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Incorporating Exercise Into Your Day

Even the most dedicated are going to encounter setbacks and time constraints that can dissuade them from exercising. Life is unpredictable. Work, kids' schedules, appointments, social events, sickness, tiredness or just plain not feeling like it—all can close in on the amount of time dedicated to a workout routine. The important thing is to find a way to incorporate some exercise into the day, no matter how crazy your schedule becomes. Here are some suggestions:

- Wake up early and spend an extra 15-30 minutes walking/exercising before work
- Park your car farther from your destination and walk the extra steps to work, stores and appointments
- Bring sneakers to work and take a walk on your lunch break. Ask a co-worker to join you.
- Take a 15-minute break from work and walk around your building or neighborhood
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator every chance you get. For an even greater workout, take the stairs two at a time.
- Can't get to the gym? Spend time actively playing with your children or grandchildren, inside, outdoors, at the playground or park.
- Lift boxes, help carry items that need moving at work or offer to fetch office supplies or necessities for co-workers
- Clean out a closet, rearrange your furniture, clean the garage, wash the car, do some yard work. Get motivated by knowing that time spent on these activities is a workout for your body.
- Carry bags to your car instead of using a shopping cart
- Any time you're standing in a line, contract your abs 10 times and then your glutes ("back end" muscles)
- Work out while watching your favorite TV show
- If you take the bus or the subway, get off at an earlier stop and walk the remaining distance to your destination
- Use dumbbells, soup cans, laundry detergent containers, milk jugs filled with water or any other weight you can find to lift weights at home

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For Leaders:

Becoming an Effective Mentor

Mentoring is not just giving someone else advice. It is a leadership skill that involves motivating and guiding another person. A mentor helps someone else learn more, grow and become more confident. In order to achieve this, a mentor should strive to:

Teach through storytelling: Share personal anecdotes with your mentee. Telling them about your own journey to achieve your goals will let them know that they are not alone.

Share your own mistakes: It is important to be relatable. Share the mistakes you have made in the past. Explain how you recovered from them and how they helped you grow as a person.

Be a good listener: Although you are guiding and providing advice to the mentee, getting their feedback is crucial to the process. Find out what their goals and concerns are. Only then can you effectively tailor your advice to their needs.

Be accessible: An effective mentor should be available to answer any questions and listen to any concerns. Let your mentee know what times you are available to talk or respond to questions. Be sure to follow through and give them your full attention during these times.

Provide helpful feedback: As a mentor, you must provide effective feedback and constructive criticism. Don't be harsh. Tell them nicely and politely about skills that need improvement. Then, have an open and fluid conversation in which you both brainstorm and share ideas for improvement.

Celebrate achievements: You will be proud anytime your mentee succeeds and should let them know this. Sometimes, they may fail to appreciate the smaller successes. Remind them that any progress, large or small, brings them a step closer to their goal and deserves to be celebrated.

Avoid offering unsolicited advice: Sometimes, we all need to struggle through something on our own in order to learn and build our confidence. If you step in as soon as you see your mentee struggling, you will prevent them from being able to solve problems on their own.

Consider your actions: Remember to be a good role model in all aspects of your life. You never know which of your actions your mentee may choose to emulate, so remember to always consider your actions and words very carefully.

Maintain confidentiality: Let your mentee know that you will not be sharing the details of their life and progress with anyone else. This will allow the mentee to maintain an open and honest relationship with you at all times.

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Nurturing Healthy Relationships

All couples experience ups and downs, and that can stress to even the healthiest relationship. When you're not feeling as connected to your partner, it's important to take the time to find out why and share it with them. Your partner can provide a fresh perspective and together you can find ways to solve your issue. Some other tips:

Stay Connected

Turning away from your partner during stressful events can damage a relationship. Try to strengthen your bonds by turning to each other.

Maintain Emotional Intimacy

Being intimate with your partner means that you reveal your thoughts and your feelings (even though it may be embarrassing to do so), demonstrate affection and work together to solve problems.

Find Balance

You can become overwhelmed with activities that take away from time with your partner and family. Seek a healthy balance in your work and family life:

- Don't be a workaholic
- Avoid family burnout by cutting back on activities
- Keep watch for long periods of loneliness, depression or mood swings in yourself or in your partner. If you see these signs, be willing to help or get help.

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Dangers of Loneliness

Increasingly, experts warn that the loneliness has reached epidemic proportions in the developed world and that the effects of social isolation may be as serious a hazard to our health as obesity, smoking and other major risk factors.

In recent studies, researchers found that people with greater social connections reduced their risk of dying prematurely by 50 percent and that social isolation, loneliness or living alone all played a significant role in premature death. These findings build on previous studies showing that loneliness had the same negative impact on health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and exceed the impacts of many other well-known risk factors, including obesity and physical inactivity.

What You Can Do

If you are feeling lonely, there are some simple steps you can take to improve your mood and end your isolation:

Reach out to friends and family. Sometimes even a short phone call can make you feel better.

Improve your well-being. Make sure you are eating right, exercising regularly and scheduling a yearly checkup with your doctor.

Share your skills with others. Offer to volunteer at a local church, school or community organization to help yourself as you help others.

Get out and do something. Check with your local park district, social club, continuing education program or similar organization and get involved. You will learn new things while making new social connections.

Get a mental health checkup. Loneliness is often associated with mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. If you have not been feeling yourself lately, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional. You can also contact your Employee Assistance Program to get help.

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Valuing Diversity

Whether you are employed at an office, farm, restaurant, manufacturing facility or store, odds are you are surrounded by people from different cultures and backgrounds. Being employed in such a diverse and inclusive workforce requires sensitivity to the cultural backgrounds, native languages and social practices of those around you.

We all know the importance of embracing the differences between individuals by recognizing everyone's unique contribution to the organization. Employees who work well together and treat each other equally and with respect are the foundation for any successful enterprise.

The following suggestions can help ensure that the workplace is an inclusive, productive and accepting environment for everyone.

A Model for Valuing Diversity

With so many personalities, cultures and backgrounds, there is great potential for miscommunication and false impressions to disrupt workflow and create bad feelings among co-workers. Work is not the place for controversial or potentially inflammatory comments. When in doubt about whether what you have to say may be insensitive to others, keep this model of valuing diversity in mind:

Awareness of self and others. Be aware of how your words and behaviors affect others, as well as how their words and behaviors affect you. Also, be aware of your own assumptions and prejudices.

Sensitivity and skills. Develop ways to communicate that reflect an understanding of and response to other people's views, as opposed to telling them your view and how they should behave as a result.

Seek knowledge. Learn about cultures, experiences and values different from your own. Offer to share knowledge of your experience with others.

The New Golden Rule

Another step you can take is to use the New Golden Rule: Treat others the way they would like to be treated. If you're confused about what that means, ask them. Your question will help avoid misunderstandings and can open a valuable exchange of information. Some other tips to keep in mind:

- Understand and respect individual differences. Remember that not everyone sees things the same way you do and keep an open mind toward others.
- Be assertive. Let other people know how you want to be treated, and don't be afraid to speak up if something makes you uncomfortable. How will people know that you find a particular expression or behavior offensive unless you tell them?
- Be thankful if someone has the courage and sensitivity to tell you how you've offended them. Don't get defensive; the only way you can correct the situation is through honest communication.

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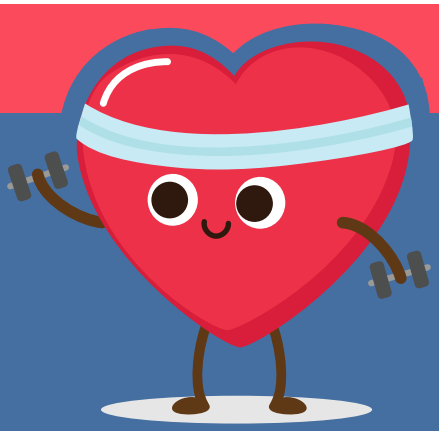
Physical Fitness **Assessment**

Physical fitness is an important component to living a healthy life. Take this assessment to determine your fitness level.

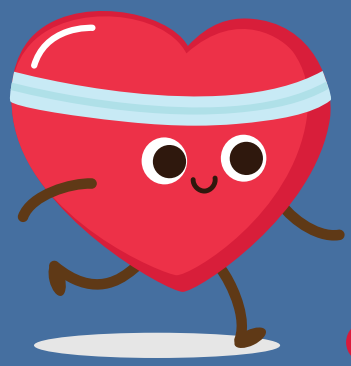


1. I engage in some form of physical activity each day (e.g., walking, climbing stairs, carrying groceries).

   Yes No

2. I am able to climb several flights of stairs without feeling winded.

   Yes No



3. I can walk a mile at a moderate pace while simultaneously having a conversation.

   Yes No

4. I have enough energy to perform my daily tasks without feeling fatigued.

   Yes No

5. I engage in moderate to intense physical exercise.

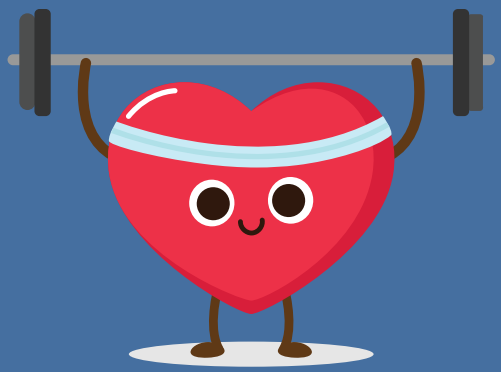
   Yes No

6. I lift weights or other heavy objects.

   Yes No

7. I make sure to stretch my muscles for at least five minutes before and after I work out.

   Yes No



Results

If you answered **"Yes"** to each of these questions:
Congratulations! Based on your responses, you appear to be physically fit. You are reaping the many benefits of exercising.

If you answered **"No"** to any of these questions, you may need to improve your physical fitness. Talk to your doctor about beginning a fitness program and incorporating physical activity into your daily life.

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