

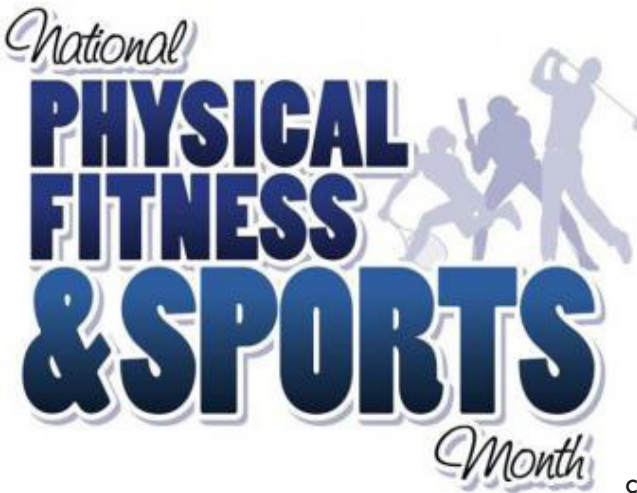


# HEALTHCONNECT

connecting patients for better health

MAY 2016

## NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH



Regular physical activity reduces the risk of many adverse health outcomes and increases life expectancy. Being active also improves overall quality of life and performance – both on and off the job.

According to the 2014 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment Annual Report, 27 percent of active-duty Navy and 17 percent of active-duty Marine Corps respondents indicated a lack of moderate or vigorous intensity aerobic exercise in their routine. The positive picture is that active-duty Sailors and Marines exceed the general population in their activity level. Being active increases your chances of living longer and performing better both on and off the job.

For the best results, engage in a variety of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise, muscle strengthening, and functional body movement activities. Flexibility is also an important piece of a physical fitness routine. Flexible muscles and joints are less likely to be injured while exercising. For adults, the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans:

(1) At least 150 minutes/week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes/week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both.

(2) For more substantial health benefits, the guide recommends 300 minutes/week of moderate-intensity, or 150 minutes/week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both.

(3) The guidelines also recommend moderate- to high-intensity muscle strengthening that involves all major muscle groups at least two days/week.

## PROPER RUNNING FORM BRINGS BETTER PRT RESULTS

In the midst of Physical Readiness Test season, many service members are still training hard to obtain the best possible score. For those who choose to perform the run as their cardio option this season, perfecting their form could improve their efficiency, help prevent injury and shave off a few seconds from their time.

Starting from the top, runners should keep their head upright and in line with their shoulders, look slightly down and ahead, and relax their jaw. They should lean their torso slightly forward, should not slouch and should keep their chest up and shoulders straight.

Something most people may not realize is that their arms and hands also play an important role while running. Arms should be bent at around 90 degrees and should not be crossing or swinging in front of the chest. Hands should also be relaxed. A good technique is to imagine that they are holding a coin between the thumb and forefinger.

Last but not least: the feet. To help cross the finish line faster and more efficiently, don't try to over stride. Each foot should land under or slightly in front of your hips, and keep cadence at about 170 to 190 steps per minute. When landing, try to land on the midfoot to forefoot (from the arch to the ball of the foot). Remember to apply these tips during the next run to be the best runner possible!

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## HEALTHY WEIGHT

ShipShape Weight Management Program - 8-week intensive program for adults. To register, call the HRAC at (866) 645-4584

Right Weight - 4-week program for learning to manage your weight the right way. To register, call (757) 953-1925 or 953-9247

For more information on Health Promotions and Wellness Department programs and resources, call (757) 953-1925

## TOBACCO CESSATION

Workshop - 1st Mondays, 8 a.m. to noon  
4-week class - begins 1st Tuesdays, 1-2:30 p.m.  
Tobacco Meditation Walk-In Clinic - 1st Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m.

For more information, call (757) 953-1927 or 953-1925



## ALLERGIES: AVOIDANCE TO PREVENTIVE

With spring in full bloom, allergy season seems to be in full effect. So what exactly are allergies? An allergic reaction is the body's way of saying "I don't like it" to a substance to which there is hypersensitive. Allergens cause the immune system to produce antibodies called Immunoglobulin E, or IgE, for protection.

The IgE antibodies, in turn, cause the release of inflammatory chemicals such as histamines, resulting in allergy symptoms that can range from mild to life-threatening. Although allergies caused by environmental factors cannot be completely avoided, there are some helpful ways to reduce the severity of reactions.

First, those with allergies should see an immunologist to have allergy testing done. This helps doctors gauge the extent of allergies by testing how much and which antibodies is being produced. Based on these results, doctors determine what type of immunotherapy will be used. However, prevention is still the best medicine.

Eliminate dust and dust collectors from rooms where the most time is spent. Eliminate allergen sources from bedding by choosing allergen-proof materials, and change sheets and pillowcases regularly. Reduce humidity throughout the home, which will also help prevent mold growth. Avoid spreading allergens throughout the house by maintaining clean, adequate filters for home heating and air conditioning systems. Although they will not remove dust mites, using air filtration systems to purify the air is still recommended.

To prevent outdoor allergens, learn about the pollen cycles in the area - different trees, grasses and weeds have varying cycles depending on the location. Close doors and windows and try to remain indoors from 5 to 10 a.m. when pollen levels are highest. Dry clothes indoors, and after performing outdoor tasks, wash areas such as the hair, face, arms and legs. Avoid mowing the grass, but for those who must work outdoors, wear a face mask designed to filter out pollen. The best recommended advice may be to take a vacation during the height of the pollen season in a more pollen-free area.

According to Barbara Pauly, the Allergy Clinic manager at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, that busiest clinic times are during spring and fall when pollen levels are the highest. However, patients should come in several months prior to these allergy seasons to experience maximum relief because allergy shots take several months to start working.

# 22

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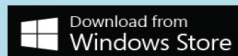
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