

One on One's Position Statement on Frequency of Structured Exercise

The American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association's most recent recommendations on physical activity for the promotion and maintenance of health states "to promote and maintain health, all healthy adults 18-65 years old need moderate intensity aerobic (endurance) physical activity performed for a minimum of 30 minutes 5 days per week, or vigorous intensity aerobic activity for a minimum of 20-minutes 3 days per week." They also recommend moderate intensity resistance training at least 2 non-consecutive days per week.

At One on One, we differentiate between training for health and training for fitness. Health is defined as "the condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit; especially: freedom from physical disease or pain." We define fitness as "having the physical ability to do what you reasonably may want to for the rest of your life." It is important to recognize the differences among these key terms. A healthy individual is considered to be free from disease, but may not necessarily be fit. A fit individual is not only healthy, but has the aerobic capacity, muscular strength/power, and joint range of motion to permit them to participate in life as they choose. We believe strongly in training for fitness.

Individual exercise prescription almost always changes as an individual's goals, lifestyle and fitness level changes. Exercise intensity, frequency and duration can all be manipulated to accommodate these changes while still allowing the individual to maintain and even improve his/her fitness level. The key is to remember that, when decreasing one variable, there must be a corresponding increase in another (*i.e. a decrease in exercise frequency must lead to an increase in exercise intensity or duration in order to improve/maintain your fitness level*). We believe (and studies have shown) that it is the total volume of exercise that has the most impact on one's health and fitness.

Our experience has shown that those who exercise most days of the week for 30 – 60 minutes per session, with a mix of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic and anaerobic physical activity are the most successful in acquiring and maintaining optimal fitness. We have also seen those who gradually decrease their frequency of training, without making the corresponding modifications in intensity and duration, almost always experience a decrease in their fitness level.

The minimum exercise frequency to maintain fitness is two moderate to high intensity exercise sessions per week for a minimum of 60 minutes. Remember, this is to maintain fitness only. Other fitness goals, such as body fat reduction or increases in muscle mass, require a greater total volume of exercise.

One on One's Minimum F.I.T.T. (frequency, intensity, time, type) Guidelines for Healthy Individuals

To *improve* fitness:

F = 3 days per week
I = high intensity
T = minimum 20 minutes
T = aerobic

or

F = 5 days per week
I = moderate intensity
T = minimum 30 minutes
T = aerobic

and

F = minimum 2 non-consecutive days per week
I = moderate intensity
T = minimum 30 minutes
T = resistance

To *maintain* fitness:

F = 2 days per week
I = moderate to high intensity
T = 60 minutes
T = aerobic/resistance training

To *improve* body composition:

F = 5-7 days per week
I = moderate to high intensity
T = 30 - 60 minutes
T = integrated resistance training
and
interval endurance training
and/or
steady state endurance training