

Staying Fit for Safety

There are many motivations for maintaining physical fitness. One of them is improving your ability to work safely.

Physical fitness means having the strength, endurance and flexibility to deal with the things we encounter in our lives each day. It involves keeping our heart and lungs functioning well so they can supply us with the oxygen we need. Maintaining muscular strength can help us to prevent injuries. Maintaining fitness can increase energy and endurance to allow us to remain alert to possible dangers on the job.

Even if you work at a physically demanding job, it is important to have a regular exercise program. Even a job involving tasks such as heavy lifting or walking will not provide all of the right kinds of exercises to maintain good fitness.

Probably the last thing you want to do at the end of a day's work is to work some more -- in the form of exercise. But in the long run it can help you to work better and even more safely.

It can be a real trick to fit exercise into a schedule which is already too busy. But it can be done. The best way is to work exercise into your daily routine.

A lot of people manage to exercise by getting up a little earlier in the morning and exercising first thing. But there are many other ways to fit it in. Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ Walk or bicycle to or from work. You could also walk or bike to the place where you catch your bus, commuter train or carpool.
- ◆ Make a habit of taking the stairs as often as possible.
- ◆ Also get in the habit of walking instead of driving when you are running errands.
- ◆ Do stretching exercises and warm-up exercises right at your work station before your shift and during short breaks.
- ◆ On your lunch break, maybe you can fit in a quick walk, run, swim, or other workout.
- ◆ Make exercise part of your social and family life by having some active fun with friends and family members.
- ◆ Use breaks to stretch and flex your body, to avoid stiffness and repetitive strain injuries.
- ◆ When you are standing at the sink or talking on the phone, do some stretches to improve your flexibility.
- ◆ Sign up for sports or workouts on two or three weekday evenings. Ball, tennis, hockey, badminton, basketball and many other sports are played every evening in community recreation facilities.
- ◆ Get in the habit of being active. If you find yourself slumped on the couch exercising nothing but your remote control finger, get up and do something. You'll be surprised how good it feels!



Some of the benefits of exercise include being stronger and more flexible. You'll probably have a more healthy appetite and sleep better. You might just generally feel better. Also, your better physical condition might give you an extra edge in avoiding accidents and injuries.

**ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG**