

PAR-Q - The Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire

Take the PAR-Q Before You Start an Exercise Program

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The physical activity readiness questionnaire (PAR-Q) is a self-screening tool that can be used by anyone who is planning to start an exercise program. It is often used by fitness trainers or coaches to determine the safety or possible risk of exercising for an individual based upon their answers to specific health history questions. The PAR-Q was created by the British Columbia Ministry of Health and the Multidisciplinary Board on Exercise. This form was adopted directly from the [ACSM](#) Standards and Guidelines for Health and Fitness Facilities.

The Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire

Being physically active is very safe for most people. Some people, however, should check with their doctors before they increase their current level of activity. The PAR-Q has been designed to identify the small number of adults for whom physical activity may be inappropriate or those who should have medical advice concerning the type of activity most suitable for them.

Answer yes or no to the following questions:

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?
2. Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?
3. In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?
4. Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?
5. Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
6. Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs (for example, water pills) for your blood pressure or heart condition?
7. Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?

If you answered yes:

If you answered yes to one or more questions, are older than age 40 and have been inactive or are concerned about your health, consult a physician before taking a fitness test or substantially increasing your physical activity. You should ask for a medical clearance along with information about specific exercise limitations you may have. In most cases, you will still be able to do any type of activity you want as long as you adhere to some guidelines.

If you answered no:

If you answered no to all the PAR-Q questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can exercise safely and have low risk of having any medical complications from exercise. It is still important to start slowly and increase gradually. It may also be helpful to have a fitness assessment with a personal trainer or coach in order to determine where to begin.

When to delay the start of an exercise program:

- If you are not feeling well because of a temporary illness, such as a cold or a fever, wait until you feel better to begin exercising.
- If you are or may be pregnant, talk with your doctor before you start becoming more active.

