



## HARBOR PHYSICAL THERAPY SPRING NEWSLETTER

### Five Reasons to Ride Your Bike This Spring

In addition to saving money on the costs of other modes of transportation and being environmentally friendly, biking has many health benefits that make it a good option for getting around the neighborhood this spring. Here are a few reasons why:

1. Cardiovascular Health – Biking will help to elevate your heart rate and provide a great aerobic workout. This will promote heart and lung health and can lower your blood pressure and risk for heart disease.
2. Low Impact Exercise – Compared to other forms of exercise such as running, biking has a low impact on your joints.
3. Good for all Fitness Levels and Ages – Even though it is low impact, that doesn't mean it has to be easy! By adjusting speed, distance, and resistance, the exercise you get while biking can be as challenging as you want it to be. This makes it a good option for everyone, whether you are a high level athlete or are trying it for the first time.
4. Muscle Strength – Biking works the muscles in the legs as you are pushing the pedals, core muscles as you stay upright, and the muscles in your arms as you hold onto and steer the handlebars.
5. It's Fun! – Biking is a fun way to get around and explore. For safety, make sure you wear a helmet to protect your head. If you have any health issues and are unsure if biking is appropriate for you, check with your physical therapist or doctor first.

### Do you Know How Hard you are Working with Exercise?

Tracking your heart rate, allows you to determine how hard you are working with exercise. This will allow you to track your progress to set workout goals.

Find your maximum heart rate by using the equation  $220 - \text{your age}$ .

For moderate intensity exercise, aim for a heart rate of 64%-76% of your maximum heart rate.

For high intensity exercise, aim for a heart rate of 77%-93% of your maximum heart rate.

If you perform the same cardiovascular exercise at the same intensity and time frame, you will start to notice your heart rate will not get as high overtime. This is because your cardiovascular fitness is improving. You want to progress your exercise every approximate week to continue to challenge yourself and improve your cardiovascular fitness.

### What Makes Someone Flexible?

Flexibility comes from a combination of muscle elasticity, joint structure, tendon and ligament health, nervous system adaptation, and lifestyle factors. While some people may be naturally more flexible due to genetics, anyone can improve their flexibility with consistent practice. By incorporating regular stretching, staying active, and paying attention to recovery, you can increase your range of motion, reduce injury risk, and enhance your overall physical well-being.



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