Tips for the Novice

If you're gearing up for a little physical activity, here's some general advice to keep in mind before you start:

**Always warm up for at least 10 minutes before beginning any strenuous activity. It's a shock to your heart when you bound from a virtual standstill to a full-tilt gallop. Work your way up slowly.**

**Equally important is to cool down for at least 5 minutes after you have finished exercising. When your muscles have been pumping over and over, you stop, sit down or stand still, blood tends to pool in those muscles. In many cases you will feel faint—because not enough blood is leaving those muscles for your brain. So decrease activity gradually.**

Don't strain. Many exercise programs and after one week, when you have finished exercising. When your muscles have been pumping over and over, you stop, sit down or stand still, blood tends to pool in those muscles. In many cases you will feel faint—because not enough blood is leaving those muscles for your brain. So decrease activity gradually. You may have been running hard or playing tennis, keep walking and swinging your arms to move the blood around.

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**Please attention to pain. That's your body telling you something is wrong. Pain is an early warning signal and if you persist in the face of pain you are asking for more serious injuries. When it hurts, ease up.**

This program has endurance and flexibility training but no strength exercises. Perhaps we should add them. Last weekend while cleaning out the basement, a cast-on batshook pinned me to the wall and smashed my fingers. If it happens again we may add some pushups, or even lift weights, but for the moment we feel content lifting forks.

I never thought I would exercise so much. But it is fun. It relieves tension, boosts my energy, suppresses appetite (even when I'm hungry), and makes me feel good about myself. It's my proudest, my race, for my needs, and the only judge of whether it's successful or adequate is yours alone.

Here's hoping you enjoy your fitness as much as I do. Staff writer Don Ackman is a fitness enthusiast.