

USAF Fitness & Sports Newsletter

May/June
2003

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"History does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak and the timid."

General Dwight D. Eisenhower



STAYING FIT IN THE FIELD

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Sticking with the program

Ninety days is the benchmark for sticking with an exercise program. Often, if you can pass the 90-day mark, you are well on your way to a healthier you. Here are some suggestions that can help you stick with the program long enough to make it part of your lifestyle:

- **Don't knock yourself out.** Many people start out an exercise program with such enthusiasm that they wind up overdoing it and straining their muscles. They are so sore for a few days that they can't work out and then get out of the habit. Take it easy. Save some of that excitement for a few weeks down the road when you'll need to stay motivated.
- **Work your workouts in.** Make working out a priority. Your workout time is time you invest in yourself, your body, your health, and your future. Take it seriously.
- **Reach your goals.** When you set realistic goals for either weight loss, change in muscle size, or trimming your waistline, the results you achieve can motivate you to keep going. Set goals daily, weekly, and monthly. As you reach each of those, you can feel good about what you're accomplishing, which will help you to continue with your commitment.
- **Keep track of your accomplishments.** Using a diary or a chart, chronicle your workouts and your achievements. That way, you can see your progress in a physical sense on a daily basis.

WANT TO LOSE WEIGHT?

SET REAL GOALS

When someone sets out to lose weight, they often hear or read that they must "set realistic goals."

Many people wonder exactly what this means. After all, if you weigh 150 pounds and you want to weigh 120, your goal is to lose 30 pounds, right? True, but there's much more to setting realistic weight-loss goals than simply figuring out how much you need to lose.

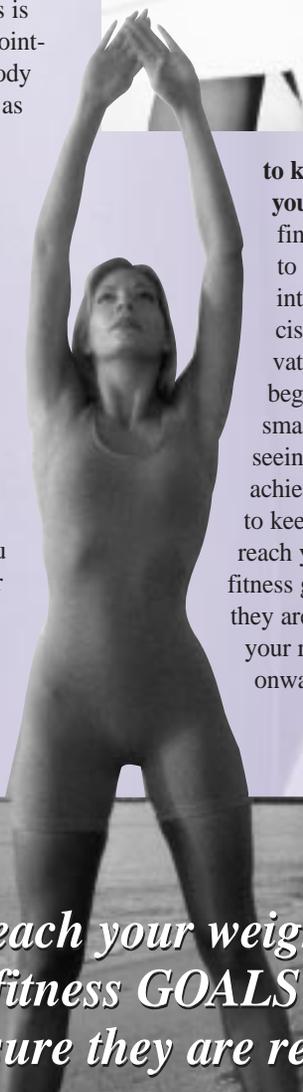
First, you need to consider your body type. If you are a 5-foot 3-inch woman with a medium frame and weigh 150 pounds, setting a goal of looking like a supermodel after your weight loss is only going to set you up for disappointment. You need to work with the body you have and concentrate on being as healthy as you can be in that body.

Next, it's important to reduce your one larger goal into several smaller ones. Choose short-term goals, such as losing 2–4 pounds per week for the next several weeks. Smaller, more manageable goals are easier to reach and make reaching your goal weight seem less burdensome. Along with these weekly goals come daily goals of sticking to a healthy diet and getting the exercise you need. Regular exercise not only helps you to lose the weight, it improves your mood and helps you to develop a fitter, rather than just thinner, body.

Finally, taking action is the first step in motivating yourself



to keep going toward your goals. Many people find that keeping a diary to record their food intake, weight, and exercise habits helps to motivate them. Once you begin to reach your smaller goals and start seeing results, those achievements will spur you to keep going. You can reach your weight-loss and fitness goals if you make sure they are realistic and allow your results to motivate you onward in your efforts.



You CAN reach your weight-loss and fitness GOALS if you make sure they are realistic...

AIR FORCE USAF FITNESS and SPORTS NEWS

Air Force Women's Team wins bronze medal at 2003 USA Cross-Country Championship



(Left to right): McKenna, Schrank, Flood, Coppinger, Skeete, and Luzader

The Air Force Women's Team won third place in the 2003 USA Track & Field Winter Cross-Country Championship, held February 15, 2003, in Houston, Texas. The team was led by **Special Agent Jamie Flood** (McGuire Air Force Base), who finished the rain-soaked 8K run with a time of 35:51. She was followed closely by **Second Lieutenant Lara Coppinger** (Edwards Air Force Base) and **Captain Kshamata Skeete** (Hickam Air Force Base), with times of 36:36 and 37:43, respectively.

The times of **Major Heidi McKenna** of Peterson Air Force Base (38:01), **Major Brenda Schrank** of Wright Patterson Air Force Base (38:02), and **Technical Sergeant Terry Luzader** of McGuire Air Force

Base (39:36) assured the Air Force of this impressive third-place finish on the extremely muddy course. Flood, Coppinger, and Skeete each qualified and advanced to the Military World Championships in France. The United States Team finished seventh in a very strong international field of competitors.

STAYING FIT IN THE FIELD

The importance of physical fitness is the one constant among the many variables in the readiness equation. Solid fitness programs are needed in the field to sustain the human war-fighting machine in a stressful environment and prevent deconditioning.

Unlike home station programs, deployed locations are fully staffed and run by active duty and Air Reserve component forces. It is these individuals who are trained in the principles of cardiovascular, strength, and flexibility programs and are able to assist with individual and group fitness programs, as well as train others to lead unit exercise. They also run complete intramural programs and maintain all exercise equipment.

Most bases begin with very little equipment, but gradually incorporate complete sets of cardiovascular and weight-training machines. At Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), they have one main and five additional satellite fitness tents, which house all equipment as well as a basketball court. Outdoor volleyball courts and running tracks are also part of the total fitness program.

Lt Col Steve Whitney, SVS Commander, says "it is not unusual during any single rotation to have as many as 1,800 personnel a day using our fitness facilities."

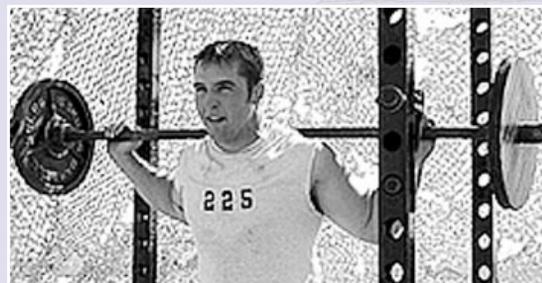
Sports competitions are also very popular, and individuals competing in intramural sports can usually see their results posted in the base newspaper. Lt Col Whitney says "the fitness and sports programs are open to all coalition partners, and many fitness programs are run in conjunction with one or more partners." At Ganci Air Base, work is under way to construct a state-of-the-art fitness center that will feature cardio, selectorized, and free-weight equipment; a designated area for group exercise and martial arts instruction; and a full-length basketball court.

These types of facilities and programs will come close to what personnel have come to expect and will have a direct impact on the morale of the troops. A typical duty day can range anywhere from 12–20 hours, and these field fitness programs are critical to the ability of our deployed personnel to sustain long hours as well as maintain optimal performance.

Fit Tip

Want to improve flexibility?

Working out with weights on a regular basis not only strengthens the muscles, but also strengthens the joints. By working each joint through a full range of motion during each exercise, you improve flexibility.





Breaking a fitness plateau

You seem to be doing everything right: a balanced diet, regular aerobic exercise, a steady regimen of resistance training, and stretching. Why, then, are you stuck and unable to break your fitness plateau? Is this the most fit you can be? Have you peaked? Or is your routine somehow limiting your fitness level?

Many regular exercisers and athletes face this barrier at some point in their training. It's a common source of frustration, but here are some things to consider that may help.

Frequency, intensity, and duration

As you become more fit and grow more comfortable estimating your level of exertion, you can change one of these factors to keep your exercise routine from getting stale. You can increase your intensity, which will usually limit the duration of your workout, or you can maintain your normal intensity but increase your duration or frequency. Changing any of these factors will create a different exercise stimulus and may help break that plateau.

Rest and recover

Frequently, when physical performance declines or fails to improve, people respond by increasing the duration, intensity, and/or frequency of their workouts. This plan of attack is ultimately counterproductive because rest may be what is needed, not more exercise.

Often, one of the most difficult things for a fit person to do is rest. A week away from the gym or off the road may seem unthinkable, but periodically it is necessary and tremendously beneficial.

Change your routine

Changing your routine is frequently helpful in breaking through a plateau. If you continually use the same amount of weight when you lift weights, you'll initially see an increase in strength, but eventually you will plateau. Unless you use more weight or challenge the muscle with a different exercise, you'll maintain the strength you've gained, but your strength won't increase. This principle also applies to aerobic exercise. If you always run five miles at eight minutes per mile, you will maintain your aerobic capacity but won't improve it. Making one of these days a speed workout or a longer run would not only break up the monotony, but it would also improve performance.

RAF FAIRFORD FITNESS CENTER BECOMES 24-HOUR OPERATION

RAF Fairford, located in the sleepy Gloucestershire hills of England, is greatly expanding its hours and fitness services for deployed personnel.

Most of the time, RAF Fairford is a contingency base—a bare-bones airfield ready to host aircraft and personnel to support operations or exercises in the European or CENTCOM region. Lately, they've taken on B-52s and a large number of support personnel.

"During normal day-to-day operations, RAF Fairford only has about 200 personnel," said **1st Lt Jake Martinez**, a logistics planner with the 424th Air Base Squadron. Lt Martinez and his wife, Amanda, can often be found playing basketball on Sunday afternoons.

"It seems as if almost the entire base participates. With such a small staff, we work, live, and play together. You can't walk in and expect to go full-court anytime, we actually have to schedule a time for everyone to play. It's a family atmosphere, but I can't wait for some new opponents!" said Lt Martinez.

Lt Martinez and his teammates are certainly getting some new competition as hundreds of deployed airmen pour into the contingency dorms and lodging.

Many departments have implemented 12-hour shifts, 6 days a week, while personnel train and prepare for possible combat operations. In response, the fitness center expanded its workforce and changed its business hours to a 24-hour operation.

"Apparently, people working shifts will still make time for working out," said **Michael Hertlein**, the Chief of Services at RAF Fairford. "We've had people using the facility at all hours...and we only expect it to get busier."

Airman 1st Class Terrence Buckner, a fitness specialist working at the Fairford Fitness Center, has received kudos for the easy-to-remember operating hours. "Since we're open 24 hours, it's easier to get a good workout," Buckner said, "Remember, working out relieves the stress of a long day."

"A few people have asked what time we close, but I think the word is getting around that we're here all the time," he joked.

Deployed personnel seem to appreciate the attention their rough schedules are getting from services staff.

"Often, fitness facilities close early on Saturday or Sunday and don't stay open very late into the night. But with a 24-hour schedule, it doesn't matter when I get time off, it's there when I'm ready," said **Tech Sgt Anthony Cole**, a member of the 189th security forces squadron of the Arkansas National Guard deployed to RAF Fairford.

Cole works as a security forces area supervisor, which means shift work is the norm. "When you work shifts, it's tough to work around business hours. The 24-hour schedule makes it easy," he said.

Pick-up basketball and volleyball games have become more common, with permanent party and deployed personnel mixing it up in coed teams. Instead of scheduling a time for everyone to show up, the gym is brimming with players ready to shoot, dunk, spike, and score.

With the uncertainty of possible future operations, the services staff are poised to keep the troops in shape around the clock. "We don't know what will happen, but regardless, we're going to give our customers the service they need for as long as they need it," Hertlein said.



GO TOTAL!

A total-body workout can be the most efficient way to complete an exercise session and reap the benefits in a short period of time. Our lives are hectic. We run from job to home to school to shopping to sports activities. It goes on and on. With time so short, the advantages of a total-body workout should not be overlooked.

Total-body workouts can give you the results you want with an investment of three sessions per week. That's because the cross-trainer machine is designed to work both the upper and lower body at the same time. Muscles in the arms, shoulders, legs, and back are all being worked, along with the heart and the lungs, in one session of a half to three quarters of an hour.

One reason people like this workout is the cardiovascular benefits it offers. When using a cross-trainer machine, you can raise your heart rate more quickly than with a conventional workout. In other words, you can get a vigorous workout in less time because of the intensity of the exercise you are doing.

In addition to building muscle and getting great cardiovascular results, total-body workouts are a terrific way to burn calories. This is because so much of your muscle mass is engaged in activity at one time. This increases oxygen uptake and burns calories effectively and quickly.

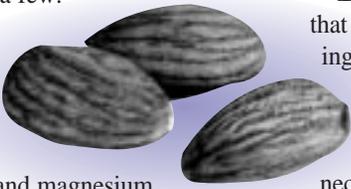
Overall, a total-body workout can give the exerciser a better-quality workout in a shorter period of time. In only two or three sessions a week, you can build muscle, elevate your heart rate for better conditioning, and burn calories. Why not look into what this type of workout can do for you? It just might be the answer to getting a complete and effective workout on a tight schedule.

Really good foods

Sure, you watch your diet. You try to eat low-fat foods and get all the vitamins and minerals you need. That's great. But did you know there are some foods that are extra-good for you? Certain foods pack a nutritional wallop from which you can reap many benefits. Here are a few:

■ AW NUTS!

Almonds are very high in vitamins E and B. They contain the minerals calcium and magnesium as well. In addition, they contain plenty of protein but no cholesterol. They are also high in mono-unsaturated fat, which may help lower your risk of heart disease.



■ BEAN EATING?

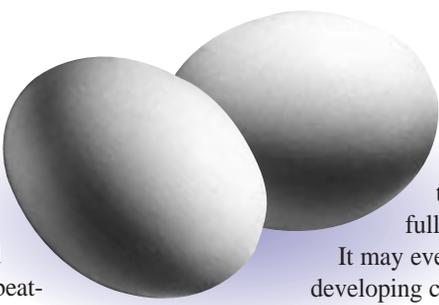
Jokes aside, beans are an excellent source of fiber. They are also full of proteins and complex carbohydrates as well. With a little creativity, you can find many ways to



include beans in your diet and benefit from the goodness they offer.

■ EGG ME ON

Eggs are a food that have taken a beating over the years with regard to their place in a healthy diet. Now we know that eggs are full of protein and contain amino acids that are necessary to the body. Eggs contain more than a dozen vitamins and some minerals as well.

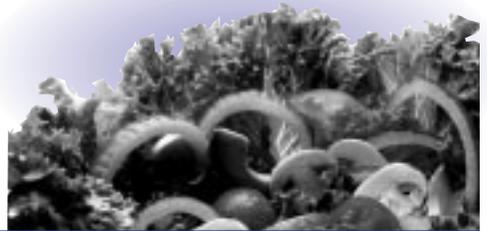


■ VEG OUT!

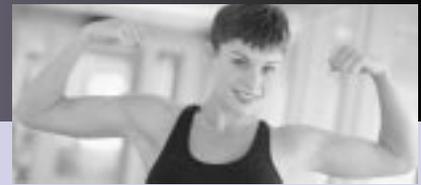
All veggies are good for you, but some are better than others. Spinach and tomatoes are two that pack extra punch. Spinach is full of fiber and vitamins A and C.

It may even help lower your chances of developing cancer. Tomatoes—not just fresh ones, either—may also play a part in lowering your risk of disease because they contain lycopene.

Sure, you want to eat right, and that's really not that difficult with so many good foods that are beneficial to you. Imagine a spinach salad with tomatoes and hard-boiled eggs. Now there's a salad that not only tastes good, but also packs a nutritional punch.



A good workout gets better



Pilates is the workout regimen developed by German athlete Joseph Pilates. Pilates originally called the method “contrology,” but his surname has become the moniker by which this system is known. Pilates is a program of strength training centered on achieving core stability within a complete workout. The method emphasizes the quality and effectiveness of the exercises by focusing on control, alignment, form, and breathing.

Stott Pilates was developed by professional dancer Moira Stott-Merrithew. Ms. Merrithew studied Pilates in New York for two years. After that time, she worked with physical therapists and other medical professionals to redefine the method. Her approach is considered safe and effective. It combines original Pilates principles with modern knowledge of spinal rehabilitation and exercise. This makes the system suitable for treating chronic problems such as fibromyalgia, arthritis, and some injuries.

One of the best things about the Stott Pilates program is that in addition to offering variety, it customizes personal discipline and intensity to meet the needs of the individual. Many people find that they can gain greater flexibility, strength, and posture with this method of exercise.

The Pilates system of exercise is designed to help participants realize optimal results through efficient and controlled exercises. This means that many people will begin to see results in as few as a dozen sessions. If you think you could benefit from this exciting and challenging program, ask a fitness expert about it.

COME IN FROM THE HEAT

Summer is a beautiful time of year. There’s nothing like exercising outside. A walk, jog, bicycle ride, or other outdoor activity can really boost your

spirits as well as give your body the exercise it needs. That’s great, as long as the weather is fine.

However, when the heat is on and the pollen count is up, exercising outside can be difficult and even dangerous. In the early morning and midafternoon, pollen counts tend to be elevated. If you are sensitive to pollen, those are the times to avoid any outdoor activities. Early morning is often a good time for exercising outside, but when the midday heat hits, heat exhaustion can result from outdoor workouts.

That’s when it’s time to bring your workout inside. Find a facility where you can get the exercise you need in air-conditioned comfort, and without being exposed to allergens that can raise havoc with your respiratory system. Working out indoors means avoiding the dangers of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and UV rays.



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FITNESS AND SPORTS

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