

activity can spell trouble; for example, Dr. Mirkin estimates that 65 percent of all women who start from inactivity into an aerobic dance program suffer from some form of lower leg injury. Take it easy, take your time and don't over-do it.

"For fitness you don't have to work out more than three times a week," Dr. Mirkin says. "Any more than thirty minutes three times a week and you're not exercising for fitness; you're either addicted to exercise or you're competing. When you exceed four times a week, the injury rates rise accordingly. People who exercise five times a week or more are injured at a very high rate, compared to a very low rate on three times or less a week." Dr. Mirkin advises would-be fitness buffs who want to work out more than three times each week to pursue different routines, at different intervals, which stress different parts of the body.

For example, Dr. Mirkin says, "running stresses primarily the lower part of the leg, and cycling stresses primarily the upper part." So, if you alternate running workouts with cycling workouts you will do your best to work against the chance of injury. Such an alternating system of work outs takes into account what some experts call the 48-hour recovery rule, a rule beginning exercisers will do well to follow to the letter. "Every time you exercise vigorously your muscles are injured," Dr. Mirkin explains, "and it takes about 48 hours for your muscles to heal. Even the best athletes in the world use some variation of the 48-hour recovery rule. They go hard, easy. A world class marathoner will do intervals at a four-minute-mile pace one day, but they'll run a seven-minute-mile pace

continuously," he explains. "That's all you need to become fit, if you do that three times a week. Strength training is done in bouts of 30 to 50 seconds at the most. When you want to become strong you move against the heaviest resistance that you can, ten times in a row, slowly, and that should take about 30 to 50 seconds." In strength training, most people work in series of ten repetitions, or reps, and then rest before continuing on another series.

Heart/lung training routines come in all shapes and sizes, for all manner of folks. You might try using a rowing machine, a cross



country skiing machine, a trampoline or a bicycle. Plain old fashioned jogging or swimming, or a hearty aerobics routine, will also do the trick nicely. Strength training is generally done with weights, either free weights or those provided with use of Universal or Nautilus machines, or in some of the newer machines which use air or water to provide a changing flow of resistance, although you can also build strength on your own power, through specific isometric routines, providing your own resistance against yourself.

What we hope you take away from this installment of *The American Express Real Life Planner* is the knowledge that there are many ways to tackle both sets of exercises, many health and fitness routines which will serve you well in the years ahead. It's up to you to decide which routines will best fit into your changing lifestyle, which activities will best meet your needs. Everything you could ever hope to find in an exercise program is there for the taking on your college campus. Do yourself a favor and try your hand at a host of activities before landing on the small handful that you'll actively enjoy beyond graduation. Remember, team

sports will always be harder to pursue than individual efforts, so you will do well to develop interests in activities you can handle on your own, at your own pace, on your own schedule. Go for it.

## EXTRA EFFORTS: GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR FITNESS ROUTINES

**B**elow, assorted tips, and odds and ends, to help you get better mileage out of your exercise program:

- The best time of day to exercise is at noon, the time when your biological clock tells your body to be most receptive to over-activity. Exercising at mid-day is also a great way to break up your work schedule, and to get your busy afternoons off to a running start. Of course, a work out at any time of day will do you good, but you should try to set aside the same time each day for your routine, putting your body on a schedule to accommodate and adjust to your activities. And, if you do choose to work out on your lunch hour, don't let your work out routine replace eating as your noon time activity; make time for both.

- If you jog, try running with light hand weights (from one to five pounds each) and moving your arms in a punching motion as you run. You might find you'll only be able to run for shorter periods, and shorter distances, but you'll gain a complete upper body work out in the same time it was taking you to exercise your heart, your lower body, and your endurance.

- Conversely, ankle weights, once thought to provide an increased work out for the lower body in the same way hand weights assist the upper body, have been found to impede progress, and increase the chance of injury. With ankle weights you have to lift your legs with added force, placing increased stress on your quadricep muscles. Running with ankle weights, according to Dr. Gabe Mirkin, can make the quadriceps too strong for the opposing hamstring muscles, making injury more likely.

- In bicycling, be sure the seat is adjusted to its maximum height for your legs. Too often, cyclists leave the seat too low, so that



on the next day. That pace, for a person who's training at the four-minute-mile, is like you or me walking."

Dr. Mirkin, and most other fitness specialists, generally break exercise routines into two distinct types: heart/lung, or cardiovascular, training, and strength training. "Heart/lung training is done in continuous exercise where you get your pulse up beyond 100 beats a minute for at least ten minutes

