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Protocol for Push-Ups

Purpose

This measures muscular endurance of the upper body (anterior deltoid, pectorals major, and triceps).

Procedure

1. The hands are placed shoulder width apart, with fingers pointing forward. Some part of the hands must lie within a vertical line drawn from the outside edge of the shoulders to the floor. The administrator places one fist on the floor below the participant's chest (sternum). Members of the opposite sex will use a 4-inch sponge in place of the fist.
2. Starting from the up position (arms fully extended with elbows locked, both hands and both feet only touching the floor), the participant must keep the back straight at all times and lower the body to the floor until the chest (sternum) touches the administrator's fist. The participant then returns to the up position with the elbows fully locked. This is one repetition.
3. Resting is permitted only in the up position. The back must remain straight during resting.
4. When the participant elects to stop or cannot continue, the total number of correct push-ups is recorded as the score. One minute time limit.

How to Prepare for Push-Ups

1. Determine the maximum number of correct push-ups you can do in one minute.
2. Multiply that number by .75 (75%). Round off the result to the lowest number. This will be the number of repetitions (push-ups) you will do per set.
3. Warm up with some light activity of your choice, such as a stationary bike, walking or jogging on the treadmill, light calisthenics, etc.
4. Perform the number of push-ups (correct form) determined in the calculation done in #2 above.
5. Rest no longer than 60 seconds, and do another set of repetitions.
6. Repeat #4 and #5 until you have done 3 or 5 sets of repetitions. Even though the last sets may be difficult, maintain proper form. If you have to hesitate longer on the floor on the last sets to get in the full number, then do so but rest no longer than necessary. It is important that you get in all the repetitions.
7. Do this routine every other day. Increase the number of reps per set by 1 or 2 each week.

Note: If you are unable to do at least 5 reps per set, then you will have to adjust the above calculations on modified push-ups (from the knees) in order to keep the number of reps high enough to address muscular endurance. You should also get assistance in designing a strength routine using selectorized machines including chest, arms and trunk exercises.