



# HEALTH & FITNESS

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## ◆ Health & Fitness

### a Health

## What are Health & Fitness?

### Health

The World Health Organisation describes health as:

*“a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”*

Not many of us can really say we are completely healthy, or have a healthy way of living (lifestyle). By not having a healthy lifestyle, eg. smoking, eating lots of fatty foods and sweets, drinking alcohol, and taking little or no exercise, can lead to poor health. Most people take good health for granted (especially when you are young), you only miss good health when you no longer have it!

It is important to eat a balanced diet and to get enough sleep. Avoid poisoning your body with drugs, including tobacco smoke, alcohol, or air pollution like car exhaust fumes. There is no guarantee that you will always be healthy, but adopting a healthy lifestyle helps.



You need to maintain high standards of personal hygiene with regular washing and dental care at all times. After P.E. you should always take a shower. Hot sweaty clothing and footwear, and communal changing and washing facilities provide ideal conditions for the spread of minor skin infections. Common examples being, viruses (verucca), bacteria (spots & boils), and fungi (athlete's foot). Sensible hygiene will help prevent this type of infection, but no matter how clean you are there is still a risk. Generally skin infections do respond to simple treatments.

## Fitness

Being healthy is not the same as being fit.

The World Health Organisation defines physical fitness as;

*"the ability to perform muscular work satisfactorily"*

Although health and fitness have different definitions they are very closely related. Generally improving your fitness will improve your health. Fitness which is not so concerned with performance but more to do with your well being is known as health related fitness. Fitness which is more concerned with improving your performance is known as activity related fitness .

There are many definitions of physical fitness. They all focus on physical factors which are part of your overall health. We could think of physical fitness as the capacity to perform repeated activity with relative success, and enjoyment. This normally involves a measure of the relative efficiency of the heart, blood vessels, lungs, and muscles in carrying out movements. In hard physical activity, the enjoyment involves knowing that you have achieved your aims.

You need to be fit to cope with everyday life and not feel tired all the time. The more you do, the fitter you need to be. As you get older you may not be able to withstand the stresses of life as well as you did when you were younger, and you will need to stay as fit as you can.

### QUESTION BOX 1

1. Give the World Health Organisation definition of health.
2. Explain what being unhealthy means.



### ANSWER BOX 1

1. The World Health Organisation describes health as:

"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

According to this definition it is an ideal goal rather than an attainable state.

2. Unhealthy means lacking any of the above to a greater or lesser extent. Most people take good health for granted (especially when you are young), you only miss good health when you no longer have it!

### QUESTION BOX 2

Explain how somebody could be fit but unhealthy? Explain your answer.



### ANSWER BOX 2

Somebody could be fit but unhealthy, if the definition of healthy is taken as the absence of disease or infirmity. Many top class sportspeople are asthmatic or diabetic, and still the best in the world. Very fit marathon runners and cyclists have actually died during competition.

## Fitness & Activity

### Components of physical fitness

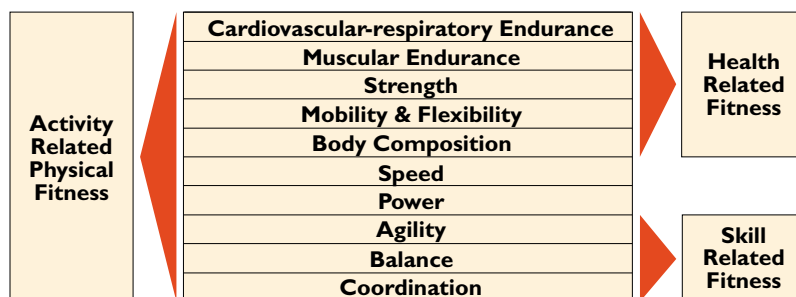
There are various fitness components which influence physical efficiency.

strength; endurance; flexibility; agility; balance; speed; power; co-ordination; reaction time and body composition.

All of these affect performance, resulting in selection into different activities in different ways.

These are organised in the The European Test of Physical Fitness (Eurofit).

Modified after the European Test of Physical Fitness (Eurofit, 1988).



The importance of health related fitness lasts a lifetime.

Exercise machines are good for all ages, can be carefully controlled in a systematic fitness programme, avoid the worst of the weather, and provide women with a safe environment free from worry, and opportunities for those living hectic urban lifestyles.