The Components of Fitness

Fitness and Health contain similar properties but are really two different concepts. **Health** refers to the absence of disease and **Fitness** refers to the degree of body functioning and the ability of the body to handle physical demands. The more efficient the body functions, the higher the level of fitness. The higher the level of fitness, the greater the chance the body will be free of disease and maintain a healthy state. Fitness is a major part of a preventative medicine approach to health. The term we really want to use to describe our state of being is Wellness.

**The components of fitness include:**

**Flexibility** - The movement of a limb around a joint.
- Stretching all major muscles 3-5 times per week; Yoga; Tai Chi

**Muscular Strength** - The force produced from a maximal muscular contraction.

**Muscular Endurance** – The capability to reproduce sub-maximal force repetitively.
- Lifting weights 2-3 times per week (full body workouts require a day of recovery in between). Vary activities to improve strength (high weight, low reps) and endurance (moderate weight, high reps; push-ups/sit-ups/etc)

**Cardiovascular Endurance** - The ability of the body to sustain physical work.
- Cardiovascular activities 3-5 days per week that are continuous and repetitive for 30-60 minutes; calisthenics; jumping rope

**Nutrition** - The body’s blood chemistry and body composition.
- Eating a well balanced diet from all food groups; lowering high sugar intake, saturated/trans fats, and sodium

**Not a component of fitness but a dimension of wellness that that is pivotal in maintaining physical fitness...**

**Mental Health** - A proper balance of personality and the ability to handle stress.
- Engaging in the learning process; practicing stress management techniques; challenging yourself with everyday activities