Too Cold for Outdoor Fitness: Move Your Fitness Routine Inside

When winter months boast of cold, wind and snow, the usual outdoor activities become less and the fitness routines seem to wane. The good news is that there is a solution – Move Your Fitness Routine Inside. There is no need to purchase a gym membership or exercise equipment. You just need to make a decision to start! Take a moment and ask yourself what you want, set a goal for yourself, and develop a realistic fitness plan that you can manage. Although starting and sticking to a fitness program can be challenging, the health benefits of regular aerobic and muscle strengthening exercises can be rewarding.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, – aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises are two types of activities needed each week to improve your health. The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute aligns with DHHS and reports that taking the time to do aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises will:

- strengthen your heart and improve lung function
- reduce coronary heart disease risk factors by lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- lower your risk for type 2 diabetes

The bottom line is that regular exercise with a balanced diet helps one to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Hence, as long as one focuses on aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises, there will be benefits.

Aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises can improve overall health for everyone. Aerobic exercise or "cardio" increases the rate of breathing and makes the heart beat faster. A low to moderate intensity aerobic exercise should be performed and maintained for 20 minutes or longer three to five times per week (Haskell, et.al., 2007). Muscle-strengthening exercises are those activities that work all the major muscle groups of the body. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends 8-10 exercises two or more non-consecutive days per week and add resistance that allows you to perform 8-12 repetitions of each exercises (Haskell, et.al., 2007).

Below is a list of aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises shared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that can be incorporated into your indoor fitness program. As always, please check with your physician or healthcare provider before undertaking any new physical fitness or weight management activities. The accompanying PowerPoint Presentation provides links to guide you on how to correctly do the aerobic and muscle strengthening exercises.

Aerobic Exercises

- Walking briskly (fast)
- Going up and down stairs
- Virtual Rowing
- Jumping Jacks
- Running in place

Muscle Strengthening Exercises

- Push-Up
- Dumbbell Row
- One-Arm Dumbbell Row
- Overhead Press (Shoulder Press)
- Front Raise
- Alternating Bicep Curl
- Bicep Curl (Concentration Curl)
- Tricep Extension
- Tricep Dips
- Abdomen
- Knee Flexion (Leg Curl – Standing)
- Knee Extension (Leg Extension – Sitting)
- Squats
- Static Lunges

We hope that these aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises will help you get your indoor fitness program started. For those cold days when doing fitness activities outdoors seems too unbearable, remember that you can remain fit while doing aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises indoors. Stay focused on your fitness and weight management goals!

For more information on fitness visit the following websites:

http://www.presidentschallenge.org/

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/strength-training/MY00033

http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html

http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/exerciseandphysicalfitness.html/

References:

Haskell, W.L., Lee, I.M., Pate, R.R., Powell, K.E., Blair, S.N., Franklin, B.A., Macera, C.A., Heath, G.W., Thomspon, P.D. and Bauman, A. (2007) Physical activity and public health: updated recommendation for adults from the American College of Sprots Medcine and the American Heart Association. 39(8): 1423-34. Retrieved February 10, 2010 from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17762377

http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/phys/phys_types.html