



Cornell University Wellness Program

Establishing An Informal Exercise Area In Your Building

Informal Exercise Area Defined:

There are five formal fitness centers located on Cornell's main campus. These include centers in Helen Newman Hall, Teagle Up, Teagle Down, Appel and Noyes. These fitness centers are managed by the Cornell Fitness Centers (CFC). They are overseen by the CFC staff and are monitored by trained student staff during all open hours of operation. These fitness centers are open to all students, staff, retirees, spouses and partners.

The Cornell University Wellness Program has received a considerable amount of feedback from staff that due to their job requirements and the physical location of their workplace, it is not feasible for them to take time to travel to a fitness center (15 minutes), participate in a group exercise class or exercise in a fitness center (60 minutes), shower and change (20 minutes), and travel back to work (15 minutes).

Because of this time constraint, staff are wanting exercise options in their buildings. Many have already brought in exercise and fitness equipment such as exercise DVD's, dumbbells, exercise tubing, and are using these items in their own office space or in larger open rooms such as break rooms. In an effort to help support staff's individual pursuits of health and well-being while concurrently trying to reduce the risk of personal injury/illness that is inherent when exercising, the Cornell Wellness staff in collaboration with the Department of Risk Management has developed this document that includes information on establishing informal exercise areas in Cornell's buildings and office spaces.

An informal exercise area is defined as an office space or open area where staff may use exercise equipment that is not managed by the Cornell Fitness Centers and has no trained staff monitoring the area. This document includes: 1) Guidelines 2) Questions 3) Level of Risk and 4) Recommendations, to provide guidance for groups or individuals who are wanting to establish informal exercise areas.

Guidelines:

- The Cornell University Wellness Program must be consulted prior to establishing an informal exercise area on Cornell University owned or leased property. Contact Cornell Wellness by email wellness@cornell.edu or call (607) 255-3886.
- A single Point of Contact (POC) person, who resides in the building where the informal exercise area will be located, needs to be designated.
- The POC must review the Guidelines, Questions, and Recommendations provided in this document. The Questions section must be completed, and a copy must be sent to Cornell Wellness at 305 Helen Newman Hall or emailed to wellness@cornell.edu
- Cornell Wellness staff will provide a Welcome Packet to the POC that includes laminated posters and forms that need to be posted/displayed by the POC in a highly visible area in the informal exercise area.
 - Welcome Packet to POC includes:
 - Welcome statement

- Laminated Posters
 - Cornell Wellness site reviewed poster w/date of review (includes info on how to schedule a fitness consult and/or web links for sample safe exercise routines). Includes prominent message that this is an unmonitored informal exercise area
 - [PAR-Q poster](#). The PAR-Q is a readiness for activity questionnaire
 - Rate of Perceived Exertion and Target Heart Rate posters
 - When to stop exercising poster
 - [Accident/Injury Report system poster w/website](#)
 - Sign-in/Sign-out sheet w/times
 - Emergency response system policies & procedures plan poster (include location of closest AED/First Aid kit, fire escape route, emergency phone, fire extinguisher) (needed? If yes, then POC provides)
 - Facility max occupancy number (needed? If yes, then POC provides)
 - Equipment cleaning guidelines (needed?)
 - OSHA poster (bloodborne pathogens, cleaning products) (needed?)
 - ADA poster (signage that indicates access points for people with physical challenges as well as certain signage that can be viewed by some individuals who have visual impairments) (needed?)
- Forms
 - [Flexible work/wellness agreement form](#) (used if employee wants to exercise on work time)
- Cornell Wellness staff must perform a walk-through of the area once set-up is complete and at least once per year to visually see if guidelines/recommendations are still being followed and required posters/forms are still posted/displayed. Cornell Wellness reserves the right to shut down the informal exercise area at any time.

Questions:

To be filled out by POC with assistance from Cornell Wellness staff:

- What is the purpose of this informal workout area?
- What equipment is desired?
- Who will purchase/provide equipment?
- What is the process for purchasing/providing equipment/equipment removal?
- What space will be used? Will this space be used for other purposes as well?
- Will the structure of the space support the weight of the equipment?
- Is the type of flooring appropriate (impact resistance & slip resistance) for intended use?
- What is the security/safety of the space?
 - Sign-in/sign-out sheet w/ time-in and time-out (minimum requirement)
 - Personal cell phone (minimum requirement)
 - Locked door w/ key access?
 - Card access? (recommended for limiting thefts and limiting use by non-Cornell affiliated persons)
 - Video monitored?
 - First Aid box?
 - AED present or poster w/location?
 - Emergency phone hard line?
- What are desired open hours of area?

- Will sound equipment be used? What type of sound system? Must be kept at a volume low enough to not disturb surrounding office spaces.
- Is the lighting sufficient?
- Is airflow sufficient? Air temp during all seasons? Humidity during all seasons?
- Are walls free from protrusions?
- Are floor elevation changes marked appropriately to minimize tripping/falls?
- Will there be enough space for participants? Is there a maximum room capacity?
- Will there be enough space for equipment & space between equipment?
- Who is responsible for the site/equipment maintenance/equipment removal?
 - Building manager or Unit/department person (need designated single point of contact)
 - Who cleans equipment? What is used to clean it? How often is it cleaned?
- Release time vs flex time vs non-work time considerations (supervisors signature needed if exercising on work time – use this [flexible work/wellness agreement form](#))
- What happens if POC leaves position, retires, etc. Who assumes responsibilities?

Level of Risk:

Level of injury risk and cardiovascular event risk by equipment desired in the informal exercise area:

Lower Risk

Strength Equipment

- Exercise band
- Exercise tubing
- Medicine balls (2-10 pounds)
- Dumbbells (2-10 pounds)
- Kettle bells (2-10 pounds)

Cardio equipment

- Low – impact cardio DVD (ex. walking)
- Low – impact flexibility DVD
- Low – impact strength training DVD (ex. abs & core)

Flexibility equipment

- Pilates or Yoga straps, blocks, blankets, pillows
- Foam roller
- Exercise mat

Moderate Risk

Strength Equipment

- Large exercise ball
- Medicine balls (11-50 pounds)
- Dumbbells (11-50 pounds)
- Kettle bells (11-50 pounds)

Higher Risk

Strength Equipment

- Dumbbells (51+ pounds)*
- Kettle bells (51 + pounds)*
- Squat racks and Olympic bars*
- Plate-loaded bars of any kind*
- Use of Plyometric apparatus (boxes, cones, benches, rope ladders)*
- Cross-Fit type apparatus (rings, sandbags, tires)*

- Variable resistance/selectorized resistance all-in-one tower*
- Variable resistance/selectorized resistance single exercise pieces of equipment (ex. leg press)*
- Stationary bicycle (upright or recumbent)*
- Elliptical*
- Rower*
- Treadmill*
- Jump rope*
- High – impact cardio DVD (ex. Tae Bo)*
- High – impact strength training DVD (ex. P90X)*

Recommendations:

For equipment categorized as Lower Risk, minimum recommendations would include:

- “Guidelines” are adhered to including laminated posters and forms are posted/displayed
- All “Questions” are answered in writing
 - With respect to answering the question “What is the security/safety of the space”? A minimum required response includes all items below:
 - Sign-in/sign-out sheet w/ time-in and time-out
 - Personal cell phone for emergencies
 - The time used by individual for exercising needs to be designated as Release time, Flex time or non-work time. Supervisors signature needed if using flex/release time and exercising on work time – use this form [flexible work/wellness agreement form](#))

For equipment categorized as Moderate Risk and Higher Risk, the POC needs to contact Cornell Wellness. Cornell Wellness will collaborate with the department of Risk Management to provide recommendations and guidelines specific to the informal exercise area and the equipment desired in that area.