



EXERCISE & FITNESS



exercise & fitness

All the Right Moves for Better Health

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Mind Games: Committing to Fitness

No matter what your age, being active will help you have more fun and feel more alive.

Simply by keeping your body moving, you'll look, feel and really become younger in many real, measurable ways. But the battle of the bulge takes place in the mind first — you have to want to do it. This section will inspire you to make the commitment.

CAN EXERCISE MAKE YOU YOUNGER? YES!

Aging is something we're all doing every minute. But aging doesn't have to mean losing your health. True, the heart and lungs' ability to rush oxygen to muscles declines by about 10 percent for every decade of life. And the average adult loses six or seven pounds of muscle every 10 years until age 45 — and even more after that. Most of the lost muscle is replaced by fat. With less muscle and more fat, the aging body gets increasingly weaker.

Still, recent studies show that much of the decline that's been blamed on aging is actually due to physical inactivity, which tends to increase with age. Simply by exercising regularly, it's possible to slow — and even reverse — many of the changes that are supposed to happen naturally with age. *Here's how it works:*

As we age — and exercise less ...

- Metabolism slows down
- Joints stiffen
- Muscles shrink
- Sense of balance dwindles
- Heart and lungs weaken
- Body temperature becomes less well-regulated
- Bones become brittle

But even as we age, regular exercise helps ...

- *Speed up metabolism*
- *Make joints more flexible*
- *Regain lost muscle*
- *Steady balance*
- *Strengthen heart and lungs*
- *Keep body temperature normal*
- *Build up hardier bones*

Research shows that aerobic workouts, including walking, jogging, swimming and cycling, help burn fat, lose weight and rebuild muscle. Exercise actually fortifies bones, and strength training, or weight lifting, builds muscle strength. Exercising regularly may also help prevent and treat a variety of diseases that are linked to aging, including arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and osteoporosis (fragile bones). ♦

TURNING YOUR CLOCK BACK

- If you've been inactive, start with a leisurely **half-mile stroll** every other day.
- After one month, **work up to a mile and a half** — which should take less than half an hour — and three miles after three months.
- If you're already fit, try **brisk walking** up and down hills ... or low-impact aerobics, cycling, jogging, lap swimming or water aerobics.
- Add **light strength training** such as weight lifting to your exercise routine to build up your muscles.
- Spice up your routine with **fun activities**. Go bowling or dancing, play water sports or join a fitness center.
- Drink plenty of **water** before, during and after each workout. Don't wait until you get thirsty.
- Do warm-up and cool-down **stretches and slow walking** before and after each workout.

Remember: It's never too late to start making exercise a regular part of your life. The payoff can be like finding a fountain of youth. ♦

HOW TO FEEL VERY, VERY GOOD WITHOUT WORKING UP A SWEAT

You probably know the story ... as little as 30 minutes of daily moderate physical activity is all it takes to begin reaping the benefits of regular exercise. But the challenge is squeezing any amount of exercise into your jam-packed day. **Solution:** Forget about calling it fitness or any other name. Just take a closer look at your life and sneak healthy activities in. **Here's how:**

- 1. Discover something fun.** *Advantage:* You'll be less likely to skip it. Stroll briskly with a friend ... bounce around with children ... walk the dog. You'll enjoy healthy gains and you won't even need any special equipment.
- 2. Seek do-it-yourself opportunities.** Do by hand what you'd ordinarily do with machines. *Examples:* Push a power mower instead of using a riding mower, carry clubs around the golf course or wash your car yourself.
- 3. Do it in the a.m.** Try to be active when it suits you best. *Interesting:* One study showed that three-quarters of morning exercisers were likely to stick to their wellness routines, compared to only half of those exercising at midday and a quarter of those exercising in the evening.
- 4. Look for other openings.** It's not necessary to cram everything into one half-hour session. Research shows that five minutes here and there can be a boon to your health, too.
- 5. Uncover easy wins.** The day is chock-full of other chances to gain health benefits without working up a sweat. *Three smart moves:* Use stairs instead of elevators ... load and unload your own groceries ... get off the bus one or two stops early and walk the rest of the way. Adjust your mindset, try these five tips beginning tomorrow ... and get ready to feel great. ♦



Exercise Payoffs

You'll ...

- Look great: trim and fit
- Protect your heart
- Strengthen your bones
- Help control blood pressure
- Ward off back pain
- Keep your bowels regular
- Relieve stress
- Sleep more deeply
- Feel more energetic
- Live longer!