

The Health Screening Process

The preliminary steps to developing a program focus on evaluating current lifestyle, fitness, and health status. This helps to establish a baseline upon which to plan future efforts. Of these, the health screen is paramount. A structured health screen helps to:

- limit agency and coordinator liability
- meet the ACSM Standard of Care
- classify individual risk level
- clear the individual for exercise
- identify individuals for further screening
- personalize the individual's plan.

The fitness coordinator's role in this process is to gather and to provide information. In some instances, for example, a self-guided program, a form such as a PAR-Q may be provided and required of officers prior to using the department workout facility. In the event an agency has a mandatory testing or training program, a more comprehensive screening tool such as a Preparticipation Screening Questionnaire may be used by the fitness coordinator with officers prior to testing.

The information gathered in the screening process should be evaluated against objective criteria, such as the coronary artery disease (CAD) risk factors

CAD risk factors to be used below are:

Positive Risk Factors

- Family history (before age 55 in males or 65 in females)
- Cigarette smoking
- Hypertension - $> 140\text{mmHg}/90\text{mmHg}$
- Dyslipidemia - LDL $> 130\text{ mg/dl}$, HDL $< 40\text{ mg/dl}$, on meds or TC (alone) $> 200\text{mg/dl}$
- Impaired fasting glucose - average of at least two readings $> 100\text{mg/dl}$
- Obesity - BMI > 30 , male waist $> 40"$ and female waist $> 35"$, or waist/hip $> .95$ for males and $> .86$ for females
- Sedentary lifestyle

Negative Risk Factor

- Elevated HDL - $> 60\text{ mg/dl}$

Risk Stratification

Exercise and exercise testing carries the potential for significant benefit and in

very isolated instances, substantial risk as well. The coordinator's role in the screening process is to provide education around the former and to minimize the latter. The results of the pen and paper review represent an objective procedure, using established criteria. An important resource for this action is the American College of Sports Medicine.

ACSM Risk Stratification Categories

1. Low risk people are

- males under 45 years of age
- females under 55 years of age
- asymptomatic
- those with one or fewer risk factors.

Action:

- Perform informed consent prior to testing and or participating in supervised training
- No further screening is necessary

2. Moderate risk people are

- males 45 yoa and older
- females 55 yoa and older
- have two or more risk factors

Action:

- Perform informed consent prior to testing and or participating in supervised training
- medical examination and exercise testing prior to vigorous training

3. High risk people are

- individuals with one or more signs or symptoms of cardiopulmonary or metabolic disease
- those diagnosed with cardiopulmonary or metabolic disease

Action:

- Perform informed consent prior to testing and or participating in supervised training
- medical examination and exercise testing prior to moderate or vigorous training

Afteraction

All of the information gathered during this process is considered confidential and subject to federal protection. The completed forms and follow up information should be maintained separately and securely, apart from personnel files.

In a subsequent installment we'll review forms, specific circumstances, and consider some examples.