How to exercise for maximum health AND fitness benefits

Recommended Reading:

*In Fitness and in Health, and The Maffetone Method* by Dr. Philip Maffetone, are excellent guides on exercise for fitness *and* health. These books are especially useful for heart rate monitoring to increase aerobic fitness and achieve optimal fat-burning. Available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

**The Heart Rate Formula** (excerpted from *In Fitness and in Health*):

The most important step toward proper and efficient exercise is to analyze yourself. This means finding the highest heart rate at which you can exercise while still being aerobic. The method explained below is simple, accurate and safe. It can be used by anyone in any sport, competitive or recreational.

**The 180-Formula**

1. Subtract your age from 180 (180 - age)  

\[
180 - _____ = _____
\]

2. Modify this number by selecting one of the following categories:

   a. If you have, or are recovering from, a major illness (heart disease, any operation, any hospital stay, etc.) or if you are on medication --------- subtract 10  _____

   b. If you have not exercised before, or if you have been exercising but have been injured or are regressing in your training or competition, or if you often get colds or flu, or have allergies ------------------------ subtract 5  _____

   c. If you have been exercising for up to two years without any real problems, and if you have not had colds or flu more than once or twice per year------- subtract 0  _____

   d. If you have been exercising for more than two years without any problems, while making progress in competition, without injury---------------------- add 5  _____

**Maximum Heart Rate:**  _____

**Minimum Heart Rate:**  _____
As you can see from the graphic above, you should warm up at a slower heart rate for 10-15 minutes, complete 30 minutes of exercise in your heart rate range that you calculated on page 1, and then do 10-15 minutes of cool-down exercise at a gradually descending heart rate. As your health and fitness increase, you can also increase the amount of time you spend in the optimal heart rate range.

**Recommended Heart Rate Monitor**

Polar Heart Rate Monitors are usually available at bike shops and sport shops. You can read more about them on the web at www.polar.com.