**Keeping fit**

The fitness boom of the past decades led to a big rise in the numbers of people participating in sports and activities. Those who pursue the latest fitness fashion are convinced that staying in good physical form requires much more than regular exercise and balanced meals. For anyone who really wants to be healthy, fitness has become an integral part of their lives. A lot of health and fitness clubs, and public leisure centres that were created in many countries indicate the popularity of sports during the past thirty years. These centres with their swimming pools, sunshine beach, water slides, and tropical plants and gyms are very popular among the people. Families can spend their holidays at huge indoor water parks. In such places everybody will have much fun.

There are many opportunities for keeping fit. First of all it is necessary to do exercises. People of different ages can design exercises that will fit them. Running, jumping, swimming, bending and stretching are among the most popular exercises. Many people prefer jogging, which is the cheapest and the most accessible sport. Walking is a very popular activity too. For example, popular running competitions are now held everywhere. Lots of people want to see if they can run faster than everyone else. The big city marathons have become sporting events. Television and newspapers report about them in detail. In order to keep fit some people do aerobics or yoga; others prefer some kind of weight training in a gym. People can easily learn more about fitness through popular books and videos that are sold almost everywhere. A healthy body becomes a fashion, an ideal of the life of today. Even moderate physical activity can protect against heart disease and strokes as well as improve general health and the quality of life. Everyone can benefit from being a little more active. Making small changes like using the stairs instead of the lift or walking or cycling instead of taking the bus can help people live a more active, healthier and enjoyable life. Many sports activities have become part of daily Russian life. Football has always been the most popular sport among boys. Playing football is healthy; football also brings people close because in order to win people have to work as a team. Bicycling is very popular in Russia. Skiing, skating, fishing and hunting are wide spread in our country. In summer many people like to go to the bank of the river on a hot day to swim. Another activity that is popular in our country is roller-skating. Today it has reached its peak in our country. At present the lack of facilities make enthusiasts use city pavements or parking lots.

Unfortunately, many people do not take enough exercise to keep themselves healthy. According to the statistics nowadays 60 percent of men and 91 percent of women are below activity levels necessary for a fit and healthy life. Many men and women are overweight.

- Why are people concerned with the healthy way of life nowadays?

- Everybody wants to live a long healthy life. Unfortunately, now it has become a dream. Because of the contaminated environment people suffer a lot of diseases. And the best way to be healthy is to do sports. Doing exercises is the best way to avoid depression caused by the abnormal rhythm of the contemporary city life.

- Do you do anything for keeping fit?

- I get up very early. Every morning I do my morning exercises. It takes me forty-five minutes to do them. Once a week I go to the swimming pool. On Sundays if the weather is fine I like to ride a bicycle in the park.

- Do you think that good appearance is the only motivation of being fit?

- Keeping fit is something that a person does alone. It is nice to look young and stay healthy as long as possible. Families can spend their free time jogging, walking, or swimming together. Some families like to get out of their city into the countryside. They can have much fun in the forests, or on the bank of a lake or a river. Just for fun they make boat trips or fish. Very often families spend their free time at huge indoor water parks, where they can play or relax. But this may not help them to get fitter. They simply enjoy being together.

- What may help people to get fitter?

- Taking exercise is only one part of keeping fit. It is important to get slim. Books and magazines about slimming are best sellers today. Some people eat nothing but fruit for several days. But it won't be of any use without proper exercises. Besides to avoid serious disease one should give up smoking. Efforts should be made to inform young people of the terrible consequences of taking up the habit. Smoking should be banned in all public places.