

Target Heart Rate

Why is it so important? To obtain the best results from exercise it is important to remain at your target heart rate. Maintaining your target heart rate allows you to keep an accurate record so that you are more likely to achieve your personal goals for exercise.

To obtain your target heart rate you can use charts or ask your local medical professional to help you get on a cardiovascular program. They will be able to assist you in setting a proper target heart rate. People also often use a formula as follows: $220 - \text{your age} = \text{max. heart rate}$. Depending on the shape you are in, a beginner should use 60-70% of their maximum heart rate, while advanced exercisers can use 70-80% of their maximum heart rate as a target heart rate.

To monitor your heart rate, begin by taking your pulse. Use a watch with a second hand, count the heartbeats before exercising, immediately before or after stopping your exercise place one or more fingers on the side of your wrist at the base of your thumb, or next to your Adam's apple in your throat. Count your pulse for six seconds; add a zero to that number to get your heart rate. For example, 11 beats would be 110 beats per minute. For initially starting the exercise program it is important to take



Stay Healthy

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your pulse often. Pulse should be taken several times before exercise, in the middle, and again immediately after stopping exercise. As you exercise and take your pulse you will gradually learn another way to tell if your heart rate is on target by experience.

After a while you will know if you are in target rate by how your body feels. When you are in your target heart rate you will be breathing hard, breaking into a sweat, but feeling good and able to continue for 20 minutes. If your heart rate is too low to be in your target heart rate, you will not feel as if you are working very hard. If it is too high to be in your target zone you will have to stop and catch your breath or rest. It

is important to note that if you are in your target heart rate, even though you are working hard, you should be able to breathe easy enough to continue in conversation with somebody near you.