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Keeping Track of Your Physical Activity

Use the *Rating of Perceived Exertion* (RPE) scale (see sidebar) to guide your progress with your exercise program.

The idea behind the RPE scale is for you to choose a number based on how you feel during your physical activity sessions. The number you choose should reflect your overall level of effort, including your breathing. There is no right or wrong answer. For exercise, you should be between 3 and 5 on the scale.

As your recovery and fitness improves, so too will your perceived level of effort. The change in effort that you feel over time is a measure of your improvement.

What does the RPE scale look like?

- 0 = Nothing at all
- 1 = Very easy
- 2 = Easy
- 3 = Moderate
- 4 = Somewhat difficult
- 5 = Difficult
- 6 = More difficult
- 7 = Very difficult
- 8 = +
- 9 = ++
- 10 = Very, very difficult (almost maximal)

Tips for Keeping Physically Active

Choose an activity that you enjoy and that fits with your lifestyle

1. Exercise with a buddy.
2. Keep an exercise log like the example on the next page. This way you can see your progress and keep track of how you are feeling.
3. Set realistic goals or objectives you would like to achieve and talk openly about them with important people in your life.
4. Reward yourself when you have achieved your goals.
5. Remember to evaluate your progress; consider the effort rather than the end result.
6. Be prepared for lapses; knowing they will happen may prevent the feeling of failure. "Get back on the horse" right away and start from where you fell off.

