
EXERCISE? WHO, ME???

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Would you like to **feel better?**

Live longer?

Be happier?

Have better health?

Lose weight?

Stop wheezing when you go up the stairs?

Then exercise is for you.

Oh, I don't mean going out for a 3-mile run every morning. I don't even mean making your muscles sore. But studies show that with any improvement at all in physical fitness, you will join those who have:

- * lower cancer rate
- * lower blood pressure
- * fewer heart attacks
- * at least seven more years of life
- * less depression and anxiety
- * better brain functioning
- * stronger bones
- * more restful sleep
- * a thinner figure (no matter what your mother looks like!)

*less discomfort from arthritis

Your spouse/family will find you easier to live with and happier.

How much more active? Believe me, it isn't necessary to become an athlete to improve your odds of staying healthy longer. In fact, I don't want you to begin exercising so hard that you get sore. Stay within your comfort zone. Try burning 1,000 more calories a week through an activity you enjoy. Start with 15 minutes of being active and do it five times a week. Build to half an hour. Get off the couch. Turn off the computer and the television. Let's begin.

* Walk to school with your kids every morning. Then walk back.

* Like to shop? Walk all around inside the mall without stopping before going into a store. Twenty minutes of walking three times a week burns those calories.

* Start a garden in your yard and spend one hour three times per week weeding it.

* Go swimming. You can burn up to 200 to 400 calories per half hour of swimming.

* Ride your bicycle around the neighborhood, or ride a stationary bike in your home. Start with ten minutes and build up to twenty.

* Join group exercises for an evening.

* Skip rope in your backyard.

* Do pushups against your kitchen wall.

* Every time you pass the kitchen table, do two squats; use the table for balance.

* Play volleyball with your kids or badminton with your spouse or a friend.

Oh, oh. I'm hearing excuses. You say you're too tired? You're too busy? Or too stressed? Or it's too cold, too rainy, or too dark?

Ok, let's make exercise fun. Pick something you like to do or would like to do. Plan to do it with a friend. It's no fun alone, and a commitment to a friend will help weaken the excuses. Did you choose to walk? Then choose pretty places to walk. If the mall won't do, try your neighborhood park. Make the walk an adventure. What has changed since yesterday? Are you breathing from your abdomen or your chest? Focus on deep breathing using your diaphragm. Mentally place yourself into another setting. Are you walking up a small hill? Imagine that you're climbing a mountain. Imagine you're in a rain forest. Imagine you're headed for the beach. Let your imagination go.

The truth is, you may be eating very well, avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, but without exercise, you cannot enjoy good health. Your body was built to move, and if you are not moving, you are not totally alive. I would like to challenge you to make fitness a lifelong commitment and to enjoy the benefits of getting fit. You'll feel that you have control over your life to a degree that you may not have had before. Let's get moving!

Whole Grains Get Harvard Endorsement

from *The Wheat Montana Journal*, Vol. 12, 2004

Amidst the current flurry of Low Carb articles, Harvard University has again endorsed diets rich in whole grains. Harvard has identified a list of whole grain foods that are associated with building a protective barrier against stroke and other vascular diseases.

Whole-grain foods including dark bread, whole-grain breakfast cereals, popcorn, oatmeal, wheat germ, brown rice, bran and other grains such as bulgur, kasha, and couscous are high on their list.

We live in a culture grounded in the mythical notions that you eat, drink, and indulge as you wish, then seek a pill to correct health problems that might have been prevented if a regimen of healthy food choiced had been followed.

The challenge of the 21st century is to promote lifestyles that facilitate the prevention of the diseases we have come to accept as part of the American aging process. A steady supply of whole grains will undoubtedly be a part of that lifestyle.
