

## Physical Training During Initial Entry Training

Soldiers report to initial entry training (IET) ranging widely in their levels of physical fitness. Because of this, there are special considerations when designing a physical training program for IET soldiers. Physical training involves safely training and challenging all soldiers while improving their fitness level to meet required standards. The regulations which govern the conduct of physical training in IET and explain the graduation requirements are TRADOC Reg. 350-6 and AR 350-15.

The mission of physical training in IET is twofold: to safely train soldiers to meet the graduation requirements of each course and to prepare soldiers to meet the physical demands of their future assignments.

### Program Development

All physical training programs in IET must do the following: 1) progressively condition and toughen soldiers for military duties; 2) develop soldiers' self-confidence, discipline, and team spirit; 3) develop healthy life-styles through education; and, 4) improve physical fitness to the highest levels possible in all five components of physical fitness (cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition).

Because each IET school is somewhat different, commanders must examine the graduation requirements for the course and establish appropriate fitness objectives. They can then design a program that attains these objectives. The seven principles of exercise outlined in Chapter 1 are universal, and they apply to all PT programs including those in IET. Commanders of initial entry training should look beyond the graduation

requirements of their own training course to ensure that their soldiers are prepared for the physical challenges of their future assignments. This means developing safe training programs which will produce the maximum physical improvement possible.

MFTs are skilled at assessing soldiers' capabilities. They use the five components of physical fitness in designing programs to reach the training objectives established by the commander. They also know how to conduct exercise programs that are effective and safe. MFTs are not, however, trained to diagnose or treat injuries.

The commander's latitude in program development varies with the length and type of the IET course. For example, commanders of basic combat training (BCT) may do a standard PT program at one installation, while AIT commanders may design their own programs. Regardless of the type of course, all leaders must strive to train their soldiers to attain the highest level of physical fitness possible. This means using the established principles of exercise to develop a safe physical training program.

### Safety Considerations

Overuse injuries are common in IET. However, they can be avoided by carefully following the exercise principles of "recovery" and "progression."

Research suggests that soldiers are more prone to injuries of the lower extremities after the third week of IET. High-impact activities, such as road marching and running on hard surfaces, should be carefully monitored during at this time. During this period, fixed circuits and other activities that develop CR fitness are good, low-impact alternatives.

Properly fitted, high-quality running shoes are important, especially when PT sessions require running on hard surfaces. Court shoes, like basketball or tennis shoes, are not

designed to absorb the repetitive shock of running. Activities such as running obstacle courses and road marching require combat boots to protect and support the feet and ankles. Naturally, common sense dictates a reasonable break-in period for new combat boots, especially before long marches.

Examples of recommended PT sessions and low-risk exercises are in Chapter 7. Specific health and safety considerations are in TRADOC Reg. 350-6, paragraph 4-2.

### Road Marching

One road march should be conducted weekly with the difficulty of the marches progressing gradually throughout IET.

In the first two weeks of IET, soldiers can be expected to road march

up to 5 kilometers with light loads. Loads should be restricted to the standard LCE, kevlar helmet, and weapon. Bones, ligaments, and tendons respond slowly to training and may be injured if the load and/or duration are increased too quickly.

After the initial adaptations in the early weeks of IET, soldiers can be expected to carry progressively heavier loads including a rucksack. By the start of the fourth week, they should be accustomed to marching in boots, and their feet should be less prone to blistering. By the sixth week, the load may be increased to 40 pounds including personal clothing and equipment. At no time during IET or one-station unit training (OSUT) should loads exceed 40 pounds.

A sample regimen for road marches during IET is at Figure 11-1.

<b>SAMPLE ROAD MARCH PROGRAM</b>			
<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DISTANCE</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1	5 km	LCE, kevlar helmet, weapon	
2	5 km	SAME AS WEEK 1	
3	7 km	LCE, kevlar helmet, weapon, and 10-pound rucksack	With all equipment, the total load is 30 pounds.
4	7 km	SAME AS WEEK 3	SAME TOTAL LOAD AS WEEK 3
5	7 km	SAME AS WEEK 3	SAME TOTAL LOAD AS WEEK 3
6	10 km	LCE, kevlar helmet, weapon, and 20-pound rucksack	With all equipment, the total load is 40 pounds.
7	10 km	SAME AS WEEK 6	SAME TOTAL LOAD AS WEEK 6
8	10 km	SAME AS WEEK 6	SAME TOTAL LOAD AS WEEK 6

**Note:** The total load carried (to include the LCE, kevlar helmet, weapon, and ruck load) should not exceed that shown in the remarks column. If the road marches are to or from non-tactical training, they need not be tactical road marches.

Figure 11-1