



# BOOST HEART HEALTH WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Fitbit Health Solutions is committed to making the world healthier by helping people understand and change the foundational behaviors critical for good health: activity, nutrition, sleep and mindfulness. In other words, we'd like to help you help your population

**MOVE MORE,  
EAT BETTER,  
SLEEP LONGER  
& STRESS LESS.**

First up, let's get your people moving! For over a decade, Fitbit has been dedicated to getting people all over the world to increase their physical activity. It's a hugely important part of our mission because we know it's one of the most effective ways to improve quality of life. And it's one of the best things we can do for our hearts, too. Share these heart-healthy recommendations with your organization:



### **150 MINUTES**

The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week to keep your cardiovascular system healthy and to counteract the dangers of a sedentary lifestyle.<sup>1</sup> This amount of activity will help improve circulation, which in turn lowers your heart rate and blood pressure, and generally helps your heart pump more effectively. An easy way to think of that amount of activity is about 30 minutes at a time, five times a week.

### **HEALTHY TO THE CORE**

While core-strengthening and flexibility activities like yoga, Pilates, and Tai Chi aren't typically thought of as heart-pumping exercises, they keep you strong, balanced, and flexible. And that's what you need to do all those other physical activities you love while avoiding injury and fatigue.<sup>2</sup> Core strength and flexibility may also help to lower stress, burn calories, and even increase your mindfulness...and we can all use more of that.



### **FULL BODY, HEALTHY HEART**

Full body exercises, like cross-country skiing or swimming, use more muscle groups, which, in turn, strengthens your heart as it works harder to pump blood to all those muscles.<sup>3</sup> Exercises like burpees, jumping jacks and lunges are great ways to involve more of your body, while ensuring a great aerobic workout as well.

## PATH OF MOST RESISTANCE

While aerobic activity has always been prescribed for heart health, strength and resistance training is becoming an increasingly popular recommendation from doctors and researchers. Weight training, resistance bands, and body weight resistance exercises like pushups and pullups get your heart pumping like aerobic exercises do, but also build lean muscle, reduce dangerous visceral fat around your heart, and even reduce blood pressure.<sup>4</sup> Research has also shown that strength training increases your HDL (“the good cholesterol”) levels, regardless of fitness level.<sup>5</sup> Add in increased bone density and sounder sleep, and you’ve got plenty of reasons to hit the weights. The American Heart Association recommends at least two strength training sessions a week.<sup>6</sup>



## HIGHER AND HIGHER

The reigning king of cardiovascular exercises is interval training. In fact, interval training might be the best exercise for overall health and weight loss to boot. Why? Well, the strategy of alternating high intensity bursts of physical activity with incremental active recovery times varies your heart rate, optimizing vascular function and cleaning fat from your bloodstream.<sup>7</sup> Plus, you can apply it to whichever physical activity you enjoy: run for a minute and walk for two minutes; combine two laps of freestyle swimming followed by four laps of slower sidestroke. Interval training is fun, efficient, and tremendously effective.

## KEEP IT GOING

Not a fan of the gym? No problem. Even if you can’t get an hour of vigorous exercise in, staying active and moving consistently throughout the day still makes a difference and keeps you from the sedentary lifestyle. Little things like taking the stairs at the office, housecleaning, or parking a long walk away from the store keep your physical activity levels up all day, and the combination of exercise and activity is best for your heart.<sup>8</sup> Using an activity tracker can help you monitor your activity levels and remind you to get moving.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-infographic>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/3-kinds-of-exercise-that-boost-heart-health>

<sup>3</sup> <https://utswmed.org/medblog/heart-cardio-workouts/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://journals.lww.com/nsca-jscr/Fulltext/2010/10000/Changes\\_in\\_Arterial\\_Distensibility\\_and\\_38.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/nsca-jscr/Fulltext/2010/10000/Changes_in_Arterial_Distensibility_and_38.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3798817/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/strength-and-resistance-training-exercise>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.prevention.com/health/a20456108/heart-healthy-exercises/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/why-exercise-isnt-enough-to-keep-your-heart-healthy>



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