

Summer Missions: Your Health & Fitness *before* you go

Why it matters: Your body will be strained this summer. Even if you aren't chasing kids around 12-14 hours a day, you will likely be in a place you have never been, with people you don't know, doing things you've never done. The stress of being in a new place puts strain on the body. Doing things you've never done, while good for you, strains you physically. And if you aren't prepared for the physical demand, it may detrimentally affect how you relate to others and in turn make your mission experience less than ideal.

Two tips to prepare before you go:

1. BUILD THE HABITS

Practice proper rest and hydration for at least 2 months before you go.

- Try to get about 2 liters of water a day. More if you are physically exerting yourself. Best to drink only water and use Gatorade for after heavy perspiration.
- Try to get 8 hours of sleep each night. Some days it may be impossible, but let that be the exception. On days you get less sleep, drink more water.
- If you currently don't exercise then start, maybe as simple as a 30 min walk a day. See #2 for more details.

2. SET A WORKOUT GOAL—AND FOLLOW THROUGH

- Determine a set time of exercise (at least 5 days a week) when you are going to sweat. (Example: 20 min jog, or 5 sets of 30 seconds of jump rope, or take a Zumba class or video, or do sports such as tennis or swimming). Keep track of what you are doing. Write down what you do and try to increase the intensity of exercise each week. Physically pushing your body now will help you be prepared when you are physically pushed on the field.
- Do a physical fitness test (PFT). You likely did one in grade school. It's time to check it again. A simple one can be found at this link <https://www.verywellfit.com/home-fitness-tests-3120282> Grade yourself on core strength, push-ups, and 12 minute run. Do one as soon after you are appointed as you can. Then try to increase your strength in your low areas.