

Target Heart Rate

Your target heart rate can help you determine how hard your body should be working when doing physical activity. You can also use the target heart rate to monitor your exertion level while being physically active.

Steps 1, 2, and 3 below show you how to calculate your target heart rate, how to monitor your exertion level when doing physical activity, and the benefits of being physically active at different levels of intensity.

STEP 1: CALCULATE YOUR TARGET HEART RATE USING THE FOLLOWING FORMULA

- 1) $220 - \text{your age} = \text{maximum heart rate}$
- 2) $\text{Maximum heart rate} \times (.6) = \text{lower boundary of target heart rate (60\%)}$
- 3) $\text{Maximum heart rate} \times (.9) = \text{upper boundary of target heart rate (90\%)}$

This table will help you select a suitable intensity level for doing physical activity.

YOUR FITNESS LEVEL/FITNESS GOAL	PERCENT OF MAXIMUM HEART RATE
Just getting started/light effort	60% to 70% of Maximum Heart Rate
Average fitness/moderate effort	70% to 80% of Maximum Heart Rate
Excellent fitness/vigorous effort	80% to 90% of Maximum Heart Rate

STEP 2: MONITOR YOUR EXERTION LEVEL WHEN DOING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

When doing physical activity, use your target heart rate and the following chart to determine your intensity level. During physical activity, take your pulse for 15 seconds and multiply the number by four to get your beats per minute. Compare your beats per minute with your age to see how hard your body is working.

AGE	LIGHT EFFORT 60% TO 70%	MODERATE EFFORT 70% TO 80%	VIGOROUS EFFORT 80% TO 90%
	Beats/minute	Beats/minute	Beats/minute
15–19	121–144	141–164	161–185
20–24	118–140	137–160	157–180
25–29	115–137	134–156	153–176
30–34	112–133	130–152	149–171
35–39	109–130	127–148	145–167
40–44	106–126	123–144	141–162
45–49	103–123	120–140	137–158
50–54	100–119	116–136	133–153
55–59	97–116	113–132	129–149
60+	90–122	105–128	120–144

STEP 3: KNOW THE BENEFITS OF BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INTENSITY

Whether you do light, moderate, or vigorous physical activity, your body can benefit from being active. It is important to do at least 30 minutes of moderately intense physical activity every day (70% to 80% of your maximum heart rate).

If you are just getting started, you can still enjoy the health benefits of physical activity by doing a light effort (60% to 70% of your maximum heart rate). Remember, always start slowly and gradually increase your physical activity level as your physical fitness improves.

This table shows how intensity of physical activity relates to different health benefits.

YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTENSITY LEVEL	HEALTH BENEFITS
Light effort – 60% to 70%	Fat burning
Moderate effort – 70% to 80%	Heart and lung benefits and fat burning
Vigorous effort – 80% to 90%	More heart and lung benefits and fat burning