

# Exercise Physiologists

SOC: 29-1128 • Career Profile Report

## ■ Key Facts

**\$58,160**

Median Salary

**23,900**

Employment

**+9.0%**

Growth Rate

## ■ Requirements & Salary Range

**Education:** Bachelor's degree

## ■ Automation Risk Assessment

**Low Risk** - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

## ■■ Work-Life Balance

**9.5/10** - Excellent work-life balance

## ■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

## ■ Top Skills Required

Compassion, Communication skills, Decision-making skills, Detail oriented, Interpersonal skills

### ✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

### ■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

## ■ What They Do

Exercise Physiologists are healthcare and fitness science professionals who study how the **human body responds and adapts to physical activity**. They design and supervise exercise programs to improve health, manage chronic conditions, and support rehabilitation and performance. Working at the intersection of medicine, fitness, and science, they use evidence-based practices to help clients safely achieve physical goals and improve quality of life.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy physiology, data-driven decision-making, and working directly with people to improve health outcomes.

## What Do Exercise Physiologists Do?

Exercise physiologists assess physical fitness and develop customized exercise plans tailored to medical history, risk factors, and goals. Their responsibilities emphasize safety, measurement, and progression.

Common responsibilities include:

- Conducting fitness and clinical exercise assessments
- Measuring heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen use, and body composition
- Designing individualized exercise prescriptions
- Monitoring clients during exercise for safety and effectiveness
- Adjusting programs based on progress and clinical indicators
- Educating clients on lifestyle change and physical activity
- Maintaining detailed records and reports

## Areas of Practice

Exercise physiologists may specialize based on population or setting:

- Clinical Exercise Physiology: Support patients with cardiovascular, pulmonary, or metabolic conditions.
- Cardiac Rehabilitation: Guide recovery after heart surgery or cardiac events.
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation: Assist individuals with respiratory conditions.
- Wellness and Preventive Health: Promote physical activity to prevent chronic disease.
- Performance and Human Physiology (related roles): Support athletic or occupational performance.

## Skills and Abilities Needed

Exercise physiologists combine scientific knowledge with clinical judgment and communication.

### Core Professional Skills

### Personal Qualities That Matter

## Education and Certification Pathway

Becoming an exercise physiologist requires formal education and, in some cases, certification:

- Bachelor's Degree: In exercise physiology, kinesiology, or a related field
- Clinical Experience: Supervised internships or practicum hours
- Professional Certification (often required): Credentials in exercise physiology
- Advanced Education (optional): Master's degree for clinical or leadership roles
- Continuing Education: Ongoing learning to maintain credentials

Requirements vary by employer and state.

## Where Do Exercise Physiologists Work?

Exercise physiologists are employed in health, clinical, and performance-focused settings:

- Hospitals and Medical Centers

- Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Clinics
- Physician Offices and Healthcare Systems
- Wellness Centers and Fitness Facilities
- Universities and Research Institutions
- Corporate Health and Occupational Programs

Work environments are typically indoor and health-focused.

## How Much Do Exercise Physiologists Earn?

Earnings vary by setting, education level, and specialization:

- Entry-Level Exercise Physiologists: Typically earn professional healthcare wages
- Clinical or Certified Specialists: Often earn higher pay with experience
- Advanced or Leadership Roles: May earn more in hospital or program management settings

Compensation often includes healthcare benefits.

## Is This Career Difficult?

Exercise physiology is intellectually demanding and responsibility-driven. Professionals must apply scientific principles accurately while ensuring client safety, particularly for individuals with medical conditions. The challenge lies in balancing precise monitoring with motivating, client-centered care.

## Who Should Consider Becoming an Exercise Physiologist?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy human biology and applied science
- Want a healthcare-adjacent role without medical school
- Like working one-on-one with clients or patients
- Are detail-oriented and safety-conscious
- Value preventive health and evidence-based practice

## How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, anatomy, physiology, and math
- Develop strong communication and coaching skills
- Gain experience in fitness, rehabilitation, or healthcare settings
- Learn basic data tracking and assessment methods
- Research accredited exercise physiology or kinesiology programs

**Exercise physiologists use science-backed exercise to improve health, manage disease, and enhance physical function—helping people move better, feel stronger, and live healthier lives.**