

## Becoming Fit For Life

Congratulations on being ready to commit yourself to lifetime fitness. Being fit for life is the ability to do a range of non-ordinary physical activities without becoming sick, injured or exhausted.

Non-ordinary activities might include picking up a heavy box when you have to, climbing several flights of stairs because the elevator is broken, having to walk a mile because your car is out of gas, or dealing with the stress of a crisis on the job or in the family.

The non-ordinary could also include things that are fun to do but impossible for you because you are out of shape. Like play a game of tennis without ripping a muscle. Or take your kids on a bike ride. Lifetime fitness has several components:

- Stamina, built with walking, jogging, biking, and swimming;
- muscle strength, built with resistance exercises such as weight lifting;
- flexibility, maintained with stretching;
- weight control, maintained with moderate, low-fat eating.

A regular fitness regimen would include at least three 30-minute stamina sessions per week, two short strength building session per week, at least one stretching session between each stamina session, and three low-fat meals and a light afternoon snack each day. The articles in this section will get you on the path to fitness.

### Before You Begin

I strongly recommend you do the following sentence completion exercise with your work group or an exercise partner. It will give you an opportunity to verbalize and problem-solve what may be on your mind about getting fit.

**How it will work:** Sit facing your partner. Decide who will be the speaker and who will be the listener during the first round. The speaker will complete a series of sentences that the listener reads from the list below. The speaker's task is to keep talking for a whole minute while the listener only listens and times the minute. This is not a discussion. That comes later.

**Process:** Once the speaker has completed all the sentences, then you reverse roles and the original speaker listens while the original listener speaks. After you have both completed the sentences, take about 15 or 20 minutes to discuss what you heard the other saying.

- My favorite fitness activity is...
- What I enjoy most about this fitness activities is...
- The people that support me in my fitness activities are...
- The fitness vision I have of myself when I am 75 years old is...
- The ways I could integrate new fitness activities into my life are...
- The new fitness activity I see myself beginning this week is...
- My major concern in getting started is...
- The best way to handle my concern is...
- My plan for getting started is...

The rest of this section has a series of articles pertinent to getting fit for life. If you study this section, you'll glean with an hour of reading what might have taken us a day to discuss and learn in a workshop setting.