How to Use a Heart Rate Monitor to Improve Fitness

Heart rate (HR) is measured by the amount of times the heart beats per minute. Since our heart is a muscle, regular exercise is essential for it to become stronger. Understanding heart rate is a key component to improving health and fitness. There are four types of HR:

1. **Resting heart rate (RHR)** is the rate that your heart beats per minute during periods of the day when you are most relaxed. The average RHR for men is between 60-90 beats per minute (bpm). The average RHR for women is between 70-90 bpm.
2. **Maximum heart rate (MHR)** is the highest amount of beats your heart has the potential to reach. It is difficult to accurately measure MHR.
3. **Training heart rate** is the rate that you maintain during aerobic exercises to improve fitness. To improve fitness through a heart rate monitor, it is important to exercise at a steady, rhythmic pace.
4. **Recovery heart rate** is the rate you should bring your heart to after a workout.

Factors that affect heart rate:

- **Air temperature:** an increase in temperature may increase HR.
- **Body position:** When you stand for the first 15 to 20 seconds, your HR may go up a little bit, but after a couple of minutes it should come down.
- **Emotions:** the feeling of stress, anxiety, "extraordinary happy or sad" can raise HR.
- **Body size:** If you're very obese, you might see a higher RHR than normal.
- **Medication:** Medication that block your adrenaline (beta blockers) tend to slow your HR, while too much thyroid medication or too high of a dosage will raise it.

How heart rate monitor works?

A heart rate monitor (HRM) is a wearable device that measures and displays the number of heart beats per minute. There are a few different ways to monitor HR, including chest straps, wristbands, headbands, headphones, and even on blood pressure monitors. Normal HR varies between person-to-person, so understanding your heart rate range is important to improve fitness and possibly discover developing health problems.

Chest band monitor

Wristband monitor

Benefits of measuring heart rate?

- Establish a heart rate zone or range within which your heart beats per minute

- Track the effectiveness of fitness routine

- Determine if you are pushing too hard or need to push harder in your fitness routine

Heart rate on blood pressure monitor

To learn more about our doctor's group, call Member Relations: (415) 590-7418

aamgdoctors.com
youtube.com/c/AAMGDoctors
facebook.com/DoctorsAAMG