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# Scuba Fitness: Beach Walk for Aerobic Exercise and Tide Pools (Photos)



Gretchen Ashton  
Carlsbad Scuba Fitness Examiner

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*Parking near the corner of **Carlsbad Boulevard and Cerezo Drive** is free and beach access by stairs drops onto a wide expanse of beach. This section of **Carlsbad State Beach** during extremely low tides provides miles of relatively unencumbered shoreline toward the south and tide pools full of sea creatures to the north. A fast-paced walk on the beach is a great way to improve cardiorespiratory fitness and exercising near the water is excellent motivation for ocean loving scuba divers.*



Carlsbad State Beach Looking North  
Gretchen M. Ashton, Photographer

The most important fitness component for scuba diving is cardiorespiratory fitness. Generally speaking, the purpose of cardiorespiratory fitness is to maintain and improve the efficiency of the heart, lungs and vascular system. This is accomplished through aerobic exercise which is any activity that utilizes oxygen. Greater oxygen demand is created through exercise by moving primarily

the large muscles of the body repeatedly and rhythmically at intensities beyond the usual activity of rest or relaxation. Repeated and regular aerobic exercise produces permanent favorable changes in health and performance, strengthens the heart, improves the ability of the body to transport and utilize oxygen, regulates blood sugar levels, is also beneficial for weight loss, and at the same time adds some muscle strength. Aerobic exercise is best performed consistently as part of a healthy lifestyle.

### **Target Heart Rate Training Zones for Scuba Divers**

The aerobic training zone of 70% improves the ability of muscle cells to utilize oxygen, trains the heart to pump more blood, metabolizes stored body fat as the primary source of energy, is preferred for weight management and is a good intensity for moderate scuba diving conditions.

The aerobic training zone of 80% is good for overall cardiovascular fitness, improves the ability of the body to transport oxygenated blood to the muscle cells and carbon dioxide away from the cells, is effective for overall muscle strength and a good intensity for more demanding scuba diving conditions, i.e. swimming against moderate current.

Beginners may start in the 60% aerobic training zone and progress gradually. Consult a physician before beginning any exercise program.

Calculate your training heart rate with the **Karvonen Formula**.

Divers can prioritize aerobic exercise to maintain cardiorespiratory fitness, help correct medical conditions, improve diving performance and greatly reduce risks associated with diving.