

# The Formula for Success

## *Three Guiding Principles*

In addition to the FITT Formula, your fitness plan should take into account the principles of progression, specificity and overload.

The **principle of progression** states that to improve your fitness, you need to gradually increase how hard, how long and/or how many times you do an exercise. Every week or two in your plan, try to use the principle of progression to continually challenge yourself to do harder, longer workouts.

The **principle of specificity** states that exercise is specific. If you want to improve your cardiovascular fitness, you need to do exercises that make your heart beat faster. Stretching will not help build cardiovascular fitness or muscle strength, but it will improve your flexibility. Likewise, cardiovascular exercises will not improve your flexibility.

The **principle of overload** states that in order to improve your fitness you must continue to challenge your muscles. In order to do this you want to increase the intensity, frequency or time. Do this gradually to prevent injury.



\*Remember: it generally takes six to eight weeks for fitness improvement to take place. Gradually modify your workouts over the next few weeks instead of increasing the difficulty overnight. For example, don't try to go from running 10 minutes to running 30 minutes overnight. Add a few minutes each week instead.