



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Sullivan Benefits

It can be confusing trying to figure out how to use a band. Keep in mind that you can perform the same exercises as you do with free weights – the difference lies in positioning the band. The possibilities are endless and you'll find there are a number of exercises and workouts available to you.

FITNESS

EQUIPMENT:

RESISTANCE BANDS

Originally used to train older adults in nursing homes, flexible bands now provide exercise options for exercisers and athletes of all levels.

How They Work

Resistance bands offer no resistance at first, and increase resistance as they are stretched to their limit. The resistance changes again as the bands return to resting position.

Benefits of Resistance Bands

- They travel well. Resistance bands can be easily packed in a suitcase or gym bag, so you can do resistance exercises anywhere you go.
- They're good for all fitness levels. You can use a resistance band in a variety of ways, and as you become more advanced you can increase the intensity and difficulty of exercises.
- They increase coordination. Holding tension throughout resistance exercise forces you to use more muscle groups, which helps you gain coordination and balance.
- If you want to buy a resistance band, they are affordable. Depending how many you buy and where you get them, they will cost about \$6-20.

Selecting Resistance Bands

When choosing from among the wide variety of resistance bands available, consider:

- Different muscles in your body require

different levels of resistance, so note the tension level of the band. Different tensions work better for different muscle groups.

- Choose a level of resistance that fits the exercise – for example, chest presses require more resistance than arm curls.
- If you're just starting out, use a basic long tube with handles. A band with padded handles can be more user-friendly.

Safety

Resistance bands should be checked at rest and then when stretched to their usable length. Determine the following:

- Is the resistance smooth and flexible while in use?
- Are there signs of wear from repetitive use, including cracks or worn endings? If so, discontinue use to avoid a potentially serious injury.

