“Conversation Pace”

Walking and running should feel good. Your effort, in general, should be comfortable. We are often asked, “What's comfortable supposed to feel like?” or “How do you define comfortable?”

Comfortable means being able to talk in complete sentences while exercising. Using the “talk test,” you're doing fine if you can “comfortably” carry on a conversation. If you can't “comfortably” talk in complete sentences while you are exercising, you're trying too hard. Slow down and get back to “Conversation Pace.”

“Conversation Pace” doesn't mean gasping for air every few words or forcing the end of the sentence, wishing the session were over. It means talking so comfortably that you are totally involved in the conversation and you don't even notice you are exercising. The session is practically over before you realize it, and you think, “Wow, that was so easy!”

When you are comfortable, your fitness level improves. The more comfortable you are, the more you can do, and the fitter you get. Here's how it works… Your heart and lungs get used to processing more and more blood and oxygen every time you go out. Your cardiovascular system responds by becoming more efficient. You respond by being more comfortable doing more work.

Most beginners and many experienced people have a tendency to ”over-train” when exercising. They think they're able to talk but it's with way too much effort. They fail the “talk test.” They aren't getting enough oxygen and the cumulative effect of this leads to over-training. Day in and day out they eventually get anaerobic and they aren't aware of it. This is why staying comfortable is so important.

Staying comfortable and exercising at “Conversation Pace” is also more fun. You get to know the people you are working out with and time just seems to fly by. When it's fun you're more likely to stick with it. What a simple concept this is. Regardless of the actual pace that you are walking or running at, if you simply carry on a conversation, you know you are going at the right pace.