

Introduction on Physical Fitness

“Physical fitness” refers to the ability of the body to adapt to the external environment and engage in daily activities. A good level of physical fitness does not only facilitate us to carry out everyday activities, but also brings us extra vigor to enjoy leisure time so that our body can cope with unexpected environmental changes and pressure in daily life.



Physical fitness is conventionally categorised into “health-related physical fitness” and “sports-related physical fitness”. The former aims to promote physical and mental health, and enrich the quality of life, while the latter sets targets on improving sports performance for athletes to achieve outstanding results in competitions.

“Physical activity” refers to any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that involves energy consumption. Regular participation in structured and systematic physical activities, namely “sports training”, can effectively improve one’s level of physical fitness.

The idea of “functional fitness” has emerged and gained popularity since the beginning of this century, aiming to perform daily functions, while attaching importance to the interactions among various physical activities in everyday life and such factors as age, life roles and functions. “Functional training” refers to packages of training programmes designed to improve functions or performance in daily life.

Four Essential Elements of Physical Fitness

- **Cardiorespiratory endurance** refers to the ability of the cardiopulmonary and circulatory systems to supply oxygen and nutrients to muscles. With good cardiorespiratory endurance, one may do exercises for longer hours, showing a greater resistance to fatigue and delivering higher resilience and efficiency during work activities.



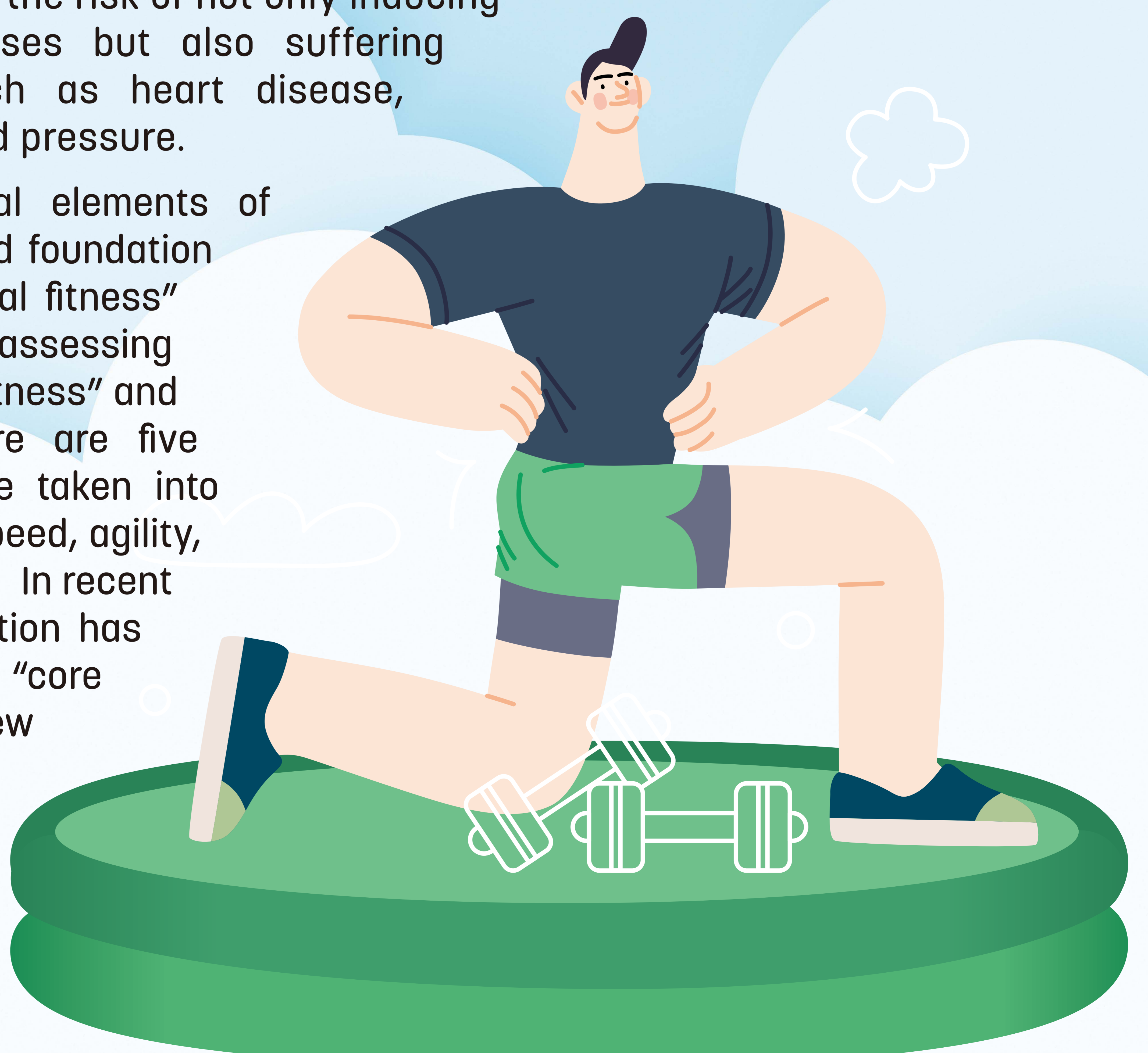
- **Muscular strength** refers to the maximum amount of force or strength produced by each muscular contraction, while muscular endurance is known as the ability of muscles either to continuously exert force or repeatedly contract under a specific load. Those with poor muscular strength and muscular endurance are susceptible to both fatigue and musculoskeletal pain.



- **Flexibility** refers to the maximum range within which human joints can stretch and move. Sound flexibility ensures effective performance of physical activities while minimising joint and muscle injuries during exercises.

- **Body composition** refers to the ratio of net body weight to body fat in relation to total body weight. A higher level of body fat, coupled with a depressed level of muscle mass, heighten the risk of not only inducing musculoskeletal diseases but also suffering chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

The above four essential elements of physical fitness lay a solid foundation for “health-related physical fitness” of human bodies. In assessing “sports-related physical fitness” and “functional fitness”, there are five additional elements to be taken into account, namely power, speed, agility, balance and co-ordination. In recent years, considerable attention has been given to the “core stability”, known as a new element of physical fitness.



Featured Physical Fitness Exercises

Multi-gym Fitness

"Multi-gym Fitness" is a physical fitness exercise performed in fitness rooms. Participants may maintain good health by improving their physical fitness, with the aid of such fitness equipment as cardio equipment, resistance equipment, barbells, dumbbells and stretching equipment.

Group Aerobic Training

Featured by meticulously designed fitness movements and elements of music and dancing, "Group Aerobic Training", a group physical fitness exercise, is well-received by energetic participants. With the passage of time, "Group Aerobic Training" is becoming much more than just aerobic dance. New group aerobic activities including kickboxing, trampolining and indoor cycling have gained popularity in recent years.

Body-mind Stretching Training

Based on the concept of "somatic fitness", "Body-mind Stretching Training" aims to train our flexibility and core stability. In addition to gaining understanding of various body parts and functions, participants may, through "Body-mind Stretching Training", enhance joint flexibility, heighten core stability, facilitate whole body blood circulation, as well as help relieve back pain. Fitness mats, small fitness balls and rectangular bath towels are common tools for "Body-mind Stretching Training".



Hydro Fitness

With a long historical tradition, hydro exercises have been extensively applied in hydrotherapy. "Hydro Fitness" is a well-known and hugely popular physical fitness exercise. Participants may perform stretching, resistance and aerobic exercises in water by making use of the physical properties of water including buoyancy, resistance, pressure and specific heat capacity to improve elements of physical

fitness such as joint range of motion, muscle strength, muscular endurance and cardiorespiratory endurance, thereby promoting cardiovascular health, metabolism, as well as physical and mental fitness.

As the physical fitness industry has thrived in recent years, participants may easily identify and perform suitable "functional training" to cater to their specific needs. The emerging types of "functional training" include:

Multiple Physical Fitness Exercises Training

Participants may perform various fitness movements with the aid of simple equipment including dumbbells, kettlebells, medicine balls and fitness mats for the training effect of multiple physical exercises, thereby improving muscle strength, core muscle stability, the body's balance and coordination, agility and cardiopulmonary function.



Stick Mobility Training

Office workers using mobile phones and sitting for a long time are very prone to stiff shoulders and neck and back pain. Based on the principle of leverage, Mobility Stick helps stretch our skeletal muscles and fascia tissues, in various directions and to a varying extent, to improve such health problems as round upper back and shoulders, and stiff lower back. "Stick Mobility Training" can enhance joint flexibility and stability, while building up core muscle strength.

ViPR

ViPR refers to vitality, performance and reconditioning. With the centrifugal force generated by the gravity and speed of the throwing motion, ViPR aims to train the whole body muscles and improve flexibility, while enhancing a sense of balance and toning our muscles.



Benefits of Physical Activity

Abundant scientific studies suggest that physical activity is indispensable to physical and mental health. Regular participation in physical activity can promote health, and its specific benefits are outlined as follows:

- Reducing risk of premature mortality
- Strengthening bones, muscles and joints, while reducing risk of osteoporosis
- Reducing risk of mortality from cardiovascular diseases
- Reducing risks of diabetes mellitus, hypertension and colorectal cancer
- Helping maintain body weight
- Reducing risk of fall injury among the elderly
- Relieving stress and enhancing mental health
- Providing chances to join physical activity in group, thereby broadening social networks and improving social health



Physical activity not only nurtures both physical literacy and fundamental movement skills among young children, but also enhances their physical strength, as well as confidence and interests in participating in sports, thereby developing a positive attitude towards life.

Points to Note for Sports Training

- Choose a suitable and safe place without obstacles for sports training.
- Do adequate warm-up and cool-down exercises before and after sports training.
- Maintain normal breathing and do not hold your breath during sports training.
- Set the suitable intensity, duration and frequency of physical activity based on your health and physical fitness conditions.
- Pay due attention to good posture and movements during sports training to prevent injuries arising from improper movements.
- In case of joint pains or discomfort in other parts of the body during sports training, you should stop training or reduce the amount of exercises at once for safety's sake.
- Participate in sports training according to your ability. Beginners should start from an easy level and do exercises at a slower pace, followed by build-ups in intensity, duration and frequency of sports training.
- If you feel unwell or develop negative reactions during or after sports training, you should stop training at once and seek medical advice or help from professionals.

