**Your VO2 max: what is it and why does it matter?**

There’s a new fitness word in town that everyone’s talking about: *your VO2 max.*

This may sound complicated but it just refers to the maximum amount of oxygen your body can absorb – and use – during sustained exercise. Simply put, it is a measure of your aerobic endurance (aerobic: in the presence of oxygen and endurance: doing longer duration exercise at low to moderate intensity).

The benefits are this: the higher your VO2 max = the more oxygen your body can use during exercise and the more effectively your body can generate energy.

Activities like running, swimming, cycling and other cardio exercises that elevate your heart rate rely on this type of energy, so VO2 max is particularly important for your body during these workouts. And improved cardio fitness makes everyday activities such as climbing stairs and working in your garden much easier.

**So, what should we be aiming for?**

While VO2 max differs based on your age, gender, health and training status, we should all aim to improve this fitness score, especially if you’re in the low to fair [cardio fitness ranges](https://www.discovery.co.za/vitality/vitality-track-vo2-max).

Plus, you’ll earn Vitality points just for getting active along the way when your device is linked to the Vitality programme.