activity levels as less than half of the overall U.S. adult population get the recommended physical activity needed each week.²

Regular physical activity reduces the risk of many adverse health outcomes.³ Being active increases the chances of living longer and performing better—both on and off the job. By incorporating physical activities that mimic job duties, Sailors and Marines will be able to work more efficiently and with less risk of injury.⁴ Incorporating both aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises will also help to sustain physical activity over the long-term and reap greater health benefits.^{3, 5}

During Physical Fitness Month, share resources that teach your Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel about the benefits of leading an active lifestyle. They'll learn how to incorporate physical activity into many areas of their lives, such as family activities, household chores, and at their workplace. Access the tools and resources by clicking on the blue, underlined hyperlinked text throughout the document. By incorporating these tips into their daily routines, Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel can meet their recommended weekly amounts of physical activity with ease!

What Can Leadership Do?

As a commanding officer, you play an important role in promoting healthy physical fitness behaviors among your Sailors and/or Marines:

- Reference the [Activity Ideas](#) for tips on how to share physical activity resources with your command.



- Establish a strong command policy on individual and unit-level physical training, and lead by example during command physical training.
- Ensure injury prevention efforts are incorporated into physical training practices.
 - Command Fitness Leaders (CFLs) and Assistant Command Fitness Leaders (ACFLs) play a significant role in offering a safe and effective exercise training program at the command. In addition to the [Navy's official CFL course](#), encourage CFLs to seek additional training and resources offered by the Navy. The command may contact their local Health Promotion and Wellness Coordinator or Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Fitness Coordinator for a listing of current classes/resources offered in your area such as the NOFFS (Navy Operational Fitness & Fueling System) one day short course.
- Introduce your command to NOFFS and Marine Corps High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT).
 - NOFFS is designed to provide the Navy with a world-class performance training resource for Sailors, as well as Navy health and fitness professionals. The exercises used in the training system are designed to replicate the activities Sailors conduct in their operational duties: lifting, pushing, pulling, and carrying.
 - HITT is a strength and conditioning program designed to prepare a Marine for combat. The program improves a Marine's physical development, combat readiness, and resiliency.

You can work with Health Promotion Coordinators and Command Fitness Leaders to:

- Inform Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel that most health benefits occur with [at least 150 minutes](#) (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, such as brisk walking. Additional benefits occur with more physical activity and with vigorous-intensity physical activity.³
- Moderate to vigorous-intensity [muscle strengthening](#) that involves all major muscle groups is recommended at least two days a week.³
- Encourage your Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel to include [stretching](#) as part of their fitness routine to prevent injuries.
- Help your command [develop a positive fitness mindset for active living](#).
- Challenge your Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel to make small lifestyle changes like taking the stairs instead of the elevator. [Moderate activity contributes to one's fitness](#).
- Recommend [High Intensity Interval Training \(HIIT\)](#) (not to be confused with HITT, the Marine Corps training) to your command to improve their cardiovascular health with just one session of HIIT per week.⁶



- Whether recovering from a wound, illness, or injury, physical activity has many benefits. [Share these reasons to motivate your wounded, ill, or injured \(WII\) Sailors and Marines.](#) Distribute [these tips](#) to help WII Sailors and Marines exercise safely while recovering.
- Inform your command that [optimal performance nutrition](#) can help take one's physical fitness to the next level and assist with recovery and injury prevention.
- Share these [pre-, during-, and post-workout nutrition guidelines and strategies](#) to help your command fuel their exercise efforts.
- Encourage Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel to exercise regularly to [manage stress](#).
- As the weather starts to get warmer, share these tips so that your command [stays safe when they are active](#) and gets the [proper hydration](#) they need.

Resources

¹EpiData Center Department, Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment 2014. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/HRA-2014-report-final.pdf>. Published May 2015. Accessed March 2016.

²Facts About Physical Activity. Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention. Physical Activity. <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/facts.htm>. Updated 23 May 2014. Accessed March 2016.

³U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>. Published October 2008. Accessed March 2016.

⁴NOFFS Training System Project Overview. Commander Navy Installation Command. <http://www.navyfitness.org/fitness/noffs-training/noffs-overview>. Accessed March 2016.

⁵Adding Physical Activity to Your Life. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Physical Activity. <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/index.htm>. Updated 4 June 2015. Accessed March 2016.

⁶Wisløff U, Ellingsen Ø, Kemi O. High-Intensity Interval Training to Maximize Cardiac Benefits of Exercise Training? Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews. 2009;37(3):139-146. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19550205>. Accessed March 2016.