

Getting Started With Exercise



You can get a quick overview of the information in this kit by reviewing the key concepts. However, you need to read and study the entire kit and do the activities to get the most benefit from your program. Each kit is designed to help you figure out ways to apply the key concepts and recommendations to your daily life and personal situation.

Key Concepts

- People exercise for two primary reasons: to improve their performance in a sport or to improve their health. At Nationwide Better Health, our emphasis is mainly on exercise aimed at improving health.
- Scientists have identified many health benefits of exercise.
- When it comes to reducing your risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes and certain types of cancer, aerobic exercise is most important.
- Aerobic means “using oxygen for energy.” Aerobic exercises use large muscles (such as the legs) and can be performed continuously for more than several minutes at a time. Examples include brisk walking, jogging, swimming, cycling, dancing and climbing stairs.
- Choose aerobic exercises that are convenient and enjoyable to do so you will be more likely to stay with your exercise program. For many people, brisk walking is one of the best choices.
- Invest in comfortable shoes designed for the specific type of exercise you will do.
- The F.I.T. prescription outlines your aerobic exercise program for a week at a time. Consult your goals and action plan report for your individualized recommendations. You will start slowly and progress gradually as your fitness improves. Generally:
 - *F = Frequency* (how often) – at least three to five times per week
 - *I = Intensity* (how hard) – “fairly light” to “somewhat hard”
Exercise at an intensity that causes you to breathe harder and to sweat. However, from a health standpoint, it is not necessary to work so hard that you can’t talk while exercising.
 - *T = Time* (how long) – for 30 to 60 minutes, including time for warm-up and cool-down
- Warm-up and cool-down periods are important for safety reasons. Perform the exercise you intend to do, but at a slower pace, for at least five minutes at the beginning (warm-up) and end (cool-down) of your exercise session. Walking is an excellent way to warm up and cool down for any type of exercise.
- Stop exercising immediately and call your doctor if you feel pain or discomfort in your chest, abdomen, back, neck, jaw or arms, or if you experience other alarming symptoms.
- Listen to your body. Don’t push yourself so that you don’t enjoy the exercise you do.
- Burn extra calories with lifestyle physical activities, such as walking the dog, playing with children or taking the stairs instead of using the escalator or elevator every day.
- Record each exercise session you do in your exercise diary so you can track your progress.

Getting There





Assess Your Physical Activity

Exploring your current beliefs, attitudes and habits can help you develop an exercise program that will work for your specific needs and goals. Complete this activity and share your responses with your health coach during your next consultation.

ACTIVITY



Assess Your Current Beliefs, Attitudes and Habits

Answer each question below by circling the appropriate number. Be honest.

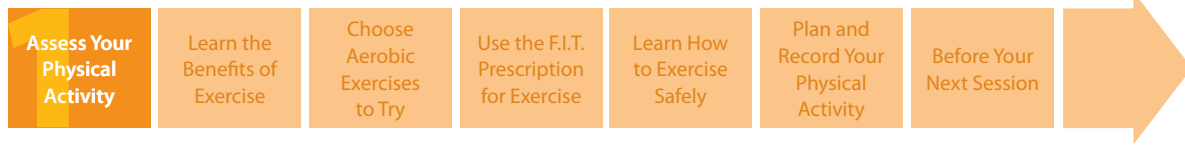
Your Beliefs

If you become more physically active, do you believe you will:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Feel less depressed?	1	2	3	4	5
Feel less bored?	1	2	3	4	5
Improve your self-esteem?	1	2	3	4	5
Meet new people?	1	2	3	4	5
Lose weight and shape up?	1	2	3	4	5
Build muscle strength?	1	2	3	4	5
Feel less tension and stress?	1	2	3	4	5
Improve your health?	1	2	3	4	5
Reduce your risk of disease?	1	2	3	4	5
Perform your job better?	1	2	3	4	5
Feel more attractive?	1	2	3	4	5
Improve your fitness level?	1	2	3	4	5
Have fun?	1	2	3	4	5
Improve flexibility, agility and coordination?	1	2	3	4	5
Feel a sense of personal achievement?	1	2	3	4	5
Total Score _____					

If your total score is less than 45, ask your health coach to tell you more about the benefits of becoming physically active.

Getting Started With Exercise



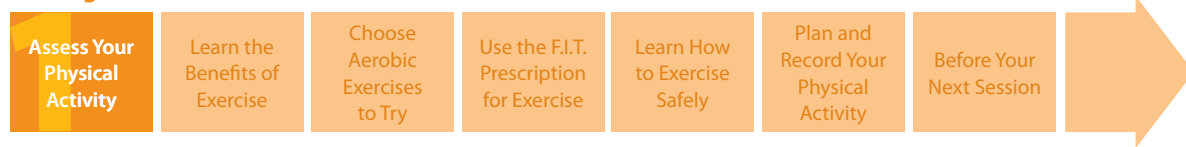
Your Attitudes

To what degree will each factor below be a problem or barrier to increasing your physical activity?

	No Problem					Major Problem
Feeling self-conscious about my looks	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of interest in exercise	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of knowledge about exercise	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of self-discipline	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of time	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of exercise companion	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of enjoyment and fun from exercise	1	2	3	4	5	
Getting discouraged	1	2	3	4	5	
Fear of fatigue	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of appropriate clothing	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of equipment	1	2	3	4	5	
Lack of good weather	1	2	3	4	5	
Fear of injury	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor health	1	2	3	4	5	
Self-conscious about athletic abilities	1	2	3	4	5	
Total Score _____						

If your total score is more than 45, ask your health coach to tell you more about the benefits of becoming physically active.

Getting Started With Exercise



Your Habits

Answer the following questions about your physical activity during the last month.

How often did you exercise?

Daily or almost daily	5
Three to five times a week	4
One to two times a week	3
A few times a month	2
Less than once a month	1

How hard did you exercise?

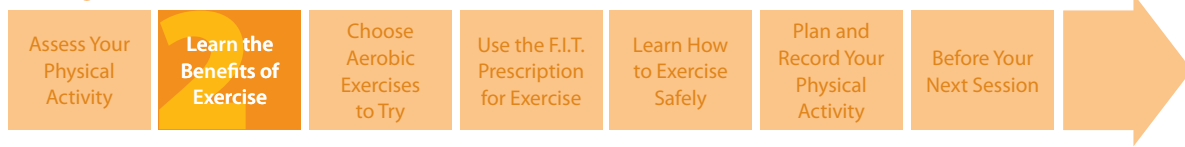
Hard to very, very hard	5
Somewhat hard to hard	4
Fairly light to somewhat hard	3
Very light to fairly light	2
Very, very light to very light	1

How long did you exercise?

Over 45 minutes per session	5
30 to 45 minutes per session	4
20 to 30 minutes per session	3
10 to 20 minutes per session	2
Less than 10 minutes per session	1

Total Score _____

If your total score is less than nine, ask your health coach to tell you more about the benefits of becoming physically active.



2

Learn the Benefits of Exercise

Everyone benefits from regular physical activity—men and women, young and old. It is best to adopt an active lifestyle in youth and stay with it over your lifetime, but it is never too late to be active and get fit. Exercise can add years to your life and life to your years.

It is important to focus on the benefits and advantages that truly matter to you, rather than what others have said. Successfully making long-term changes depends largely on motivation, which has to come from within you.

Two Kinds of Fitness

People exercise for two reasons: *performance* and *health*. If you were an athlete as a teenager, your training focused on exercises to help you perform your sport to the best of your ability. Some adults continue to maintain the type of fitness needed to play competitive sports. But you don't need to be an athlete to optimize your health, weight and well-being. The definitions below will give you a better idea of what form of fitness best fits your lifestyle.

Performance-related fitness – for those who want to be able to excel in competitive athletics.

Health-related fitness – for those who are not interested in physical competition but want to reach and maintain a degree of fitness that allows them to get the most out of life.

Complete the activity on the following pages to explore the personal benefits and advantages you hope to receive from exercise. Consider the challenges you may face when trying to exercise more and develop a plan for success.

“Exercise can add years to your life and life to your years.”

Getting Started With Exercise



ACTIVITY

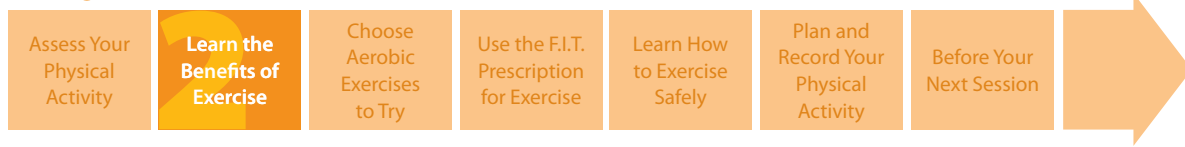


Benefits and Advantages of Exercise

Scientists have identified many health benefits and other advantages of exercise. Check the boxes next to the health benefits or advantages of exercise that are important to you, or that you think you would enjoy.

Health Benefits	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent weight loss	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced risk of premature death	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced risk for heart attack, stroke and some types of cancer	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure control or prevention	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> High levels of HDL "good" blood cholesterol and lower blood triglycerides	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes control or prevention	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stress management	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Improved sense of well-being	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Strengthened bones and osteoporosis prevention	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced cravings for cigarettes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> More energy and pep	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Better sleep and relaxation	_____
Other Advantages	
<input type="checkbox"/> Looking more fit and trim	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning new skills and developing new hobbies	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting new people and making new friends	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying a rewarding challenge	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Having fun	_____

Getting Started With Exercise



ACTIVITY



Planning for Success

Write exercise benefits or advantages that are important to you below. As you are active longer, you will enjoy more benefits and be more likely to stay active for a lifetime. Continue to add to your list over time.

My Personal Benefits and Advantages From Exercise

Write any problems or barriers that may prevent you from exercising regularly below. Try to think of ways to overcome them. Your health coach can help you find solutions.

Examples:

Barriers or Problems	Could You?
I'm too tired to exercise.	Start at an easy pace?
I don't have time.	Walk during your lunch break?
I don't want to go to a club.	Walk at the mall or in the park?

My Personal Barriers to Exercise	Ways to Overcome Barriers
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Talk with Others Who are Active

Ask your active friends and other program participants for tips on starting and staying with an exercise program. Write their words of wisdom below. If they can do it, so can you.

Person to Ask	Tips for Success
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



3

Choose Aerobic Exercises to Try

Aerobic means “using oxygen for energy.”

Aerobic exercises:

- Use large muscles such as legs, shoulders, chest and arms
- Can be performed continuously
- Burn calories (more exercise = more calories burned)
- Are critical to losing fat and keeping it off

Your health coach can help you select an appropriate aerobic exercise that is convenient and enjoyable. Consider these important factors when deciding which type of aerobic exercise to try:

- *Convenient location* – Do you prefer indoor or outdoor activities? Will you need to go to a fitness club or special facility?
- *Enjoyment* – Do you think you would like doing the exercise? Is it fun? Are you likely to do it on a regular basis?
- *Partner or group* – Do you need a partner or group to exercise? Would you prefer to exercise alone?
- *Special equipment* – Must you buy shoes or clothing or rent equipment?
- *Special skills* – Do you have the skills? Do you need to take lessons?
- *Risk for injury* – What is the chance that you might get hurt?

The aerobic exercises to the right are great for beginners and can become satisfying lifelong activities. Lessons for these activities are widely available. Be sure to share the activities you would like to try with your health coach.

Write types of exercise you would like to try and why:



REFERENCE

Aerobic Exercises

Walking

- Can be done almost anywhere, alone or with a partner
- No special skills or equipment – just comfortable shoes
- Very low risk of injury
- A shopping mall is a good place to walk

Jogging

- Similar to walking
- Risk of injury in those not used to strenuous exercise
- Joint impact can be problematic for those with previous injuries

Swimming

- Requires a place to swim
- Requires ability to swim

Cycling

- Requires a bicycle or stationary cycle
- Outdoor cycling may present some risk of injury
- Requires a helmet for safety when riding outdoors

Dancing

- Requires a partner or group
- Requires some skills
- May involve fees to participate

Skating

- Requires skates and special skills
- Involves the risk of injury from falls

Climbing Stairs

- Usually requires a stair climbing machine
- A good lifestyle physical activity (taking stairs instead of the elevator)

Rowing

- Typically requires a rowing machine

Assess Your
Physical
Activity

Learn the
Benefits of
Exercise

Choose
Aerobic
Exercises
to Try

Use the F.I.T.
Prescription
for Exercise

Learn How
to Exercise
Safely

Plan and
Record Your
Physical
Activity

Before Your
Next Session

Choosing the Best Shoe

Unless you choose to swim, the most important piece of exercise equipment you will need is a good pair of shoes. Invest in comfortable shoes designed for the specific type of exercise you will do. If you find an affordable shoe that works well for you, stay with that model.

Wearing the right shoes is especially important while doing weight-bearing exercises such as walking, jogging or aerobic dance. Recent advances have resulted in shoes designed for specific types of weight-bearing exercises and engineered to suit different types of feet.

You should also choose a shoe designed for your specific foot type and stride. A knowledgeable salesperson at a quality sporting goods or shoe store can help you choose the right shoe. Several consumer fitness magazines publish annual shoe reviews that can also help you evaluate your options.

“Regardless of your current activity level, your personalized program can help you achieve your fitness goals for better health.”



TIPS

Purchasing New Athletic Shoes

Buying Athletic Shoes

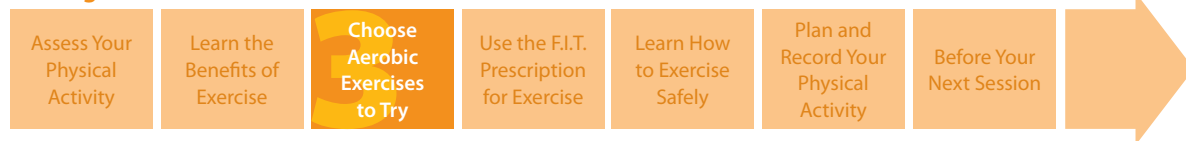
- Shop for shoes at the end of the day when your feet are likely to be larger.
- Take along the type of sock you will be wearing with the shoes.
- Spread and wiggle your toes while standing to be sure there is enough room in the toe box. Your longest toe should be about a thumbnail's width from the end of the shoe.
- Lace your shoes and check the space between the lace holes across the tongue of the shoe. There should be about one inch of space for a good fit.
- Stand on your tiptoes to be sure the heels don't slip.
- The arch of the shoe should support the arch of your foot.
- Walk or jog around the store to test for comfort and cushioning.

When To Buy New Shoes

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, it may be time for new shoes.

- Is the tread pattern worn?
- Has the heel support worn on either side?
- Is the toe box thin or worn?
- Are your feet tired after exercise, especially in the arches?
- Do you feel pain in the shins, knees or hips after exercise?

Getting Started With Exercise



REFERENCE



Shopping for Shoes

Ask an experienced shoe salesperson to evaluate your feet and recommend the best type of shoe for you.

Foot Type	Stride	Shoe to Choose
Normal	Normal – Strikes the ground on the outside of the heel, then rolls inward (pronates) slightly to absorb shock	Stability shoes with a semi-curved shape for cushioning and durability
Flat	Overpronates – Rolls inward excessively when striking the ground	Extra stability and motion-control shoes with a straight or semi-curved shape will minimize excessive foot motion
High-arched	Underpronates – Doesn't roll inward enough (not an effective shock absorber)	Shock absorbing and cushioned shoes with a curved shape and plenty of flexibility to encourage foot motion

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4

Use the F.I.T. Prescription for Exercise

To improve your health-related fitness, you must burn a large number of calories during exercise. In another kit you will learn to use the Exercise Points System, an easy way to track the calories you burn during exercise each week.

Aerobic exercise is the best type of exercise, because it allows you to burn the most calories with the least effort. In addition to exercise type, three other factors affect how many calories you burn:

- *Frequency* – how often you exercise
- *Intensity* – how hard you exercise
- *Time* – how long you exercise

These three factors are known as the F.I.T. prescription:

Frequency + Intensity + Time (F.I.T.) = Calories Burned = Improved Fitness

Your health coach will help you outline a weekly exercise program for you using the F.I.T. prescription. Start slowly and progress gradually as your fitness improves.

REFERENCE



F.I.T. Prescription	
F – Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do some kind of aerobic exercise at least three days per week. • Aim for five or six exercise sessions per week (ideal for most people). • Include lifestyle physical activities to burn extra calories whenever possible.
I – Intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise should feel “fairly light” to “somewhat hard.” • You will breathe faster and perspire, especially if it is warm. • Begin with low- to moderate-intensity exercises. • Don’t work so hard that you can’t talk, but if you can sing, try to work a bit harder. • See the kit “Knowing How Hard to Exercise” for more information.
T – Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to exercise without stopping. • Include time for warm-up and cool-down. • Your long-term goal is to exercise for 30 to 60 minutes per session.

TIPS



Lifestyle Activities – Ways to Burn Extra Calories

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Park farther away from the store and walk the extra distance
- Cut the grass
- Work in the garden
- Walk the dog
- Play ball with your children or grandchildren

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Learn How to Exercise Safely

Your exercise program is designed to be safe and effective. For more information on specific safety considerations, see the kits “Knowing How Hard to Exercise” and “Exercising Safely.” Also, you can always ask your health coach about anything related to exercise safety.

Warm-Up and Cool-Down

For safety reasons, include a warm-up period as you begin each exercise session, and end with a cool-down period. This allows your heart, muscles and joints to adjust to the work they will do during exercise and then return to a resting state safely and gradually.

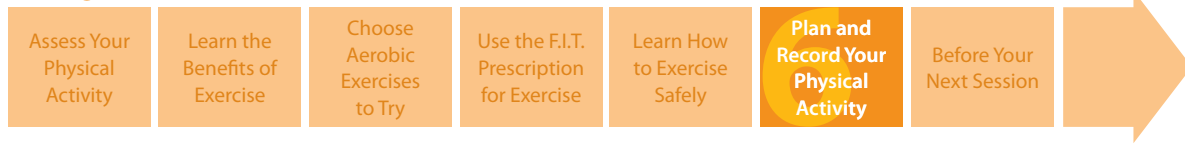
To warm up or cool down, try performing the exercise at a slower pace for at least five minutes at the beginning and end of your exercise session. Walking is an excellent warm-up or cool-down for any type of exercise.



TIPS

Exercise Safety

- Drink one cup of water every 20 to 30 minutes during exercise, especially if it's hot and humid.
- Exercise before meals, or wait at least two hours afterwards.
- If you have allergies, exercise indoors. If air pollution is a problem for you, exercise indoors or exercise outdoors early in the morning.
- If you exercise outdoors, find a safe place to exercise.
- Dress in comfortable, loose-fitting clothes appropriate for the exercise.
 - Clothing should allow sweat to evaporate to prevent overheating.
 - Dressing in layers you can remove makes it easier to adjust to the weather.
- Listen to your body.
 - Minor muscle soreness is common at first, but goes away as your fitness improves.
 - Don't push yourself so hard that you don't enjoy the exercise or feel tired for a long time afterward.
 - Report any injuries to your health coach immediately.
- Stop exercising **immediately** and **call your doctor** if you experience any of these symptoms:
 - Pain or discomfort in your chest, abdomen, back, neck, jaw or arms
 - Unusual shortness of breath
 - Nausea during or after exercise
 - Dizziness or fainting
 - An irregular pulse (if it is usually regular)



6

Plan and Record Your Physical Activity

Exercise is a key part of your personal action plan. To help you achieve your fitness goals, it is important to plan and record your physical activity.

Exercise planning

- Think of each exercise session as an appointment you don't want to miss or cancel.
- Consider finding a partner who can go at your pace to exercise with. You're more likely to exercise if someone is depending on you.
- If you don't want a partner, encourage someone to remind you to exercise or ask about your experience.
- In advance, choose a way to reward yourself when you accomplish an exercise goal. Copy the weekly exercise goal sheet below, fill it out and post it where you will see it every day.

ACTIVITY



Exercise Goal Sheet

Exercise Goal for the Week of _____

I will do (type of exercise) _____ on ___ days for ___ minutes per session.

My reward for achieving this goal will be:

(Who) _____ will help me achieve my goal by:

Getting Started With Exercise

Assess Your Physical Activity

Learn the Benefits of Exercise

Choose Aerobic Exercises to Try

Use the F.I.T. Prescription for Exercise

Learn How to Exercise Safely

Plan and Record Your Physical Activity

Before Your Next Session

Using Your Exercise Diary

Keeping an accurate record of your exercise is critical to your success and can help you monitor your progress. Your exercise diary (located in the back of this workbook) provides an easy, convenient and fun way to record the type, location, frequency, intensity and time of your exercise. The following steps will help you stay on track.

1. Write your name and program information on the front cover of your exercise diary.
2. Find and review your exercise recommendations in your personal action plan, which should include a 12-week aerobic exercise plan.
3. Set your exercise goals one week at a time.
 - Write your goal on the first line of the inside cover of the diary.
 - Specify the frequency (days per week) and time (minutes) you will exercise.
 - Leave the target heart rate and target exertion rate blank for now.
4. Record each exercise session using the weekly exercise diary.
 - Fill in the date, type, location and duration (including warm-up and cool-down) of your exercise.
 - For now, leave the heart rate, exertion rating and points blank. (See the kit “Knowing How Hard to Exercise” for more information.)



TIPS

Using the Exercise Diary

- Read the safety tips on the back cover of the diary.
- Record all activity sessions of five minutes or more throughout the day.
- Set your exercise goal for one week at a time using your aerobic exercise plan as a guide.
- Keep your exercise diary handy at all times – it fits easily into a pocket or purse.
- Most people find the diary fun and helpful right away. Commit to using it for at least 12 weeks.

“Keeping an accurate record of your exercise is critical to your success and can help you monitor your progress.”

Getting Started With Exercise

Assess Your Physical Activity

Learn the Benefits of Exercise

Choose Aerobic Exercises to Try

Use the F.I.T. Prescription for Exercise

Learn How to Exercise Safely

Plan and Record Your Physical Activity

Before Your Next Session



Before Your Next Session

In the time between your sessions with your health coach, do the following.

- Be sure to read and complete this educational kit.
- Use this sheet to record your work.
- Bring this sheet with you during your next session.

REVIEW



Check Yourself

Complete the statements to be sure you understand the key concepts in this kit.

1. Performance-related fitness is for people who want to excel at competitive _____.
2. Health-related fitness is for people who want to get the most out of _____.
3. It's never too _____ to start being active and get fit.
4. Understanding your beliefs, _____ and habits related to physical activity will help you identify ways to become more active.
5. _____ benefits from regular physical activity.
6. Exercise can add _____ to your life and life to your years.
7. The longer you are active, the more _____ you will enjoy.
8. _____ means using oxygen for work.
9. The more aerobic exercise you do, the more _____ you burn.
10. Aerobic exercises use _____ muscles and can be performed continuously.
11. Aerobic exercise allows you to burn the _____ calories with the _____ effort.
12. The F.I.T. prescription = # of calories burned = improvement in _____ related fitness.
13. Use the first five or more minutes of your exercise session to _____ and the final _____ or more minutes to cool-down.
14. Drink one cup of _____ every 20 to 30 minutes during exercise, especially if it is hot and humid.
15. _____ exercising immediately if you experience any unusual symptoms.

Answers: 1) athletics; 2) life; 3) late; 4) attitude; 5) Everyone; 6) years; 7) benefits; 8) Aerobic; 9) calories; 10) large; 11) most; least; 12) health; 13) warm-up; five; 14) water; 15) Stop

Write any questions for your health coach here.