

PHYSICAL FITNESS

MEANING

Physical fitness is the ability to perform daily tasks vigorously and alertly, with energy left over for enjoying leisure- time activities and meeting emergency demands. It is the ability to endure, to bear up, to withstand stress, to carry on in circumstances where an unfit person could not continue, and is a major basis for good health and well- being.

Physical fitness:

- ❑ It is used in the context of two meanings: General fitness (a state of health and well-being) and specific fitness (the ability to perform specific sports or occupational skills).
- ❑ Fitness can be further subdivided into five categories: Cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility and body composition. The criterion for physical fitness has also been expanded to include the capacity to meet physical demands in an emergency situation.
- ❑ Physical fitness is the capacity of the heart, blood vessels, lungs and muscles to function at optimum efficiency.
- ❑ It is the body's ability to function efficiently and effectively in work and leisure activities, not only at a set point of time, but at various ages and stages, within a person's life cycle. The key is in finding optimum health within the limits of one's lifestyle in order to be able to resist hypokinetic diseases.

Importance of Physical fitness

- **Overall Health** – A regular fitness regime helps in improving the overall health of an individual. A brisk walk for half an hour and free hand keep oneself fit. It enhances blood circulation and improves immunity as well.

- **Boosts Energy** - After working out or after a session of yoga, one shall feel rejuvenated and energised throughout the day. Contrary to this, if one's lifestyle is sedentary and lethargic, the individual will feel tired and sluggish the entire day.
- **Weight Reduction** – This is the main advantage of being fit. Working out regularly is one of the natural weight loss methods. One can burn extra, calories; the individual will also remain in shape. Therefore, weight reduction is one of the important benefit of physical fitness.
- **Strong Build** – Staying fit with regular workouts and muscle building makes the bones strong. People suffering from backache, shoulder pain, etc. must exercise regularly.
- **Mental Strength** - A fit body is not only physically strong but mentally strong as well. A combined routine, including proper exercise and diet, have a positive effect on brain function. It elevates flow of blood to brain and enhances one's memory. It also keeps oneself mentally strong.
- **Personality Development** – Staying fit makes one look good. The more one indulges improve. This increases confidence level and grooms personality. One feels fresh and rejuvenated throughout the day. The mood remains happy and optimistic too.

Components of Physical fitness

- There are eight (8) components of physical fitness. They are directly or indirectly interrelated with each other. Each component has its own importance in different games and sports.
- These components are:
- **Cardiovascular/ respiratory endurance:** It is the ability to do work for longer duration or sustain fatigue. Cardiovascular endurance or cardiopulmonary endurance or respiratory endurance refers to the efficiency of heart, lungs and vascular system's delivery of oxygen – rich blood to working muscles during activities that last longer than 90 seconds. Cardio means related to heart, vascular

mans related to blood vessels, and pulmonary means related to lungs.

- **Strength:** It is the ability to do work against resistance or overcome resistance. Muscular strength is the amount of force which muscles can exert against resistance for short duration, anaerobic (without oxygen) activities. Resistance includes external objects such as free weights or household objects pr even own body weight during body- weight exercises. Physically, muscular strength is the ability of cells to supply muscle energy in the form of ATP (adenosine triphosphate) to muscle fibers for concentric, eccentric and isometric contractions in time frames ranging from 0seconds to 15 seconds.
- **Flexibility:** Flexibility is the range of motion possible for each of the joints or group of joints.
- **Speed:** Speed os the ability to perform a task in less time as compared to others. A physically fit person has better speed than a person who is not in best of health.
- **Co-ordination or coordinative Ability:** The coordinative abilities are those abilities of an individual which enable the individual to do various related activities properly as well as efficiently. It is the ability to use different senses together with body parts, or to use two or more body parts together. For example, dribbling a basletball. Using hands and eyews together is called hand –eye coordination.
- **Agility:** Agility is the ability to change direction quickly while the body is in motion. For example changing directions to hit a tennis ball or kick a football or shoot a basketball.

- Balance: It is the ability to keep an upright posture while standing still or moving. For example, in-line skating & stretching. The balance is of two types:
- Static balance: It is the ability to maintain one's equilibrium in a fixed position.
- Dynamic Balance: It is the ability to maintain one's equilibrium while the body is in motion.

Factors affecting Physical Fitness

- The various factors that affect physical fitness are:
- Hereditary: Hereditary factors play a very important role in affecting the physical fitness and wellness. Size, shape, structure and height are involved in hereditary factors.
- Nutrition: Nutrition or Balanced diet improves our wellness. Unbalanced diet and malnutrition affect the physical fitness and wellness.
- Environment: Untidy, dirty and polluted environment affects the physical fitness and wellness. Safe, clean and hygiene help to maintain the environment.
- Training: Proper training is an essential factor affecting the physical fitness. Proper training increases the ability to a great extent. Proper training means availability of proper facilities and guidance of appropriate methods of training.
- Illness: Diseases and injury greatly affect the physical fitness. We should follow the obstructive and remedial measure which does not affect the physical fitness.

- Self-motivation: The individual must be self- motivated to be physically fit. All other factors can be overcome if one is self motivated to be physically fit.
- Emotional stability: When we take any types of stress, tension and worries its results reduce our physical fitness. To maintain physical fitness of the body, a person must be emotionally stable.
- Lifestyle: Lifestyle also affects physical fitness of an individual. It plays an indirect role in influencing physical fitness it has been observed that the people who have improper lifestyle are likely to have less physical fitness.
- Posture: Everyone appreciates good posture of an individual. Good posture enhances physical fitness. It is also the symbol of wellness. The person who does not have good posture tends to have a lower level of physical fitness.
- Age: It is the major factor influencing physical fitness. Usually, Maturity can be defines by chronological, skeletal and physiological age.
- Gender/sex: Prior to adolescence boys and girls do not differ substantially in height, weight, girth, bone width and body composition. But at maturity they differs significantly on various parameters.