COMPONENTS OF A WORKOUT

Any workout consists of three major components:

1. The Warm-Up

The purpose of the warm-up is to slowly elevate the heart rate to an aerobic level. For cardiovascular (cardiorespiratory) exercise, general recommendations are to perform 5-10 minutes of slow aerobic-type movements to ease the body into the work bout component. Some general physiological benefits associated with warm-up include the prevention of injury (warm muscles are more elastic and thus have a greater capability for range of motion); increased blood flow to stimulate fuel availability; increased ability of the cardiovascular system to respond to sudden, strenuous exercise; and perspiring, which better enables the body to cool itself during the bout.

2. The Work Bout

This component is where the majority of an individual’s work is performed. The work bout design is based on the “FIT” Principle, described in a separate section of this packet. An individual has control over the number of times per week he/she performs the bout (“frequency”), how hard he/she is working in a given bout (“intensity”), and how long each bout lasts (“time”).

3. The Warm-Down (or “Cool-Down”)

The purpose of the warm-down is to gradually decrease the heart rate from the higher, aerobics level. This is performed by continually moving the large muscles of the body after the work bout, but in such a way that the intensity gradually lessens. Some general physiological benefits associated with warm-down include: the decreased levels of waste products e.g. lactic acid in the blood, which in turn promotes a faster recovery from acute fatigue; the prevention of dizziness and delayed muscle fatigue which can occur from the blood pooling in the lower body when warm-down is not performed; and a decreased likelihood for cardiac irregularities.