

## **Suggested Physical Conditioning Preparation**

High Adventure activities require strength and endurance. Being in sound physical condition is the single most important aspect for participants to maximize their high adventure experience. The better physical condition one is in, the more likely he or she is to learn and perform well and have an enjoyable experience. We have often heard that participants in our high adventure trips underestimated the fitness level necessary to fully enjoy the trip. Additionally, inadequate fitness condition will affect the safety, atmosphere, pace and overall enjoyment of the trip for all participants. Physical conditioning should be approached from two fronts:

### **Cardiovascular conditioning**

Traditionally improved by activity sustained for at least 45-60 minutes. Suggested activities include running, bicycling, swimming, stepping, etc.

### **Strength training**

Traditionally improved by training with free weights or Nautilus machines.

### **Specific program recommendations include:**

#### **Canoeing**

Paddle a canoe containing a load of at least 100 pounds in addition to the other passenger. Work on paddling at a steady, not necessarily fast, pace for 15, then 30, then 45 minutes. Your goal is to be able to paddle for an hour at a consistent pace without stopping to rest. Steering a canoe is also part of conditioning oneself for the canoe trek program. The "J" stroke and "sweep" stroke should be mastered before going on canoe trek. Your goal is to be able to paddle for an hour at a canoe trek. Paddling is the best training for paddling.

#### **Backpacking**

Hike trails with varying terrain, carrying your pack. Use light loads (20 pounds) and work up to loads of 50 – 55 pounds. Your goal should be to be able to carry a load of 1/3 of your body weight for an hour at a time without stopping. If you train indoors, be sure to work up to training with your pack and hiking boots. You will be ascending and descending many small mountains on your trip. Make a point to walk at least a mile (with or without pack) every day.

#### **Rock Climbing**

In preparation for rock climbing, start with 25 squats per day and work up to 50 by trip time. Start with biceps curls without weight. Work up to 10 pounds in each hand by using milk cartons with water in them if you do not have access to free weights. Do 20 curls each day for 30 days prior to your trip, working up to 10 pounds in each hand.

Push-ups are useful if performed correctly. Start with 5 push-ups, working up to 20 at a time. Pull-ups help in tough spots where you can't use your legs. Be sure to do them in an overhand position and try to put as little of your hand over the surface as possible. Try them one-handed when you get a little better. Start with 4 and work up to 10 per workout.

Stretching before any exercise is recommended to prevent injury and improve flexibility and balance. Yoga is a recommended practice for rock climbing.