



# THE FITNESS CORNER

FACILITATING YOUR FITNESS JOURNEY

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ASSESSING THE RISKS OF AN EXERCISE PROGRAM 1

LIFESTYLE COACHING 2

## ASSESSING THE RISKS OF AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

Ready to start an exercise program? That's great, but before you begin, I strongly suggest you get a health screening. An effective screening will help you identify any medical conditions or factors that place you at risk during exercise. The simplest and most effective way to do this is to work with your physician to review your risk factors for coronary artery disease (CAD), the number one killer in the U.S. The seven positive risk factors (i.e., increases the risk for CAD) identified by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) with defining criteria are as follows:

1. **Cigarette Smoking.** *negative risk factor* (i.e., A current cigarette smoker **or** those who quit within the previous 6 months. reduces the risk of CAD).
2. **Family History.** Heart attack or sudden death before 55 in father or first degree male relative (e.g., brother) **or** before 65 in mother or first degree female relative (e.g., sister).
3. **High Blood Pressure.** Systolic blood pressure  $\geq$  140 mmHg **or** diastolic blood pressure  $\geq$  90 mmHg.
4. **High Cholesterol.** Total cholesterol  $>$  200 mg/dL **or** HDL cholesterol  $<$  40 **or** LDL cholesterol  $>$  130 mg/dL. NOTE: HDL cholesterol  $>$  60 mg/dL is a
5. **Impaired Fasting Glucose.** A fasting blood glucose  $\geq$  100.
6. **Obesity.** Body Mass Index  $\geq$  30. Also, waist girth  $>$  40 inches in men and  $>$  35 inches in women or waist/hip ratio  $\geq$  0.95 for men and  $\geq$  0.86 for women.
7. **Sedentary Lifestyle.** Persons NOT getting the recommended daily amount of exercise (i.e., at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity five days a week or 20 minutes of high-intensity activity three days per week).



## ASSESSING THE RISKS (CONTINUED)

ACSM also provides a risk stratification to determine if you fall within a *Low*, *Moderate* or *High Risk* category. If you are Low Risk, you are ready to get started with your exercise regimen. However, if you are either Moderate Risk or High Risk, **I strongly recommend you receive a full physical examination from your physician prior to beginning an exercise program.** This is particularly important if you plan on doing high intensity exercise. Your physician may have specific guidelines for exercises you can and cannot perform, and he or she may want to facilitate an exercise test (e.g., stress test) before clearing you to begin your program:

**Low Risk** – Men who are under 45 years of age AND have no more than 1 of the seven risk factors. Women who are under 55 years of age AND have no more than 1 of the seven risk factors.

**Moderate Risk** – Men who are 45 years of age or older. Women who are 55 years of age or older. **Or** anyone with two or more positive risk factors.

**High Risk** – Anyone with an existing disease or symptoms of disease (e.g., diabetes, asthma, renal or liver disease, lung disease, cardiovascular disease, cystic fibrosis, angina, heart murmur, dizziness, shortness of breath).

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## LIFESTYLE COACHING

Lifestyle Coaching is designed to help you **lose weight, improve your health and fitness, and enhance your work/life balance.** By utilizing a variety of processes, tools and techniques, you will reduce stress, improve your work performance, and most importantly, feel better about yourself.

Lifestyle Coaching works because it takes a holistic approach to your development. Specifically, we address the mental, emotional, behavioral and psychological elements of body shape, health, fitness and their impact on your life. By looking at the “whole person”,

we greatly increase your chances for long-term success.

Lifestyle Coaching is also effective because it is based on a simple premise: **The best way to improve your health and facilitate permanent weight loss is to make minor, reasonable modifications in your eating habits and to slightly increase your daily level of physical activity.**

To learn more about Lifestyle Coaching, visit my website at [www.holmesfitness.com](http://www.holmesfitness.com) and request a FREE CONSULTATION to begin the process that will change your life!