

(wellness works!)

# Resistance Bands

## Strength Training for Busy People



By Dr. Kim, President & Chief Exercise Officer Exercise Bytes Inc.

**NO TIME OR** too tired to go the gym early morning or at the end of your workday? No room to pack your workout clothing for travels? The good news is that you don't have to go to the gym to reap some of the benefits of strength training. Grab a resistance band and let's begin!

Strength training is an important part of a comprehensive exercise program. The American College of Sports medicine guidelines are to do 2-3 days per week of muscle strengthening and stretching of all

major muscle groups. Resistance band training is simple. As the elastic band is stretched, the resistance increases. The more the band is stretched, the greater the resistance. There are different color bands representing increasing thicknesses and resistances. Each resistance band manufacturer has a different color scale. The goal is progress up the color spectrum to improve strength. Moving from one color to the next increases the resistance by 20-30

percent when the bands are stretched to twice their resting length.

Bands can also be used for flexibility and balance exercises, injury rehabilitation, and sport-specific training (e.g., golf or tennis swing). Handles can be added to the bands for people with arthritis or those who experience hand discomfort when wrapping the band around the hands to increase resistance. Latex-free bands are available for people with latex allergies.

### Strength Training Tips

- Start with lighter resistance to emphasize proper form and movements before progressing to a band that feels moderately challenging.
- Perform movements slowly and with control (3 seconds up; 3 seconds down), always pulling the band away from the face.
- Remember to breathe (exhale when exerting effort).
- Change the length of the band; the shorter band is harder and a longer band is easier.
- Never elongate the band to more than three times its resting length.
- Start with one set of 8 repetitions and gradually increase the repetitions (1x10, 1x12), sets (2x8, 2x10, 2x12) and resistance (band color).
- Progress to the next color band (i.e. higher resistance) when you are able to easily complete 3 sets of 10-15 repetitions.

Resistance bands are easily packed, low cost and versatile. Using bands for strength training can change the way you think about exercise – by making it easy to integrate basic fitness into the busy work day and when traveling. ■

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**SHOULDER RAISES**

Anchor foot and hand at ends of band. Start with arms at sides. With palm facing downward raise arm straight in front to shoulder height. Pause. Lower to starting position. Repeat 10 times. Switch foot and arm.



**BICEPS CURLS**

Anchor one foot & hand at ends of band. Wrap band around hand. With palms up & elbow close to side, bend elbow lifting hand upward toward shoulder. Pause. Lower forearm to side of body. Repeat 10 times. Switch arms.



**TRICEPS EXTENSION**

Anchor band under back foot. Wrap band around hand & extend arm straight back with palm facing upward. Hinge your body forward & keep back straight. Bend & extend arms at elbow. Repeat 10 times. Switch arms.



**UPRIGHT ROW**

Stand with both feet in middle of band. Keeping back straight, pull band upward by bending elbows. Pause. Slowly lower arms to sides. Repeat 10 times.



**CHEST PRESS**

Place band around middle back. With elbows bent & palms facing downward near chest, wrap band around both hands. Extend arms in front to shoulder level. Slowly return to starting position. Repeat 10 times.



**REVERSE FLY**

Hold band with both hands in front of body at shoulder height. Keeping arms straight, pull ends of band sideways until band touches your chest. Pause. Slowly return to starting position. Repeat 10 times.