



**Mountain Fitness**

# ***6 WEEK EXERCISE PROGRAM***

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## **Expect Great Things For Your Body**

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This is an exercise program you can follow on a day to day basis. If you follow the activity guidelines listed here and pay attention to the nuances of your own movement as you exercise, you can expect to see some welcome changes:

- Feel less fatigued by physical exertion, especially exertion that is a part of your normal day
- Feel stronger, noticing quicker reaction time, greater awareness of your internal body, and more stamina for normal activities
- Feel less winded and more tolerant of steady exertion like walking
- Feel a decrease/change in appetite, or more satisfied by the foods you eat
- Feel more willingness and more anticipation of going to the gym
- Notice increased confidence about physical motion in general and exercise specifically
- You will most likely, and should actively endeavor to, gain a sense of predictability about making physical changes in your body through deliberate exercise on a regular schedule

There are a few more things you can expect. You are likely to experience some degree of soreness and discomfort, especially at first, and possibly more serious medical conditions. Pay attention to the notes on Injuries and Medical Issues, in the FAQ at the end of this document. Educating yourself is the natural course of action, and Mountain Fitness recommends consulting a physician with the details of your exercise plan before beginning.

## **The Exercise Program – Explained**

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Your body is designed to move. All of the physical processes that your body does without you even thinking about them are enhanced by regular exposure to physical exertion. And from this fact comes a simple observation: You've got to exercise most days of your life. The sooner and more fully you can accept this subtle truth, the easier it is to look forward to your exercise and develop a regular routine.

Lucky for you though, there's a lot you can do in designing your exercise program to help you stay interested. Seeing improvements is certainly one thing. And a healthy variety is another. And what if your program were also easy to learn? That's exactly what you have here.

Here's the basic exercise formula:

Frequency	Element	Duration
1-2 times per week	Cardiovascular exercise	30-60 minutes
1-2 times per week	Lift weights	30-60 minutes
1-2 times per week	Classes / Cross training	30-60 minutes
<b>3-6 times per week</b>	<b>Total</b>	

As you can see, the weekly formula is deliberately simple, regardless of how many total days per week you're doing. Here's a summary:

- You'll do one to two times each per week of cardiovascular exercise, lifting weights, and classes/cross training.
- That's three to six total days of exercise.
- Cycle through what kind of exercise you do on successive days - cardio, weights or classes - so that you're never getting a bunch of one kind of exercise and none of another.

To put this in perspective, I would say that most of the people I've worked with come to the gym for the first time with the same program that looks something like this: They log 20 minutes or so of cardio and then lift weights for up to an hour. With even a little bit of savvy, this can be a completely effective program, but most of these same people I meet here don't know how to progress the program so that this kind of schedule works. It gets boring and there's not a lot to show for all those abdominal curls, so they stop doing it. You can avoid this fate with a better plan. Our program has several advantages and you can effectively progress your fitness a demonstrable amount over the course of just a few weeks.

Instead of doing everything you know how to do during one routine that you repeat every day, *each day has just one main focus.*

- On Cardio days, you can really work on developing cardio.
- When you're lifting weights, it's okay to only do enough cardio to warm up, or better yet, do general calisthenics and stretching as warm up and cool down. This is a great way to address movement deficiencies, flexibility, core strength, and the like. Just make sure your warm up makes you more limber and activates your cardiovascular system.
- On cross training/class days you'll get a good whole-body workout and be pushed in a group setting.

This arrangement helps it not become just a general chore - you're giving your body several *specific* elements in sequence that it can adapt to in visible ways.

Another advantage is that you only have to learn one workout. Figure, cardio is easy - you just gotta keep doing it. Classes are ready for you when you just show up, thanks to the instructor, so nothing to hold you back there. But you will have to learn how to lift weights, or you probably won't do all of those workouts. Equipment Demonstrations are held twice a month to teach you how to operate the equipment and help you understand the recommendations given here if you want more specific instructions. Once you can confidently go through a weight lifting routine, then it's just a matter of showing up.

Finally, this program has a natural fun factor. Classes are fun because you're with other people. Your cardiovascular exercise can definitely be fun - walking, cycling, hiking and kayaking are both great recreation and make for good exercise. And most of our clients are suprized by how satisfying the weight lifting is as you progress through each week's set/rep prescription. On the other hand, doing the same thing by yourself day after day is not fun, especially if it doesn't do anything for you. Follow the schedule in this program and you're sure to avoid the pitfalls of boredom.

Next, since the weekly exercise formula gives you considerable flexibility in how many days a week to actually exercise, it's worthwhile to set an expectation based on how many days of exercise you can commit to.

2 days a week	2 days a week is a good start. Good news is, it's easy to get going with something light. You can build momentum and it doesn't take a lot of time.
3 times	3 days a week is considered to be a maintenance schedule. If you've been gaining weight, this should be enough to help you hold steady, and you might even start lowering your body weight if you keep it up.
<b>4 times</b>	<b>Consistency pays off big time. Especially if you've recently been inactive and/or gotten a lot better at your exercise, you should expect predictable weight loss and noticeable gains in strength and stamina.</b>
<b>5 times</b>	<b>Right on. This is where you'll start to see accellerated gains. Perhaps you'll join the ranks of people who have found it easier to exercise more frequently than less frequently because of the anticipation that builds for each upcoming workout.</b>
6 times	This is certainly as much as anyone who's not competing in physical sport should need to exercise during a week. If you do six days, you can count on the benefits of that extra caloric burn!

Remember that not all of your exercise can be hard. Think of creatures in nature - they walk around all day looking for something to run at. It's not all run, run, run. It's natural to have some harder days during the week and some easier days, so you shouldn't have to worry about being tired all the time. Come on. This will be fun - you're going to feel great exercising this much.

## **Cardiovascular Exercise**

The cardiovascular element of the program is what strengthens your heart and lungs most, and as you know, it provides a steady rate of caloric burn.

The key in selecting cardiovascular exercise is to pick an activity that allows you do to the work you need to do without being painful or causing injury. It's okay, especially for longer bouts of cardiovascular exercise, to mix up the equipment you use throughout the session.

All of the cardiovascular exercise for this program is done at low intensity – a level of exertion where can carry on a conversation, but notice your body temperate rise and breathing rate elevate.

Throughout the six weeks of this program, your goal is to gradually increase the duration you sustain your cardiovascular exercise up to around 60 minutes.

## **Lifting Weights**

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We don't lift weights because it's easy. We lift them because they make us stronger. This is so visible when you think in the larger scope of our daily activity. Whatever a creature does, it tends to become better prepared to do. So when a human creature exerts itself against heavy objects on a regular basis, it tends to get stronger (us gym guys figured that one out on our own, no rocket scientists here).

First some basic terminology. A "repetition" is the performance of a single instance of a move, i.e. one push or pull on a machine. A "set" is a group of individual repetitions done in a row without rest or changing exercise in between.

FINDING THE RIGHT WEIGHT is vital to your weight lifting success. This is a generic albeit very important process you'll use over and over again. You do it by testing how many repetitions you can actually do at a given weight, then deciding whether to increase, decrease or stay the same based on how many repetitions you were aiming for. This is a great thing to do with a personal trainer, because then you'll know you're starting from the right place.

For example, in the first week's workouts you're aiming to do sets of 15. If 15 reps is your target and you can lift a certain machine 27 times at 30 pounds and stop because you got bored, then that weight is too light. You try again at 35 pounds and can do about the same amount as before. You do 40 pounds and you're at 19 times. Then you try 45 pounds and you get 17 times. Now you're getting close. Try one more increment and see how many you can do, then you'll end up deciding between the two weights closest to your target weight.

Get the idea? You keep going up in weight until you can do less than your target number of repetitions, then decide whether the higher weight or the lower weight feels better.

A word on quality here. If you're consistently using too light of a weight, it will be unlikely that you see gains in your strength. On the other hand, if you're consistently using too heavy of a weight, you run a higher risk of injury and can actually diminish the overall benefit you get from your program. If you use form as your indicator, and consider how many reps you can do at any given weight based on when you're unable to perform the movement properly, you'll probably find the right zone to exercise in (again, probably worthwhile pay a personal trainer for one or two sessions to help you do this properly). You should be able to barely finish most of your sets, only missing your target reps on a few of the sets in a workout.

As mentioned earlier, the only workout you really need to learn is the weight lifting workout, and it's worthwhile to be deliberate about finding and using the right weight.

## **Classes/Cross Training**

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The Classes / Cross Training element of the program is the most fun. Cross Training refers to an activity that gives you crossover benefits into other things you're doing. Perhaps it's a more significant concept in sports conditioning, but we use it here to include kinds of exercise that help teach your whole body better coordination, whereas the other elements tend to be more focused in the benefits they deliver (cardiovascular output and muscular strength, respectively).

What are your options? There's the exercise classes here at Mountain Fitness, of course, but there are other options too. Any of the sports run through the Park District would be great cross training (funny how it all goes back to that old 'play' thing), as well as Skiing and Snowboarding, Mountain Biking, and Kayaking. Hiking, running and road cycling are usually too one-directional to accomplish the diversity of movement you need to call it cross-training, but those would absolutely count for the cardiovascular component of your program.

One of the special things about exercise classes that you don't get on your own is the planned variety of motion. Take Fitmoves, the popular circuit-style class, as an example. The class is based on the 5 pillars of motion – Push, Pull, Level Change, Rotation and Locomotion. The exercises at each station offer an assortment of each motion so that your body can develop good spacial awareness, feedback from your limbs about how fast they're moving, bending and lifting mechanics, and other non-strength attributes that determine your body's overall ability to move well. This kind of whole-body motion training is indispensable to your good health, and the easiest thing to do is to get involved in some kind of group program.

Our peak-times classes are designed to be approachable to a generally mobile, pain-free person with low cardiovascular risk, even though it may take a couple classes for you to be able to keep up with people who have been doing it regularly.

Did you know we will help you pick out the right classes? Ask at the front desk, ask one of the trainers, or ask the class instructor. We'll happily give you the instructor's phone number so you can ask questions.

# Weight Machines

Chest Press

Inner / Outer Thigh

Abdominal Curl

Back Extension

Triceps Extension

Biceps Curl #1

Pulldown

Seated Row

Preacher Curl

Chest Fly

Quadriceps Extension

Leg Press

Hamstring Curl

Triceps Dip

Preacher Curl #2

Shoulder Press

# Exercise Schedule

(“Bak a Cak” style)

WEEK	Cardio	Weights	Cross-Train	Cardio	Weights	Cross-Train
1	Date: _____ 20 minutes	Date: _____ 2 sets of 15	Date: _____	Date: _____ 25 minutes	Date: _____ 2 sets of 15	Date: _____
2 <i>more reps, same weight</i>	Date: _____ 30 minutes	Date: _____ 2 sets of 20	Date: _____	Date: _____ 35 minutes	Date: _____ 2 sets of 20	Date: _____
3 <i>more reps, same weight</i>	Date: _____ 40 minutes	Date: _____ 3 sets of 12 at higher weight	Date: _____	Date: _____ 45 minutes	Date: _____ 3 sets of 12 at higher weight	Date: _____
4 <i>more reps, same weight</i>	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 8 at higher weight	Date: _____	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 8 at higher weight	Date: _____
5 <i>more reps, same weight</i>	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 15 with lower weight	Date: _____	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 15 with lower weight	Date: _____
6 <i>more reps, same weight</i>	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 20	Date: _____	Date: _____ 45-60 min	Date: _____ 3 sets of 20	Date: _____

- Depending on how many days of exercise you do each week, you may not use all the columns/boxes for that week.
- Bring this page back to us completed when you’ve finished all six weeks for a free follow-up body composition reading!

# Questions & Answers

## Taking Measurements

Take measurements. This step adds a little complexity in the short run, but tends to make the process more reliable in the long run, along the lines of the old adage, 'What gets measured gets managed'. Slight adjustments that you can easily blend into your daily routine are the stuff of transformation, and the experience of measuring can inspire perspective about how to best direct one's efforts. What should you measure? Anything you can easily track over time – from pant size to body fat percentage (with the help of our Body Composition analyzer) to weights on the machines to the size of your bicep. Keep a log, keep a folder, just keep track!

## How should I warm up for lifting weights?

Think of your warm-up as preparatory exercise. You're preparing for quality output in whatever comes next. It's not that you can't do anything without warming up (spontaneous exertion happens all the time); it's that you can do most kinds of physical activity better when you are warmed up, and doing it vigorously is less strenuous to your body.

We recommend rowing more than anything else as a warmup because it doubles as core conditioning and is one of the most effective warm-ups for the arms and torso. Our Concept 2 Rowers have a motion that is comfortable and smooth. Plus, it's fun to observe how you row and get better at it. The ergometer measures and displays your power output. It has an excellent piece of software onboard that either shows you your output in terms of watts, meters or calories burned and lets you play games that actually help you become better at using the machine. And finally, we have had very few people here who were specifically unable to use the rowing machine.

If you spend 6 weeks gradually using the rowers more and more - up to 15 minutes at the start of each weight lifting day, you'll do a lot to develop good coordination, strengthen your abdominal and back muscles, and increase your power output.

## Will this program make me lose weight?

In theory, if you are gaining weight now, you may continue to gain weight if you do nothing to change your diet, even though you successfully complete this exercise program. On the other hand, if your body weight has been steady and you are not currently exercising, the increase in your physical activity from this program is likely to cause steady weight loss for some time.

## Injuries & Medical Issues

Part of the deal is that you have to find something you can do regularly and vigorously enough to get your body to get stronger. Injuries and medical issues can derail you, making it hard to be consistent or to exert yourself safely. Now is the time to get things checked out. If you're not actively working with a doctor, cardiologist, or physical therapist, here's the list of professionals you should get checked out with.

<i>Physical Therapist</i>	See a Physical Therapist before you begin exercise, especially if exercise is painful, or if you have structural Issues including loss of motion, recurring back problems, surgeries/rehab, and undiagnosed pain.	Heather Devito PT, ATC, CSCS (909) 289-0879	\$95 Evaluation fee Available at Mountain Fitness Center
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<i>Exercise Physiologist</i>	See an Exercise Physiologist for metabolic and cardiovascular disease screening, including blood testing and an assessment of risk factors.	Bob Antonacci MSEd (760) 525-8298	Consultation fee: \$75 Available at Mountain Fitness Center
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***Understanding the Risk for Heart Problems with Exercise***

The increased exertion experienced during exercise can be problematic for people who have heart disease (meaning that you can die), whether you are aware of it or not! If you have any of the following symptoms, you must not do anything physically strenuous and consult your doctor or exercise physiologist right away.

- Tightness in your chest, left arm, neck or jaw especially upon exertion
- Extreme shortness of breath when beginning exercise
- Rapid or sudden heart rate

Additionally, the following risk factors lead to heart disease and you should take specific precautions if you have them. If you're over the age of 45 for males or 55 for females and are not doing regular cardiovascular exercise OR have two or more of the following risk factors (sorry folks, this disease process is really just not forgiving, even though it is predictable), you should consult your doctor or exercise physiologist about the level of exertion that is right for you.

1. Family history for heart disease: Mother 65 years or younger, father 55 years or younger or sibling.
2. Cholesterol 240 or above
3. HDL cholesterol below 35
4. Blood pressure 140/90 or above
5. Smoking
6. Obesity
7. Inactivity
8. Metabolic Syndrome: A combination of any three of the following risk factors;
  - a. high waist measurement (35 plus or females and 40 plus for males)
  - b. blood pressure 135/85 or higher
  - c. triglycerides 150 or above
  - d. glucose over 100
  - e. HDL below 40 for males and below 45 for females
9. High Atherogenic Index of Plasma- Low HDL and high Triglycerides

If you're feeling a little overwhelmed just now, you can check out this article on our web site for a little more information <http://mfcbigbear.com/2011/09/15/a-chronic-solution/> and also email Bob Antonacci, MSeD at [bob@skyhightraining.org](mailto:bob@skyhightraining.org) and discuss your concern. He's a qualified exercise physiologist and you can meet with him here at Mountain Fitness Center.

*This instructional program is designed to be safe for individuals with low risk of cardiovascular problems, but we strongly advise that you must consult with a medical professional to determine your level of cardiovascular risk and what it means for you.*