



Are YOU Fit?

So you're eating well but are you maintaining your fitness? Exercise is just as important as healthy food in promoting vitality and preventing disease, but many of us forget how much activity we really need to stay our best.

At the 2010 NHA Healthy Living Conference we spent time not only speaking about and leading attendees in exercise, but we also administered brief fitness evaluations to more than 30 conference participants. We evaluated the basic components of fitness including cardiovascular health, flexibility, strength and balance. The goal was to give participants a "snapshot" of their health so they could decide if they were achieving their basic fitness goals or if there was room for improvement.

Even though most of us don't have a sports doctor and personal trainer waiting at home to complete our personal evaluation, there are many things we can do at home to test our baseline fitness and get moving. Over the years the American College of Sports Medicine, The Cooper Aerobics Clinic and the YMCA, among others, have collected data to create standards for fitness. You can find some of these online and do your own home testing. Some great websites to get you started include: <http://www.topendsports.com/testing/> and <http://www.exrx.net/Testing/YMCATesting.html>.

The amount of information can be a bit overwhelming so we recommend starting with some basics. Choose one strength category like push-ups or sit-ups in one minute. Choose one flexibility like the "sit and reach test." Choose one cardiovascular test like the 3-minute step test or 6-minute walk test and get to know your body mass index, resting blood pressure and other important basics. Also remember, if you are over 40 or have any chronic medical conditions, it is always good to check with your doctor before starting any testing or exercise program.

Once you have chosen a simple test for each of the basic segments of fitness then write them down, look up the parameters online or in a book and give it a try. Once you know your baseline you are ready to build from there. If you are in "excellent" shape based on the testing, then keep up the great work. If, however, you are like most of us, then you have room to improve. Check back in future issues of *Health Science* for more specific tips on how to get started and stay moving!

Tiffany and Stephan Esser, M.D.

An update from Dr. Stephan and Tiffany Esser

Always looking for new ways to educate, empower and motivate us, Dr. Stephan and Tiffany Esser recently created a vibrant, information-filled website complete with dozens of their favorite links, an online forum and an ever-growing collection of health videos readily accessible online — free of charge. Visit the site, view some of the videos, share them with friends and family and reaffirm your commitment to achieving your best health.

The website can be found at www.restorehealthusa.com and the videos at www.youtube.com/user/restorehealthusa.

