



# Wellness-Fitness Program Newsletter

Fall 2008



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## Boot Camp 101:

### *Back to Basics*

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Interested in a fun yet challenging way to get in shape or spice up your current fitness regime?

Consider trying out boot camp. One of the hottest new trends in fitness, this back-to-basics military-style workout combines muscle strengthening and cardiovascular conditioning techniques to tone and shape all parts of the body in about 60 minutes per session.

#### The Workout

Boot camp style workouts vary in duration and intensity, but usually contain exercises that can be modified to suit most participants' fitness level. A traditional boot camp class consists of one to two minute intervals of cardio work interspersed with strength training exercises such as squats, push-ups, dead lifts, and triceps dips. Regardless of the format, every class promises to get your heart rate up and your blood pumping to burn lots of calories.

Boot camp participants usually work in groups or teams and rotate to different workout stations. Indoor and outdoor boot camp classes may include stations that allow participants to perform high energy cardio routines through varied or simulated terrains.

#### Not your average workout

Boot camp is more than just a challenging workout. The team-oriented approach to fitness seems to be

popular as well. Many boot campers note that a strong bond often develops between themselves, other participants, and their instructors, which enriches their experience.

In another boot camp workout variation, instructors may pair participants based on fitness and motivational level, and to provide support for first timers. Like with traditional military training, a buddy system approach can also boost motivation and enhance performance.

#### High Intensity

In their September 2008 issue of *Fitness Matters*, The American Council on Exercise (ACE) evaluated boot camp-style workouts and concluded that they can burn up to 600 calories per hour. High caloric yield, diverse routines, and total body workout are several reasons people are flocking to boot camp classes.

Many Federal Occupational Health (FOH) Wellness/Fitness Centers offer boot camp workouts. If you would like help in designing a safe and effective exercise program, check with your FOH Wellness/Fitness professional.

And remember, before beginning any exercise program you should consult your primary care physician for a medical evaluation.

"People become really quite remarkable when they start thinking that they can do things. When they believe in themselves they have the first secret of success."

- Norman Vincent Peale

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## An Ounce of Prevention

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With nearly 700,000 deaths annually, heart disease is the number one killer in the United States. This disease is known as a silent killer because the warning signs develop very slowly and people with high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and other risk factors rarely feel ill.

Risk factors for heart disease include hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, sedentary lifestyle, and family history. A person who has three or more of these risk factors may be considered to be at “high” risk.

Prevention and controlling the factors considered to increase risk are key to preventing heart disease.

### High Cholesterol Prevention

Preventing and treating high blood cholesterol includes eating a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber, keeping a healthy weight, and getting regular exercise. All adults should have their cholesterol levels checked once every five years. If your cholesterol is high, see your doctor.

### High Blood Pressure Prevention

A healthy diet, regular physical activity, not smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight will help you to keep your blood pressure at normal levels. Monitor your blood pressure and work with your doctor if your blood pressure is high.

### Diabetes Prevention

Proper diet, weight control, and regular physical activity can help prevent and control diabetes. Get your blood sugar checked periodically, especially if you are overweight or have a family history of diabetes.

### Don't Smoke

Smoking increases the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Never smoking is one of the best things a person can do to keep their risk low. And, quitting smoking will also help lower a person's risk of heart disease. A person's risk of heart attack decreases soon after quitting.

### Moderate Alcohol

Keep alcohol intake moderate – no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 for men. Excessive alcohol use increases the risk of high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke.

### Maintain a healthy weight/Watch your BMI

The body mass index (BMI) is a reliable indicator of body fat for most people and uses a mathematical formula derived from both a person's height and weight. An adult who has a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. Overweight is a BMI between 25 and 29.9. Normal weight is a BMI of 18 to 24.9.

### Physical Activity

Exercise at a moderate level for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.

### Diet

Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, lower or cut out added salt or sodium, and eat less saturated fat and cholesterol to lower these risks.

### Know your Numbers

Get a Cardiac Risk Assessment. The Cardiac Risk Assessment includes measurements of total cholesterol, HDL (“good” cholesterol), LDL (“bad” cholesterol), triglycerides, and glucose.

Your cholesterol levels, blood pressure, lifestyle factors (such as exercise frequency and eating habits), and family history contribute to your total cardiac risk. Know these numbers and monitor them as needed to make heart-healthy lifestyle changes and improvements.

You can schedule a Cardiac Risk Assessment through your Federal Occupational Health managed program (if your agency participates) or at your physician's office.

You can learn more about preventing heart disease at [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease).

Calculate your BMI at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Website at [www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi](http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi).

## Vitamin-Enhanced Water:

### Is it Time to Rethink your Drink?

Vitamin-enhanced water is the latest craze captivating nutrition circles nationwide. New water beverages are constantly flooding local grocery stores. Eager for their slice of market share, big name soft drink companies are also marketing their particular brand of enhanced H2O with special added benefits.

These tasty flavor concoctions have attention-grabbing names like Mountain Berry Blast or Mango Passion Fruit, and make a wide range of claims. They boast to increase immunity, give you more energy, and even make you smarter.

#### Potable Pounds

We know water is good for you, but can these beverages really deliver improved health?

Not likely. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these fortified waters are simply a calorie-dense alternative to plain water. While better than the carbonated variety, these sugary drinks often contain at least half the calories

as most sodas, which over time can lead to weight gain.

#### Negligible Nutrition

As to their nutritional value, since many of these beverages only have trace amounts of the vitamins and antioxidants found naturally in fruits and vegetables one would have to drink a large amount to reap any nutritional benefits.

#### Scarce on Science

Although the market for vitamin-enhanced water has grown rapidly over the past several years, very few health claims can be supported by medical studies.

Next time you're looking for some refreshment you might want to pass up the Mountain Berry Blast and "rethink your drink." After all, there is no substitute for pure and simple H2O.

For more information please visit:

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition\\_for\\_everyone/basics/water.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition_for_everyone/basics/water.htm)

### *Deskercise Tips*

It's not natural to sit at a desk for hours at a time. Add poor posture -- shoulders rolled forward, neck muscles pinched, arms at an awkward angle -- and it can be hazardous.

The leading work-related injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome and lower back and neck injuries, often result from working without a break and holding the body in poor positions.

Take frequent breaks at work. Get up and move around at least once every hour. Build strength at work. You can do simple strength training exercises at your desk:

- Do a basic crunch in your chair. Pull your belly button in and up; pull your chest down.
- Grasp your chair's armrest and lift yourself up, using your arms to work the triceps.
- Do pushups without using the floor. Place your hands on the edge of your desk and your body at a 45-degree angle to the ground.
- Work your thighs by squatting as if you were about to sit in your chair and standing before you touch the seat. Keep your back straight.

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## Can Interval Training

### *Jump Start your Workout?*

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Interval training is an intense fitness regime utilizing repetitions of high and low fitness modules designed to increase aerobic capacity. This training technique is used by both athletes as well as novice exercisers to stimulate fat loss and burn more calories.

#### More for less

Adding interval training to your workout routine saves time. The intensity of interval training lets you burn more calories in less time.

#### Easy as 1-2-3

It's easy to incorporate interval training into your current workout program. Simply add alternating bursts of intense activity with intervals of lighter activity or rest. For example, try alternating short bursts or fast walking or sprinting into your two mile workout. Each burst can be time-based or cover a specific distance.

#### Spice up your Weights

You can also add interval training to your weight routine. Try incorporating jumping-jacks, 30-seconds of jogging in place, jumping rope, or any burst of energetic movement between sets.

Interval training can dramatically improve your fitness regimen by giving your body a jump start toward reaching your fitness goals. Interval training isn't for everyone. Always check with your doctor first if you have any chronic health conditions or if you do not exercise on a regular basis. As with any exercise program it is important to start slow and increase your intensity gradually, allowing your muscles, tendons and bones time to adjust to your new routine.

Remember to check with the health professionals at your FOH Wellness/Fitness center for support, ideas, and exercise tips.

### **Personal Trainers: Good investment but use care**

Deciding to hire a personal trainer can be best thing to help you reach your health and fitness goals. Or it can be a frustrating experience depending on whom you choose to work with. When deciding on a personal trainer:

**DO** check the credentials/qualifications of your personal trainer. Make sure they have up-to-date credentials from an accredited national organization. Look for ACE, ACSM, AFAA, NASM, or NSCA. Also look for current CPR and First-Aid training certificates.

**DO** evaluate several references from your potential trainer.

**DO** negotiate fees. Fees can vary greatly when it comes to personal training and range from \$35 to as high as \$150 per session or more. Some trainers will offer group discounts to two or more people.

**DO** make sure that your trainer puts you on a plan that emphasizes safety and is right for you. If you are interested in building muscle, your plan may focus more on strength conditioning. For weight loss, your plan may focus more on cardio fitness.

**DO** make an appointment with your medical provider and get a physical exam before starting any exercise program.

**DO** check with your FOH Wellness/Fitness center professional staff for more information.

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### **FOH, the Occupational Health Provider of Choice for the Federal Government**

**T**he mission of FOH is to improve the health, safety, and productivity of the federal workforce. Created by Congress in 1946, FOH is a non-appropriated service agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Program Support Center.

Federal agencies throughout the U.S. and overseas can access FOH services. FOH provides worksite occupational health services, Wellness/Fitness, Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), Work/Life programs, Environmental Health and Safety programs, Organizational and Professional Development, and training and education services.

Contact FOH at (800) 457-9808 or visit us at [www.foh.dhhs.gov](http://www.foh.dhhs.gov).

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