

# UNCG-HOPE



University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
Helping Older People Exercise  
Department of Exercise & Sport Science

Physicians,

The UNCG-HOPE program provides a comprehensive fitness program to adults over 50 years old. The program pairs senior-level undergraduate students with older adults desiring to learn about and how to exercise safely. Classes focus on functional exercises designed to maintain older adults' independence and mobility. We take pride in teaching safe and effective exercises based on the individual's health and medical history. Although our program is ongoing, we strive to empower them to understand how to exercise in any fitness environment.

As a preventive measure, we carefully screen each applicant. We ask for your assistance in this procedure, as no one will be allowed to participate without first presenting evidence of his or her physician's approval. Detailed below are the main demands that will be placed on your patient. Please read through these and then complete the approval form if, in your medical judgment, this individual shows no contraindications to participation in a supervised exercise program. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nancy Stoudemire, Coordinator at (336) 334-3274 or via email at [nmstoude@uncg.edu](mailto:nmstoude@uncg.edu). Thank you for your help.

## PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTING

Before any exercising begins, participants will undergo a battery of resting and submaximal exercise tests. Whereas most are not strenuous, each does require a certain degree of exertion. These tests will be conducted prior to the first exercise session, at 12 weeks, and at 6-month to 1-year intervals thereafter.

These tests include:

1. Resting heart rate and blood pressure
2. Body composition analysis (height, weight, circumference measures, skinfold calipers, saggital diameter)
3. Chair Stand Test - (muscular endurance)  
Each participant will sit in a chair, which is placed against a wall to prevent slipping. The participant will cross arms over chest, then rise to a full stand and lower to a fully seated position as many times as possible in a 30-second time period. Participants will be allowed 1-2 practice stands to familiarize them with the test.
4. Arm Curl Test- (muscular endurance)  
Each participant will sit in an armless chair with his/her back straight and feet flat on the floor. The test will begin with the arm in a fully extended position holding a dumbbell (women will use a 5-lb. weight, men will use an 8-lb. weight). The participant will then flex the elbow completely, bringing the weight up to the shoulder, then lower the weight. After 1-2 practice movements with no weight, the participant will lift and lower the weight as many times as possible in a 30-second time period.
5. 2-minute step test - (aerobic endurance)  
Testers will determine the minimum knee-stepping height for each participant, which is at a level even with the midway point between the kneecap and the iliac crest. This level will be marked on the wall with a piece of tape. Participants will step in place as many times as possible in a 2-minute period. Testers will count the number of times the participant's right knee reaches the level marked on the wall. Running in place is not allowed.
6. Chair Sit & Reach Test - (flexibility)  
Participants will sit on the front edge of a folding chair with arms straight and shoulders flexed. With 1 leg bent and the other straight, the participant will bend at the hips and reach slowly towards the toes. Participants will be allowed to practice on both legs to see which they prefer to test.
7. Back Scratch Test - (upper body flexibility)  
Participants will stand and place the preferred hand over the same shoulder, palm down and fingers extended, reaching down the middle of the back as far as possible. Participants will move the other arm behind the waist

with palm facing outward in an attempt to touch the fingers of the other hand. Investigators will measure the distance between the fingers of the hands. Participants will be allowed to practice with arms in both positions.

8. 8-foot Up & Go - (agility/dynamic balance)

Participants will begin seated in a chair, and on command, will rise and walk briskly around a large cone placed 8 feet away, then return to sit in the chair.

All physical testing will be conducted in the Department of Exercise & Sport Science Exercise Laboratories, with an ACSM Exercise Specialist present.

Morning and Noon Classes:

- All exercise sessions will begin with a low-intensity warm-up of at least 5 minutes and will conclude with stretching, flexibility, and balance exercises. Each participant will be assigned a student personal trainer who will design and implement a program based on the participant's goals.
- Individual strength training programs will be designed with regard to health status, results of fitness testing, and participant goals. Minimum amounts of resistance will be used for the first 8 weeks of weight training. As the participants adapt to their programs, increases in workload will be suggested.
- Participants will perform at least 20 minutes of cardiorespiratory endurance exercise either prior to or after the strength training. Examples include walking, stationary cycling, and use of other cardiovascular exercise equipment. Intensity will be set at 40-85% of VO<sub>2</sub> reserve and/or heart rate reserve, according to current ACSM guidelines.

Water Class:

- Participants in the water exercise class will perform a low-intensity warm-up of at least 5 minutes and will conclude with a cool-down/flexibility segment. Classes consist of 20-30 minutes of aerobic exercise in the shallow end of a pool, followed by 20-30 minutes of resistance work and stretching. The water classes are taught by a certified water exercise instructor. A lifeguard will be present at all times.

Tai Chi Class:

- Participants in the tai chi class will perform 60 minutes of tai chi exercise taught by a certified instructor with years of training in tai chi.

All exercises will be done under the guidance of faculty in the Exercise and Sport Science Department at UNCG and will follow current ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine) guidelines. The exercise program is of low to moderate intensity and suitable to the needs of an older group.

If you believe that it is safe for your patient to participate in this program, please complete the attached form, sign, and return it to me at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please contact me at (336) 334-3274 or via e-mail at [nmstoude@uncg.edu](mailto:nmstoude@uncg.edu). Thank-you for taking the time to read this information and consider your patient for participation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Stoudemire, M.Ed.  
ACSM Exercise Specialist and Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist

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