

What is Aerobic Exercise



Aerobic exercise is also known as endurance or cardiovascular exercise.

This includes any exercise during which you contract large muscle groups repetitively against little or no resistance besides gravity.

Your heart rate and blood pressure must increase in order to supply enough oxygen to these working muscles, making your cardiovascular system more efficient.

This results in the ability to perform more similar work for longer periods of time without getting tired or short of breath.

Some examples of aerobic exercise include the following:

- Walking
- Jogging
- Cycling
- Dancing
- Swimming
- Stair climbing
- Ball and racket sports

The speed at which you work determines how intense this type of exercise feels.

In order to carry out aerobic activities, the heart must pump much more oxygen-rich blood to the exercising muscles than it does at rest.

As you age, there are changes in your maximal heart rate which limit the absolute amount of this kind of work that you can do.

For example, you may be able to raise your heart rate to 220 beats per minute when you are 20 years old, but only 140 beats per minute when you are exercising at your peak at age 80.

This change is not reversible with exercise, although the rate of decline with aging is less in those who are habitually physically active throughout life.



The feeling of fatigue that you perceive with exertion is greater as you age, particularly if you have become inactive with the passing years. This is because every day activities are closer to your maximal exercising capacity.

This means that you may get short of breath and tired after climbing only a few steps, whereas before you could climb several flights with no difficulty.

In addition, your muscles may have become smaller, weaker and less capable of using the oxygen-rich blood delivered to them, which makes them tire out sooner than they used to.

THE GOOD NEWS IS

That all of these so called “age- related” changes are at least partly preventable or reversible with aerobic exercise or the resumption of a physically active lifestyle.

