



# *How to get the best out of* **Your Cardiovascular Program**

Cardiovascular exercise helps the body become more efficient and better able to cope with physical changes. Cardiovascular exercise (sometimes called aerobic exercise) will be the main component of your fitness program starting out. It may consist of walking, riding a bike or swimming.

Spend about 5 minutes to warm up by, gradually increasing the heart rate and blood pressure. Your goal is to try to do about 20–60 minutes 3–5 times per week. If all you can do is 5 minutes starting out, that’s okay! Your fitness level will improve through time. You may also include 5–15 minutes of stretching before and after your workout.

## 1. Remember the F.I.T.T. Principle

Frequency	3–5 sessions per week
Intensity	65–85% of Maximum Heart Rate (220 - age = MHR)
Time	20–60 minutes each session
Type	Aerobic or continuous exercise that uses the large muscle groups.

- **Cross Train**—Do a variety of aerobic exercises, never just stick with one exercise.
- **Enjoy**—Perform exercises that you enjoy!
- **Cool Down**—5–10 min., gradually decreasing the heart rate and blood pressure.
- **Stretch**—5–15 minutes of stretching improve flexibility.

2. If you have trouble finding your heart rate or if you are on medications that keep your heart rate low during exercise, use the perceived exertion system to measure your intensity level (Your goal is between the 3–5 range.)

Nothing at all	Very Light	Fairly Light	Somewhat Hard		HARD		Very Hard		Very, Very Hard	Maximal
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

*How hard do you perceive you are working?*

Make sure that you listen to what your body is telling you.