



Lab A7-2 Exercise Programs for People Who Are Overweight

Overcoming Barriers

Before starting a fitness program, it's important to recognize and overcome probable barriers to exercise. Some of the barriers listed below are typical barriers for all people; others are unique to those who carry excess weight. Put a check mark next to any barrier that may be a problem for you; also check possible solutions that you will use to overcome key barriers. If needed, develop (and write in) other solutions that will work for you.

Barrier	Possible Solution
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of motivation or confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise with a friend or group for positive feedback. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep a log of min/day of exercise; celebrate progress. <input type="checkbox"/> Document health-related changes like better breathing. <input type="checkbox"/> Join a group-exercise program to foster accountability. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time	<input type="checkbox"/> Draw up a contract with specific weekly exercise goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Seek support from significant others. <input type="checkbox"/> Remember that all increases in activity count as exercise. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of access to facilities or equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase calories burned in daily activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep in mind that walking is always accessible. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Previous negative experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize low-intensity exercise like walking. <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the source of negativity and work through it. <input type="checkbox"/> Get positive feedback from friends and relatives. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Weight	<input type="checkbox"/> Know that activity becomes easier over time. <input type="checkbox"/> Choose activities more suited to larger bodies, like biking. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor balance	<input type="checkbox"/> Switch to an exercise that feels more natural. <input type="checkbox"/> Try more non-weight-bearing activities, like swimming. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress slowly. <input type="checkbox"/> Make exercise fun. <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise with a friend. _____

(over)

LAB A7-2 (continued)

_____ Discomfort, pain, or injury

_____ Switch to an exercise in which you bear less weight.

_____ Reduce intensity or duration.

Phasing in Exercise

To lose weight, it's best to exercise 7 days a week if possible. Walking is an excellent cardiorespiratory endurance activity choice for people who want to lose weight and gain fitness. Your ultimate goal should be about 60 minutes of walking or other comfortable exercise each day. Start with whatever you can comfortably achieve, even if it's only 1 minute; begin at a leisurely pace and build fitness gradually.

For motivation, try advancing through levels of activity (see table below). Most people begin with phase 1, which includes about 20 minutes of daily walking, and progress to phase 2 after about 2 weeks. The daily walk increases to 40 minutes in phase 2 and to 60 minutes in phase 3. Intensity of exercise in the first three phases is not as important as frequency and duration; however, you may find that you naturally pick up the pace as you progress.

Phase	Activity	Min/Day	Duration*	Comments
1	Walking	20	2 wk	Begin with several short intervals if necessary; intensity is not important.
2	Walking	40	2 wk	Gradually increase intensity.
3	Brisk walking	60	Lifetime	Walk briskly at least part of the walking time.
4	Walking plus other exercises	60	Lifetime	Increase intensity with recreational sports that help accumulate 60-min total.

*These are guidelines. Your time in a given phase may be less or more.

In phase 4, add a variety of activities to complement walking for a total of 60 minutes of activity. For example, if you cycle for 40 minutes, walk for 20 minutes. Activities like stationary cycling, swimming, water aerobics, and rowing can reduce joint pain and injuries. And, of course, once you've established an exercise routine, be sure to include stretching and resistance training in your fitness program (see the sample programs in Chapters 4 and 5 in your text).

You can also lose extra pounds by adding activity to your lifestyle. Consider any increase in daily activity as part of your program—taking more trips up and down stairs, parking your car farther from your destinations, taking more walks to the mailbox, and so on.