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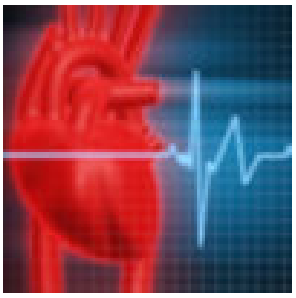
Target Heart Rate

The easiest way to know if you are exercising at the intensity necessary to gain the greatest cardiovascular benefit is to measure your heart rate. The ideal heart rate range for an exercise participant to maintain during exercise is found by first calculating the participant's maximal heart rate, and then their target heart rate (THR) for exercise intensity. You may use the table included on this page as a general THR guide, or you may want to calculate your own personal THR by using the formula in the section titled "Calculate Your Own THR" on page 2.



You will find instructions for taking your pulse under the cleverly-titled heading of "Taking Your Pulse," also located on page 2.

Using the Target Heart Rate Chart

It is first important to point out that this table is only a guide. The information contained here will give you a general idea of what your THR should be (see "Calculating Your Personal THR" for more on finding your THR.).

To use the table, perform the following steps:

1. Find your age category on the left hand side of the table. Round your age up or down, if necessary, to the closest age mark on the table.

Example:
age 41 would be age 40 on the table.

2. Find your maximal heart rate (MHR) to the right of your age.

Example:
age 40 = 180 (MHR)

3. Find your desired exercise intensity level on the top row of the table. To get your THR number, move down the column containing your desired intensity percentage, stopping even with your age mark on the left column.

Example:
70% (desired intensity percentage) at age 40 = 12 (THR number).

4. Multiply the THR number found on the table by 10. This number will be your approximate training heart rate while exercising.

Example:
12 x 10 = 120 (exercise THR)

Target Heart Rate Chart

Age	MHR	60%	70%	75%	80%	85%
20	200	12	14	15	16	17
25	195	12	14	15	16	16
30	190	11	13	14	15	16
35	185	11	12	13	14	15
40	180	10	12	12	13	14
45	175	10	12	13	14	14
50	170	10	11	12	13	14
55	165	9	11	12	13	13
60	160	9	11	12	12	13
65	155	9	10	11	12	13
70	150	9	10	11	12	12
75	145	8	10	10	11	12

Target Heart Rate (continued)

Calculating Your Personal THR

Your target heart rate calculation will be determined as a percentage of your maximal heart rate. Maximal heart rate can be measured by using the results of a maximal functional test (using a treadmill or bicycle) or by age predicted heart rate tables that typically use the "220-minus-age" formula. The formula for the age predicted heart rate method of estimating target heart rate is:

Target Heart Rate = Predicted maximal heart rate (220-age)

x 60% to 85% (desired intensity)

For example, a 40-year-old woman for whom an intensity level of 70% of maximal heart rate is desired while exercising would be calculated this way:

220-40=180 (predicted maximal heart rate)

180 (predicted maximal heart rate)

x .70 (70% exercise intensity)

= 126 (target heart rate for exercise)

Disclaimer

This is to inform you that you are solely responsible for the way that you perceive and utilize the content of this information, including all content, links and other recommendations, and that the use of same will be at your own risk.

carotid artery

radial artery

Taking Your Pulse

Your heart rate can be determined by palpating (feeling) the pulse or by using a cardio tachometer or electrocardiogram. For practical reasons, feeling your pulse is the easiest and most accessible method to obtain your heart rate. Two of the points on your body where your pulse can be measured by palpation is at the radial pulse on your wrist, and the carotid artery on the side of your neck.

To measure your pulse at your radial artery, place the tips of your index and middle fingers (not your thumb; it has a pulse of its own!) on your wrist, in line with the base of your thumb. With your fingers over the artery, lightly apply pressure.

To measure your pulse at your carotid artery, place the tips of your index and middle fingers over the artery at the side of your larynx. With your fingers over the artery, lightly apply pressure while taking care not to press too hard.

To check your heart rate, first find your pulse. Then, while timing for 10 seconds, count the pulse beats. The first pulse beat will be counted as "0" at the start of the 10 second period, followed by "1" on the second beat, and so on. Multiply your 10 second pulse count by 6 to obtain your heart rate in beats per minute, then compare your results to your target heart rate.

For instance, if you were to count 20 pulse beats during a 10 second timing period, it would be calculated this way:

20 (number of pulse beats in the 10 second timing period)
x 6
=120 (heart rate in beats per minute)