



Health Promotion Toolbox

May 2016: Physical Fitness Month

Plan of the Week

Each week during May 2016's Physical Fitness Month, share one of the paragraphs below with your command so they can learn more about physical fitness and how active living can positively impact their lives. You can access additional information, tools, and resources by clicking on the blue, underlined hyperlinked text.

Week 1

Follow the [2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) recommendations to improve your health through physical activity. Being active increases your chances of living longer and performing better both on and off the job.¹ For the best results, engage in a variety of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise, muscle strengthening, and functional body movement activities. Flexibility is also an important piece of a physical fitness routine. Flexible muscles and joints are less likely to be injured while exercising. For adults, the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends²:

- At least 150 minutes/week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes/week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both.
- For more substantial health benefits, the guide recommends 300 minutes/week of moderate-intensity, or 150 minutes/week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both.
- The guidelines also recommend moderate- to high-intensity muscle strengthening that involves all major muscle groups at least two days/week.

Week 2

Include both aerobic and muscle strengthening activities in your workout routine to improve your physical fitness. Aerobic exercises can strengthen your heart and help to increase your endurance.² Aerobic activity is anything that increases your heart rate such as brisk walking, bicycling, swimming, running, basketball, mowing the lawn, or gardening. For higher intensity aerobic activity, try [interval training](#). Interval training alternates between short, intense bouts of exercise and periods of true recovery. As an active duty service member, muscular strength is also important because it helps you with activities such as lifting artillery, moving cargo, and



carrying pack weight.³ It is also important in everyday activities such as lifting items around your house. You may find [body movement strength training](#), like upper and lower body pushing and pulling, more helpful than training individual body parts. Improving your flexibility can also increase the range of motion of your muscles and protect your joints from injury.³ There are several [flexibility building strategies](#) that you can get started with today!

If you have been wounded, ill, or injured, you may have taken a break from exercising, and now need to [rebuild your cardiovascular fitness](#). Be sure to talk to your doctor before starting any exercise program. Exercising has [many benefits](#) in the recovery process and supporting your resiliency efforts so get moving today!

Week 3

The Navy Operational Fitness & Fueling System (NOFFS) and Marine Corps High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT) program are designed to increase the physical performance of Sailors and Marines. [NOFFS](#) provides information and resources for Sailors to maintain peak physical readiness. The five different training series seek to develop skills needed to perform at the highest levels by developing muscle strength, cardiovascular fitness, and raw power, often by mimicking the physical activities done as part of job functions. Examples of training series you can access on the NOFFS website includes Operational Series (available for four different platforms), and Strength, Endurance, Sandbag, and Regeneration Series. Marines may be interested in trying the [Marine Corps Fitness HITT combat performance enhancement program](#) (not to be confused with HIIT, high-intensity interval training), which is a strength and conditioning program designed to optimize combat readiness and resiliency by enhancing speed, power, strength, and endurance.

Week 4

Incorporate fun physical activities into your daily life to stay active. Exercising at the gym is only one way to be physically active. [Moderate activity](#) can also contribute to your overall fitness and fulfill your weekly exercise goals. There are many types of physical activity, including your favorite outdoor pursuits such as rock climbing, kayaking, bicycling, and hiking. You can also be [physically active with your kids](#) by playing with them in the pool, running around at the park, or going on bike rides together. Physical activity also includes routine, daily pastimes such as gardening or mowing the lawn. With the warmer months ahead, make sure that when you increase your physical activity, you [do so safely](#)! Practice water safety to prevent against drowning and wear safety equipment like helmets when biking to protect against head and neck injuries. Beat the heat by [staying hydrated](#) during outdoor activities and workouts.



Resources

¹ Physical Activity and Health. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/health/index.html?s_cid=cs_284. Updated 4 June 2015. Accessed March 2016.

² U.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.

³ Cardio, Strength, and Flexibility. Human Performance Resource Center. <http://hprc-online.org/physical-fitness/training-exercise/exercise/cardio-strength-and-flexibility>. Accessed March 2016.