

WHY HEART RATE?

Why should we measure heart rate? When it comes to exercise, we can talk about the quantity of physical activity with how far we walked, how long we ran, how many hours at the gym or even how hard a class was. This is all good information. However, none of these descriptions give any indication of the quality of the movement. Heart rate is a measure of quality.

You can think of heart rate like the tachometer on a car. The speedometer shows how fast you are going, but the tachometer shows how hard the engine is working no matter what the speed. Here is an example.



When the car starts and the accelerator is pressed the car is going nowhere as indicated by the speedometer on the left. But the tachometer on the right shows that the engine is working very hard. When the car does begin to move, the tachometer is always showing how hard the engine is working regardless of the speed.

Think of your heart as the engine. A cardio monitor shows how hard that “engine” or your heart is working by showing you your heart rate.

BENEFITS OF HEART RATE ZONES

Heart rate can tell us the physiological benefits that can be realized from spending time in certain heart rate ranges. As people accumulate time in these zones, they will realize the benefits from doing so.

Zone	Percent	Benefits	Fatigue
Below	Up to 64% HRmax	General health, improved mobility, aid in recovery, promote blood flow, burn more calories above rest	Little to none, can repeat every day
In	65-85% HRmax	Improve aerobic function, improve cardiovascular health, increase metabolism, burn more calories	Minimal to moderate, can repeat often
Above	86-100% HRmax	Significant increase in metabolism, fat burning, anaerobic capacity, tolerance for high intensity work, improve lactate threshold, increase EPOC	High metabolic demand and neural fatigue, have to allow for adequate recovery

We highly recommend using a heart rate monitor to maximize results.