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# Strength and Resistance Training Exercise



Strength and resistance training exercise is one of the four types of exercise along with [endurance](#), [balance](#) and [flexibility](#). Ideally, all four types of exercise would be included in a healthy workout routine and AHA provides easy to follow guidelines for endurance and strength-training in its [Recommendations for Physical Activity in Adults](#).

They don't all need to be done every day, but variety helps keep the body fit and healthy, and makes exercise interesting. You can do a variety of exercises to keep the body fit and healthy and to keep your physical activity routine exciting.

## Fitness

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The American Heart Association recommends strength training at least twice per week.

Strengthening your muscles gives you the ability to perform everyday activities and helps protect your body from injury. Stronger muscles also lead to a boost in your metabolic rate, which means you'll burn more calories even when your body is at rest.

Don't worry -- we're not talking about professional bodybuilding. Simple, weight-bearing exercises that use free weights, machines or your body's own resistance are the focus. You can do these workouts separate from your cardio activity or add resistance on to an existing workout. Choose the time and type of activity that works for you.

## A well-rounded strength-training program provides the following benefits:

- Increased strength of bones, muscles and connective tissues (tendons and ligaments);
- Lower risk of injury;
- Increased muscle mass, which makes it easier for your body to burn calories and thus [maintain a healthy weight](#);
- Better quality of life.

You may wish to consult with a certified fitness professional to learn safe technique before beginning a strength-training program. One set of eight to 12 repetitions, working the muscles to the point of fatigue, is usually sufficient for each muscle group.

Aim to exercise each muscle group at least two times per week, with a minimum of two days of rest between workouts.

Training more frequently or adding more sets may lead to slightly greater gains, but the minimal added benefit may not be worth the extra time and effort -- not to mention the added risk of injury.

## What if I'm recovering from a cardiac event or stroke?

Some people are afraid to exercise after a heart attack. But regular physical activity can help reduce your chances of having another heart attack.

The AHA published a statement in 2014 that doctors should prescribe exercise to stroke patients since there is strong evidence that physical activity and [exercise after stroke](#) can improve cardiovascular fitness, walking ability and upper arm strength.

If you've had a heart attack or stroke, talk with your doctor before starting any exercise to be sure you're following a safe, effective physical activity program.

Staying Hydrated - Staying Healthy

**Strength and Resistance Training Exercise**

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Warm Up Cool Down

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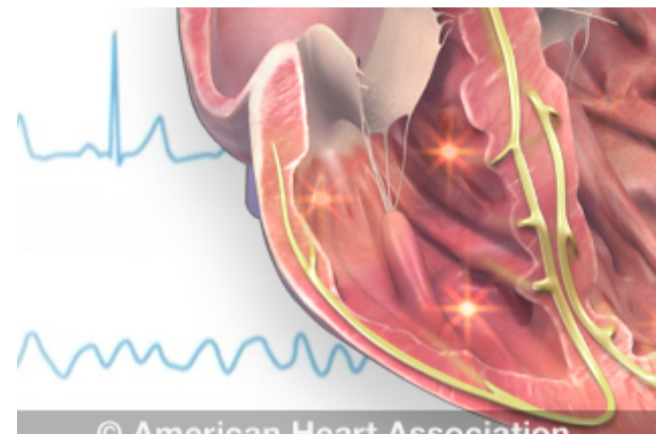
Flexibility Exercise (Stretching)

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