

## Your Heart Rate and Exercise

### Why Monitor Your Heart Rate (pulse)?

When you exercise, your heart beats faster to supply more blood and oxygen to the working muscles in your body. Your heart rate during exercise tells us if you, your muscles, and your heart are working at the right level. To get the most out of your aerobic exercise program, you should select a target heart rate range and take your pulse both during and after exercise.

| Target Heart Rate Ranges                             |                         |     |     |     |     |
|--|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Values in this chart are pulse counts for 10 seconds |                         |     |     |     |     |
| AGE  | % of Maximum Heart Rate |     |     |     |     |
|  | 55%                     | 60% | 70% | 80% | 90% |
| 20   | 18                      | 20  | 23  | 27  | 30  |
| 25   | 18                      | 20  | 23  | 26  | 29  |
| 30   | 17                      | 19  | 22  | 25  | 29  |
| 35   | 17                      | 19  | 22  | 25  | 28  |
| 40   | 16                      | 18  | 21  | 24  | 27  |
| 45   | 16                      | 18  | 20  | 23  | 26  |
| 50   | 16                      | 17  | 20  | 23  | 26  |
| 55   | 15                      | 17  | 19  | 22  | 25  |
| 60   | 15                      | 16  | 19  | 21  | 23  |
| 65   | 14                      | 16  | 18  | 21  | 23  |

| Effort Level | Exercise at:              |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| Light        | <55% of Max. Heart Rate   |
| Moderate     | 55-69% of Max. Heart Rate |
| Heavy        | 70-90% of Max. Heart Rate |

### Finding Your Pulse

You can count your pulse at two places. Your radial pulse is found by placing the pads of your first and middle fingers on your wrist (palm facing up) just above the base of the thumb. Or, you can count your carotid pulse by placing the same two fingers lightly on your neck midway between your Adam's apple and your ear lobe, just below your jawbone.

### Counting Your Pulse

1. Stop exercising
2. Find your pulse (using the method above)
3. Count the number of pulses you feel for 10 seconds
4. Resume exercise, changing the level of effort as needed
5. Re-check your pulse 2-3 times during exercise

### Using Your Target Heart Rate Range

This table gives you your target heart rate range numbers for a 10-second count. Find your age or nearest age in the left-hand column. The numbers in the right column show lower to higher effort (intensity) heart rates. Once you have counted your heart rate, look to see if that number is within your target heart rate range. If it is, continue exercising at the same effort. If your heart rate is lower than the lowest number, you may want to exercise a little harder. If it is higher than the highest number, you are exercising too hard and should slow down. Your target heart rate is only a guide to help you get the most out of your exercise program.