

# Affordable Exercise

You don't have to join a pricey gym to reap the benefits of fitness! There are many options for getting exercise.

Joining a gym is one option. If you enjoy being around other people and the atmosphere that the gym provides, it may be a good option for you.

If you do not like the idea of being in a gym, you could use exercise videos or DVD's in the comfort of your home. You can use everyday household items, like soup cans, or resistance bands to strength train. Walking only takes a safe walking route and a good pair of shoes!

Inova HealthSource offers a wide range of fitness classes in the Northern Virginia area. There are classes that focus on cardio exercise, classes that focus on strength, and classes that focus on flexibility.

Whatever your preference is, there is an option. Don't let anything stand in your way of being healthy and fit in 2007!



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Articles in this newsletter are not a substitute for the care and advice of medical professionals. When you have a question or need medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, consult your physician.

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Inova Health System is a not-for-profit health care system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services including emergency and urgent care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health, blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community we serve through excellence in patient care, education and research.

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## For Your Health

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[www.inovahealthsource.com](http://www.inovahealthsource.com)

*Check out Inova HealthSource's fitness classes for exercise options in your area!*

*Visit [www.inova.com](http://www.inova.com) and click on Health Info and Classes to get more information. Register online or call 703-204-3366.*

*Congregational Health Partnership is a program of Inova HealthSource, Community Health Division*



## Fitness in the New Year!

Another New Year is here! Many people launch the year by starting fresh with personal goals and resolutions. One of the most common resolutions is to get in shape or increase your fitness. Unfortunately by February many goals are long forgotten. Whether you are completely new to exercise or just getting back on track after the holidays, here are some tips to help you keep your fitness determination from fizzling and get you started on your path to being healthy and fit in 2007.



With your strong resolve, it is easy to want to jump into a new exercise program right away. But before you lace up your shoes, be sure to see your doctor! It is important for anyone who is starting out a new exercise program to make sure everything is working properly before beginning. With your doctor's blessing, you are ready to start!

## Getting Started

1. See your doctor!
2. Identify your goals. Why are you exercising? To feel better? To improve your health? To lose weight? To become stronger? To reduce stress?
3. Form a plan. How will you achieve these goals? When will you exercise? Where? What will you do? Be specific and detailed in your plans!
4. Get started! It might be helpful to speak with a fitness professional to help you set up your fitness plan.

# Components of Fitness

There are a few different parts of fitness. They are all important to help you be as healthy as you can be!

Three major things that should be included in any fitness plan are aerobic exercise (cardiovascular exercise), muscle strengthening exercise, and flexibility exercise.

Aerobic exercise is any exercise that gets your heart beating faster than it normally does. Walking, swimming, biking, aerobics classes, jumping rope are all examples of aerobic

exercise.

Muscle strengthening exercises are exercises that make your muscles stronger. You can do this with weights, exercise bands, and even common household items like soup cans and milk jugs!

Flexibility exercises are any moves that stretch the muscles, while you breath normally. An example is stretching the muscles that you used in your legs after going for a walk.

Your specific goals will tell you how much and how often to do these types of

activities. The general recommendations for improving health are to do cardiovascular activity at least 3 days a week for 30 minutes. Muscle strength exercises should be done 2-3 days of the week, being sure to work all the major muscles. Flexibility exercises should be done at least each time you exercise, if not more often!

*Include all three areas of exercise for optimal fitness!*

## Muscular Strength

You don't have to be a body builder to benefit from strength training!



It helps to strengthen the bones and the muscles, which can help with tasks in

every day life, like carrying groceries!

Regardless of your goals, strength training should be a part of your exercise plan.

To start, choose exercises that will

work each major muscle group in the body, like the legs, back, arms, shoulders, chest. A fitness professional can help you learn proper exercises to safely work these areas.

# Sweating it out!

Cardiovascular exercise, commonly known as cardio, is an important part of exercise.

It has many benefits, including keeping your heart healthy and helping with weight management!

When beginning a



cardio program, be sure to choose something that you enjoy doing. If you think that running should be considered a form of torture, it is probably not the best choice for you!

If you are not sure where to start, try out a few things. Walking can be great exercise, and some people enjoy

group activities like aerobics classes.

Once you know what you are going to do for exercise, start off slowly. Gradually build up to 30 minutes per exercise session, only increasing your time when you feel comfortable.

Remember, some exercise is better than no exercise—do what you can when you can!

## Stretching it out!

Flexibility is an often overlooked part of fitness! It is important for many reasons. It can help to improve your range of motion and posture, and reduces the risk of injury!

There are many options for improving your flexibility, from taking a class like yoga or pilates, to stretching your muscles during your workout.

*Improving flexibility can help you in a number of ways!*

## Helpful Websites!

[www.acefitness.org/](http://www.acefitness.org/)  
[fitfacts](http://fitfacts)

[www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)

[www.exrx.net](http://www.exrx.net)

[www/healhierus.gov](http://www/healhierus.gov)

