

## **FIT FACTS FOR BUSY BODIES**

### **No Time to Exercise**

**By Trish Schwartz**

#### **QUESTION:**

I am a very busy housewife and mother of three, active children. It is very difficult for me to find the time to exercise, therefore I just want to do enough to keep physically fit. How much exercise is enough?

#### **ANSWER:**

It depends on what you are trying to accomplish. If you just want the minimal, optimal training effect, follow guidelines suggested by the 1995 Surgeon General's Report. If you need to lose weight or train for some specific athletic endeavor, such as running a 10K race or climbing a 14,000-foot mountain, you probably need to do more. The following information is a guideline for minimal, optimal fitness.

The Surgeon General recommends that every adult should expend 150 calories a day through moderate physical activity. This could mean about 20-30 accumulated minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity, such as walking or light resistance training. The word "accumulative" was used because recent research suggests that it is the total amount of activity obtained that determines the effect of exercise, whether done all at once or in two increments, for example, 15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the evening.

These activities can be whatever you want them to be, but try to include some aerobic conditioning, some muscular strengthening and stretching. An example follows:

Sunday: Walk briskly 30 minutes

Monday: Kathy Smith's upper body toning video (20 minutes)

Tuesday: Biking 20 minutes on your home stationary bike.

Wednesday: Kathy Smith's lower body toning video (20 minutes)

Thursday: Walk/jog your neighborhood for 20 minutes. Do bouts of high intensity intervals to get the heart rate up high.

Friday: Rest

Saturday: Pilates video.

When doing an aerobic workout, try to get your heart rate up into an optimal training zone, 60% - 90% of your maximum heart rate (210 minus  $\frac{1}{2}$  your age minus 5% of your body weight). Use your respiration as an intensity guideline to determine your heart rate intensity. If you are winded, but can easily carry on a sustained conversation, you are working out at around 60% intensity. If you can carry on a conversation, but not easily, you are at about a 75 - 80 % intensity. If you can talk a little, but would rather not, you are approaching 90%. When doing a resistance training workout, using as much resistance as you can stand. That does not mean excruciating pain, it just means challenge those muscles. If you are consistent with 20 minutes a day, 5 - 6 times a week, you can be physically fit.