

# YOUR EXERCISE PERSONALITY QUIZ

by Michelle May, MD

OH Member Heather Hartter had RNY Surgery on 03/05/2008, and has lost 200 lbs.  
Profile: [www.obesityhelp.com/member/lesbianvoice/](http://www.obesityhelp.com/member/lesbianvoice/)



We've all decided at one time or another that we needed to start an exercise program. Initially we feel enthusiastic – we join a gym, drag out a stationary bike or buy new walking shoes. But how often do you abandon your program because it gets boring, time-consuming or just doesn't feel right?

Sometimes the real problem underlying the excuses is that we simply haven't chosen the right activity for our personality so it seems awkward and uncomfortable. Frankly, if it's not fun and rewarding, we won't keep it up.

To identify your unique exercise personality traits, circle the answers below that best describe you. This information will help you decide what types of physical activity you're most likely to enjoy and stick with!

## Why?

1. My main motivation for exercising is to:

- a. look better
- b. feel better
- c. be healthier
- d. lose weight
- e. other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. I am motivated by rewards like:

- a. visual graphs and numbers
- b. money or prizes
- c. intangibles, i.e. more energy or better sleep

Write your fitness goals using positive, powerful, measurable terms to keep yourself focused and inspired. Be specific about the results you want and the rewards you'll get when you achieve your goals.

**How?**

3. Time for exercise:
  - a. is not a problem
  - b. is a challenge but can be arranged when I make it a priority
  - c. is last on my list
4. I'd exercise more if it wasn't for:
  - a. the time it takes to get to the gym
  - b. family commitments
  - c. work
  - d. the cost of a gym or equipment
5. I stay on track best when:
  - a. I set a goal to work out most days of the week but stay flexible about when
  - b. I write my workout schedule in my appointment calendar
  - c. I know someone else is expecting me to be there
6. When I decide to do something:
  - a. I have a hard time getting started
  - b. I stick with it until it gets hard
  - c. I make it happen no matter what

Making the commitment to invest your time, money and energy in becoming more active is never easy. When you anticipate possible challenges, you can plan to work around them. For example, if you're concerned about taking time away from your family you could involve them in your workouts, exercise during your workday, or decide that the time is worth it because you're healthier and less stressed.

**When?**

7. I feel most energetic and alert in the:
  - a. morning
  - b. afternoon
  - c. evening
8. In the past, exercise has worked best:
  - a. when I do it early in the day before other things get in my way
  - b. when I do it at work during my breaks or lunch hour
  - c. when I stop in at the gym on my way home so I don't have to go out again
  - d. when I do it after dinner to unwind or when I have help with the kids

Plan your workouts during your peak energy times and times that are most convenient.

**Where?**

9. I need:
  - a. to exercise at my own pace
  - b. the support of a friend or partner
  - c. the accountability of a class or lesson
  - d. to be pushed by a trainer or teacher
10. I love to be:
  - a. at home
  - b. outdoors
  - c. in an exercise environment

If you enjoy being at home or alone, use videos, a home gym, or try activities like walking or biking. If you enjoy being with another person, invite someone to walk, hike, play tennis or go to the gym with you. If you socialize while you exercise, consider joining a sports team, signing up for a class at church or work. If you're more of an outdoors-type, you'll enjoy walking, hiking, bike riding or sports. If you need a designated exercise space join a gym or studio. Hire a personal trainer (at home or the gym) for guidance or accountability.

**What?**

11. I really like:
  - a. technical gadgets and toys
  - b. a real physical workout so I don't have to think about anything
  - c. creative or artistic expression
12. When it comes to competition,
  - a. it makes me feel stressed
  - b. I like to challenge myself
  - c. a little is healthy and fun
  - d. I am very competitive

There are so many different forms of physical activity that the challenge is finding several that suit your preferences. For example, if you're a gadget guru, you might like a fancy pedometer, computer programs, or gyms equipped with high-tech monitors on all the machines. If you enjoy artistic expression, try yoga or dance. If you thrive on competition, look for team sports and competitive races, or challenge competitive friends to play racquetball or tennis. If you enjoy challenging yourself, set goals and track your progress. If you don't like competition, but like to be with others, look for classes and gyms with a supportive environment.



**Michelle May, MD** is a recovered yoyo dieter and the award-winning author of *Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat: How to Break Your Eat-Repent-Repeat Cycle*. Find additional articles and resources at <http://AmlHungry.com>.