



THE FITNESS CORNER

FACILITATING YOUR FITNESS JOURNEY

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THE 5 HEART RATE TRAINING ZONES 1

HEALTH & FITNESS SEMINARS 2

THE 5 HEART RATE TRAINING ZONES

You are probably familiar with the concept of *training with heart rate*. It's based on the idea that you can improve the quality of your exercise program by matching your exercise intensity with the goals of a particular workout. You do this by determining your *Heart Rate Training Zones* and then exercising in the zone that fits the goal you have for a particular workout. For instance, if you want to work at a fairly high intensity, you might train in "Zone 3" which is about 70 to 80 percent of your maximum heart rate (MHR). Conversely, on some days, you may want to take it easy and work out in Zone 1 (50 to 60 percent of MHR).

Training with heart rate works by letting you

know how hard you are working during a given workout, and by providing you with the feedback needed to modify the intensity of your workout if you find you are working too hard or not hard enough. It offers an easy way to continuously monitor your exercise intensity and to keep it at the desired level. To successfully train with heart rate, you must first understand the 5 Heart Rate Training Zones. The zones are typically based on a percentage of your maximum heart rate and are divided into percentages as follows:

- Zone 1 = 50-60% MHR**
- Zone 2 = 60-70% MHR**
- Zone 3 = 70-80% MHR**
- Zone 4 = 80-90% MHR**
- Zone 5 = 90-100% MHR**

Each zone serves a specific purpose in your physical development. Zone 1 is referred to as the **recovery zone**. Workouts in this zone will feel very easy. You can talk in full sentences because breathing is effortless. This is a good intensity for recovering from a hard workout. It's also a good place to start if you are new to exercise. Zone 2 is famously referred to as the **fat-burning zone** because workouts at this intensity use about 80% fat as a fuel source. You are working harder than Zone 1 so breathing is more labored. However, you can still talk fairly easily. Zone 3 is the **aerobic zone** where breathing becomes labored and talking becomes some-



THE 5 HEART RATE TRAINING ZONES

what difficult. This is also the zone where you can make great improvements to your aerobic endurance.

Zone 4, known as the **threshold zone**, is where your workouts get hard. You will not be talking in this zone! Competitive endurance athletes like swimmers, runners and cyclists spend a lot of time in this zone because it will increase your lactate threshold, which is the key to improving performance (I'll describe this in greater detail in a future issue). Finally, Zone 5 is all about pain! Known as the **anaerobic zone**, it is not sustainable for long periods because it utilizes the body's anaerobic energy systems which only last for a few seconds to a maximum of a few minutes. Unless you are a serious athlete preparing for competition, you will not spend much time in Zone 5.

There are several ways to calculate your personal Heart Rate Training Zones including the *Age Formula* and the *Karvonen Heart Rate Reserve* method. I will describe each of these techniques in the next issue of The Fitness Corner newsletter.

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HEALTH & FITNESS SEMINARS

I offer several interactive seminars for organizations that want to enhance employee health in ways that improve work performance, and for individuals who want to improve their health and fitness, lose weight, reduce stress and enhance their athletic ability. Each workshop is 60 to 90 minutes in length and can be customized to address the specific needs of your organization. Visit www.holmesfitness.com for more information:

- Health, Fitness & Job Performance
- How to Beat Stress & Balance Your Life

- How to Start a Successful Exercise Program
- Lose Weight and Keep it Off...Permanently
- Children & Exercise: Creating a Connection
- How to Reduce Your Risk of Heart Disease
- Nutrition for Health and Performance
- Training for Sports Performance

