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# Keep fit! A Survival guide for accountants in a pushbutton world

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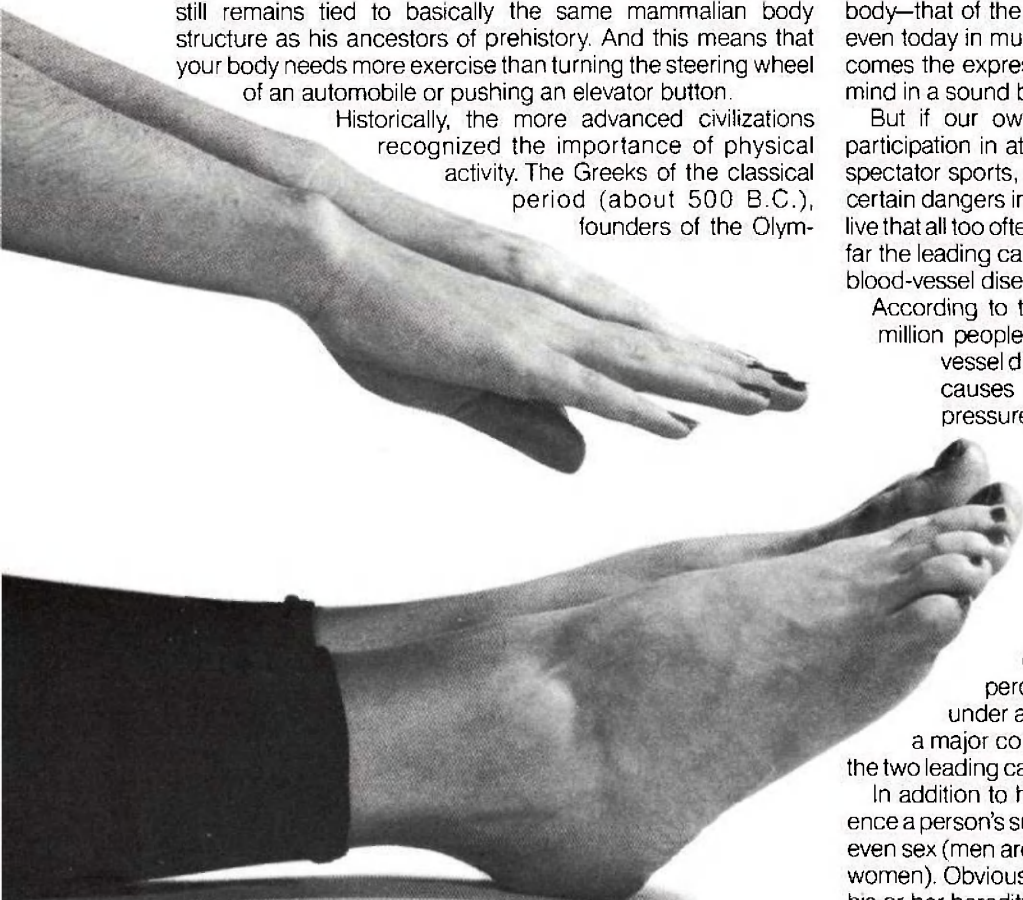
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# KEEP FIT!

## A Survival Guide for Accountants in a Pushbutton World



**Y**ou are an animal. Despite thousands of years of cultural development and scientific advancement, man still remains tied to basically the same mammalian body structure as his ancestors of prehistory. And this means that your body needs more exercise than turning the steering wheel of an automobile or pushing an elevator button.

Historically, the more advanced civilizations recognized the importance of physical activity. The Greeks of the classical period (about 500 B.C.), founders of the Olym-

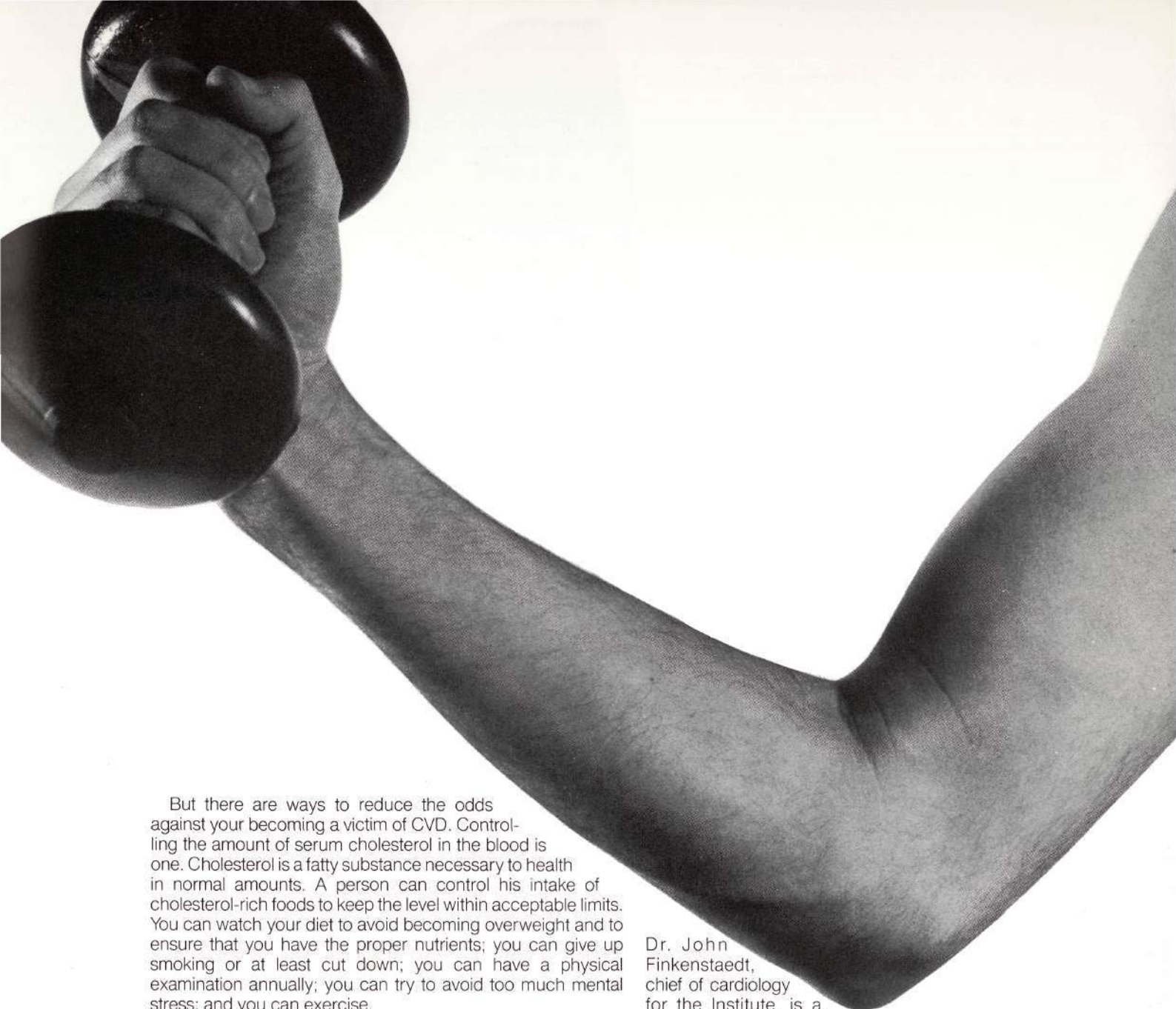
pic Games, put athletics on a par with philosophy and drama and the arts. The classical Greek concept of the ideal human body—that of the all-round athlete—is displayed and admired even today in museums around the world. And from the Latin comes the expression *mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body.

But if our own society has tended to underemphasize participation in athletics while glorifying the "star" player and spectator sports, its genius for statistics has made quite clear certain dangers inherent in the way we live. For it is the way we live that all too often causes the way we die—much too soon. By far the leading cause of death in the United States is heart and blood-vessel diseases.

According to the American Heart Association, some 1.06 million people in this country died from heart and blood vessel diseases in 1973—54 percent of deaths from all causes for that year. Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is one of the most common forms of cardiovascular disease (CVD). It is estimated that more than 23 million adults have high blood pressure, or one in every six. Despite the fact that hypertension is usually controllable, it is also one of the most dangerous diseases, since half the people with hypertension don't even know they have it and only 10 to 20 percent of those with high blood pressure have it under adequate control. Hypertension is considered a major contributing factor to heart attacks and strokes, the two leading causes of deaths from cardiovascular diseases.

In addition to hypertension, other variables appear to influence a person's susceptibility to CVD, such as heredity, age and even sex (men are more prone to cardiovascular diseases than women). Obviously there is nothing an individual can do about his or her heredity, age or sex.





But there are ways to reduce the odds against your becoming a victim of CVD. Controlling the amount of serum cholesterol in the blood is one. Cholesterol is a fatty substance necessary to health in normal amounts. A person can control his intake of cholesterol-rich foods to keep the level within acceptable limits. You can watch your diet to avoid becoming overweight and to ensure that you have the proper nutrients; you can give up smoking or at least cut down; you can have a physical examination annually; you can try to avoid too much mental stress; and you can exercise.

Why exercise? From a medical standpoint, probably the major benefit of a regular exercise program is its effect on the cardiovascular system. The heart muscle is strengthened and does not work as hard when at rest—it simply beats more slowly. Blood pressure usually is lower in a person who exercises properly and regularly. Some medical authorities also believe that exercise assists in keeping the circulatory system healthy by retarding degeneration of the arteries. Arterial deterioration is a condition often leading to both heart attacks and strokes.

And there are other benefits. Exercise enhances the body's ability to metabolize glucose and fatty acids, in effect permitting more efficient utilization of energy sources. Exercise decreases your adrenalin response to emotional stress, putting less of a burden on your nervous and circulatory systems. Exercise decreases the clotting time of your blood, making it less likely that an individual will develop a dangerous or even potentially deadly blood clot.

A large number of the partners and managers at Executive Office and the New York practice office take their regular physical examinations at the medical center and headquarters facility of the Life Extension Institute, one of two major medical services used by the Firm in New York City. LEI is an organization providing a variety of medical services, but it is perhaps best known for the thoroughness of its health examinations.

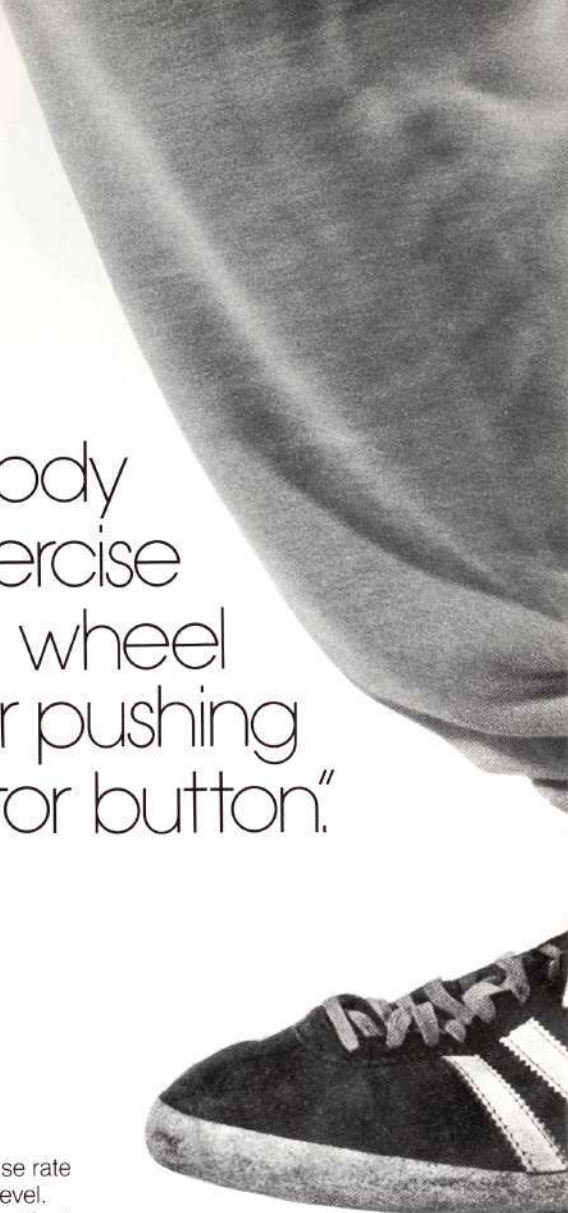
Dr. John Finkenstaedt, chief of cardiology for the Institute, is a strong proponent of a vigorous and regular exercise program.

About twenty years ago Dr. Finkenstaedt was doing biochemical research at Yale University. Spending eighteen to twenty hours a day at his work did not give him much time for exercise. His blood pressure rose to 160 over 90 and his pulse rate at rest was 85. A systolic pressure (blood pressure at the instant the heart contracts) of 120 or lower is considered ideal, and a "normal" pulse rate would be in the vicinity of 60 to 70 beats per minute. Now in his mid-fifties, Dr. Finkenstaedt has a blood pressure of 100 over 60 and a pulse rate at rest of about 50. How did he do it? By bicycling. The cardiologist exercises on a stationary bicycle during the week in his New York City apartment. Weekends are spent in Connecticut, where he rides a racing bike 100 miles a day—averaging 25 miles per hour.

Dr. Finkenstaedt does not insist that everyone ride a bicycle. "You should enjoy exercising," he states. But he does set certain standards for whatever program a person does adopt:

- The exercise program should be done at least three or four times a week. You really don't get maximum benefits with fewer sessions.
- Each exercise session should last a minimum of thirty minutes.
- Always start exercising with at least five minutes of warmup activity.





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➤→ Always include a cooling down period of at least five minutes at the end of your exercising. Or, more simply, don't fall into an armchair immediately after strenuous exercising.

➤→ Never take a hot shower right after strenuous exercising. It can lower your blood pressure so precipitously that it can trigger a heart attack. Give yourself five or ten minutes to cool off first.

➤→ If you've stopped exercising for a period—even a week—give yourself some time to work back up to your earlier level of exertion when you resume exercising.

Do you need a medical examination before starting an exercise program? Absolutely, says Dr. Finkenstaedt. Certainly anyone over the age of thirty who has never really exercised should have a complete physical examination before starting a strenuous exercise program.

Most athletic clubs and gyms require members to take a physical before they can use the club's facilities. E. Scott Tawes, a manager with our Washington office, has been a member of a weight-lifting club for the past seven years. Scott, who works out about three times a week for sixty to ninety minutes after leaving the office, finds the exercise “a great way to relieve tension.” Scott's club requires a physical before you can begin lifting weights. “One prospective member discovered he had a heart condition as a result of the physical required by the club. He comes in regularly now to exercise—after open-heart surgery to correct his condition—on his doctor's advice,” he said. Does Scott work up a hearty appetite at the gym? “I don't have too much trouble with my weight,” he noted. “My stomach simply isn't ready for a heavy meal after I've done several hundred sit-ups during a workout.”

Three key points must be taken into consideration by anyone desiring to start an exercise program:

1. The exercise must be strenuous enough to bring an

individual's pulse rate up to a target level.

2. It should be the type of exercise a person likes to do.

3. It must be the type of exercise that can be done regularly without disrupting an established pattern of life.

On the first point, many doctors emphasize that an individual looking for an improvement in physical fitness must train regularly at a level that is at least 70 percent of his maximal heart rate, with peaks to 85 percent. These heart rates are based on a “decade chart,” a listing of maximal heart rates in ten-year increments. According to the chart, for example, a healthy man of thirty-five should have an average maximal heart rate of 185. “Target” heart rate for that person during each thirty to forty-five-minute training period should average 70 percent of the maximum, or 130 beats per minute, with peaks at 85 percent of the maximum, or 157 beats per minute. At forty-five years of age, the average maximal rate should be 175 beats per minute, the 70-percent average rate would be 123 beats and the 85-percent peak rate would be 149 beats per minute.

In a pamphlet on fitness written for Raleigh Industries of America, Inc., the bicycle manufacturer, Dr. Finkenstaedt wrote: “Each [exercise] session should begin with a warmup period of three to five minutes; then progress to harder exercise for three to five-minute periods, alternated with two to four minutes at a lower level; and finally three to five minutes of cooling down.” Remember, it's not just a question of exercising regularly for the proper amount of time. You won't achieve maximum benefits unless the exercise gets your heart pumping at the desired rate.

On the second point, try to become involved in an exercise you enjoy. Bicycling is one of the easiest examples to cite, since it can be practiced even in the winter, as long as the streets or roads are clear. Swimming is an excellent form of exercise if a





pool is nearby. Many people find that they soon begin enjoying even calisthenics at a gym or at home simply because of the feeling of well-being and physical fitness it gives them.

Finally, regular exercise should become—to the maximum extent possible—a habit. Regular workouts in a gym might be practical for some, while for others it could prove inconvenient. The latter group, however, can substitute exercise at home in the morning or evening, bicycling, jogging or calisthenics. There has been a growing trend in recent years toward lunchtime exercising. Many large corporations, in fact, have provided gyms, jogging tracks and other exercise facilities for their people in their corporate headquarters or other locations.

H&S people themselves provide good examples of the variety of exercise programs that will not conflict with even the most demanding schedules. Ronald M. Burgener, a manager with the Continuing Education Department at Executive Office, spends fifteen to twenty minutes in the evening doing a series of calisthenics with his wife Linda and their two young children, Tonja, five, and Rhett, four. Ron and his family do a series of ten different exercises designed to strengthen virtually all areas of the body. Although the program was developed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints primarily to keep the Mormon Church's missionaries in top physical condition, it can be beneficial to anyone.

The Burgener family has been doing the exercises regularly about three times a week since the early part of the year. The workouts are usually held in the evening, just before the children's bedtime. "It's gotten to be a game with them," Ron said, "but they do take pride in being able to do the exercises." In addition, Ron, who lives in New Jersey, walks about a mile and a half a day from his home to the train and then from the New York

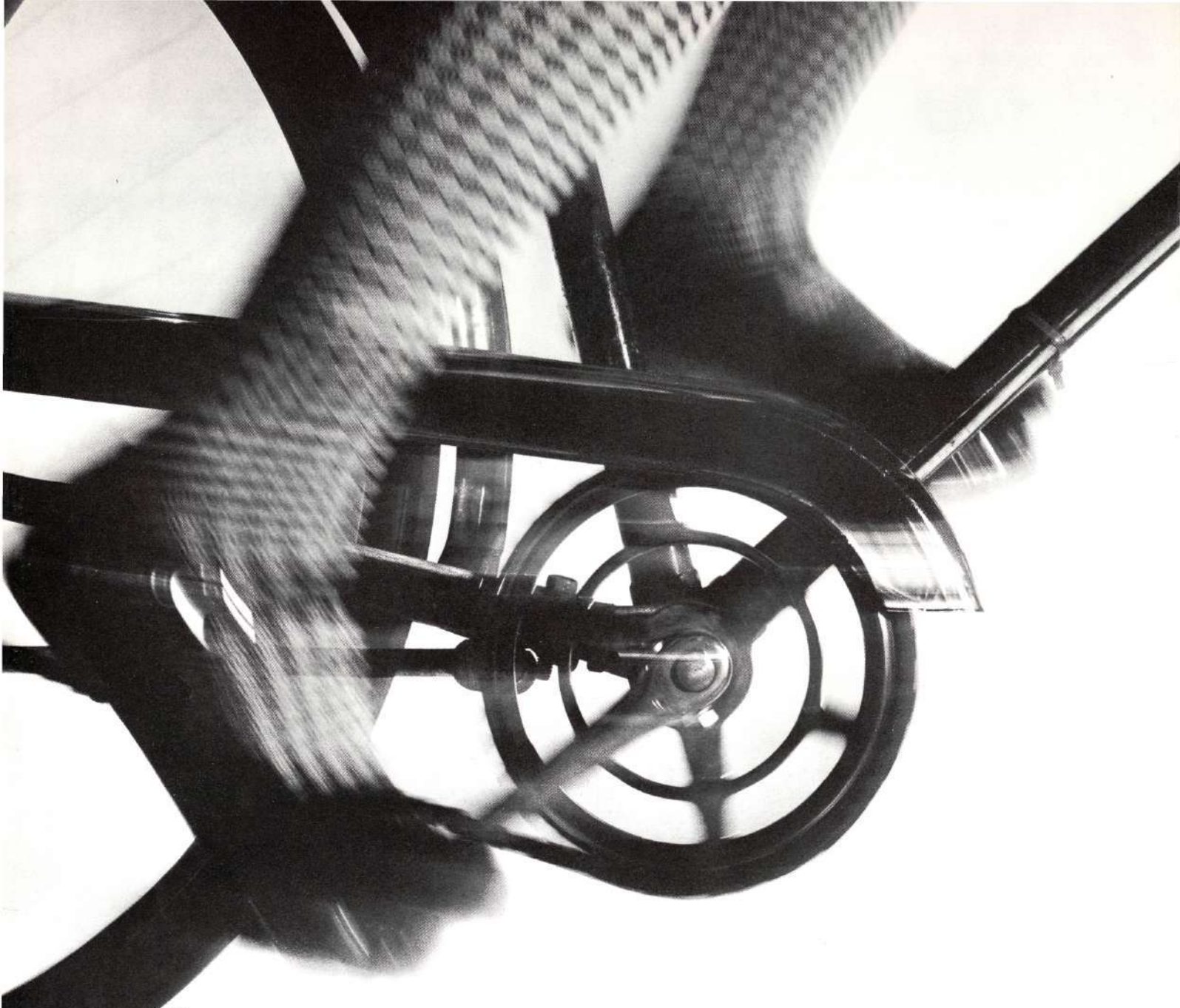
City terminal to Executive Office. Reversing the trip in the evening gives him about three miles of walking a day.

San Francisco manager Michael D. Baer is an advocate of running, a form of exercise made most popular by the Aerobics Center in Dallas headed by Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper, author of several popular books on aerobics exercise. Mike and his wife Carol run about a mile and a half three or four times a week in the evening before dinner. "It definitely does cut down on our appetites," Mike said, noting that he and his wife only need about eleven or twelve minutes to cover the prescribed distance at a nearby high school track.

For Los Angeles partner Don A. Nelson the answer was found in an exercise program sponsored by a local social club. According to Don, the program is designed to improve a person's cardiovascular system and consists mostly of stretching exercises coupled with more rigorous activities intended to maintain an increased target heartbeat rate for about twenty minutes. The latter exercises include things like jogging, swimming and bicycle riding. The sessions are given three times a week and last for about one hour. Don's wife Roslyn joined him in the program several months after he started. One of the benefits of the program, he said, was a weight loss of fifteen pounds.

Like Dr. Finkenstaedt, Dena Dannenberg loves the two-wheeler. Dena, librarian at our Philadelphia office, does not have to report to the office until noon. For the past fifteen years Dena has spent between fifty and sixty minutes every morning—barring inclement weather—pedaling some eleven miles up and down the hills in her neighborhood. She is joined on weekend rides by her husband. Dena warms up for the bike with a number of dance exercises (she takes a class in ballet and modern dance once a week) similar to yoga when she gets up in the morning.





Steve Lange had a not uncommon problem. A staff accountant with our Orange County office, Steve had been very active in such sports as handball, softball and racquetball while in college. After graduating, he just didn't seem to have the time to get as much exercise as he thought he should have. He tried running a mile a day, but even there time proved a problem. Finally, several years ago, Steve began doing the Royal Canadian Air Force program of calisthenics. He spends about fifteen minutes doing the five basic exercises in the program and tries to do them every morning when he first gets up.

Charles Goldsmith, H&S management education director based in Executive Office, lives in a Manhattan apartment and has developed a solid exercise program which he has practiced for about three years. His exercises include a series of calisthenics, such as sit-ups, push-ups and leg raises, and jogging, either in place or around the apartment. In addition, Charlie has installed a chinning bar in a doorway and uses a Bullworker, a compact device designed to exercise and strengthen most muscles of the body. He splits up his exercising into morning and evening sessions, spending a total of about thirty minutes a day on these activities. When the weather is good, he enjoys bicycle riding on weekends, usually riding anywhere from twelve to twenty miles a day.

But even if you don't want to set up a formal program, there are ways to fit brief but effective periods of exercise into the

normal pattern of daily activities.

➡ If you take public transportation to the office, can you get off before your usual stop and walk the rest of the way? Walking at a brisk pace is excellent for your health.

➡ If you work in an office building, is it possible to get off the elevator two or three floors below yours and walk up the rest of the way? If you live in an apartment building, you may be able to practice the same form of stair-climbing exercise.

➡ Do you tend to sit around after a solid lunch? Try eating less and going out for a brisk walk after lunch. It's not only good exercise but will make you feel a lot less logy in the afternoon.

➡ Do you enjoy watching television in the evening? It's surprisingly easy to spend half an hour doing stretching exercises, calisthenics and more vigorous exercises while you watch your favorite program. Or for between \$50 and \$90 you can buy a stationary bicycle exerciser and simply sit pedaling away briskly in front of the TV or while listening to music.

Is it worth the time and trouble? Almost everyone queried for this report said they definitely felt better when they exercised regularly—and they felt the difference when they had to stop exercising for any length of time. Most of us take far better care of our cars than we do of our bodies. You can always replace a car that breaks down. But you only have one body, and it has to last a lifetime. Exactly how long that lifetime lasts is, to a considerable degree, up to you. ○