



keep moving

CLINICAL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS AND PATIENTS

Keeping motivated with exercise can almost be as much of a challenge as the exercise itself. We can easily find excuses to let the exercise habit slide with work, family and social commitments taking priority. Here are some health benefits that reinforce why you should exercise or need to get back into exercise.

Make the Time for Exercise Now, or Make Time for Disease Later

Is exercise really that important to good health? The short answer is a resounding yes! Research into the benefits of exercise and its effects on a person's health has definitively shown that it is crucial to assist in the prevention of a range of lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and certain types of cancer.

Benefits of Staying Active!

- Natural, exercise-induced endorphins are released as a result of doing exercise – literally making you feel better. And unlike other 'methods' of making yourself feel better, they cost nothing except for some effort and have no side-effects
- As your body shape improves in response to exercise, you tend to gain more confidence!
- You may find that you can do more things in life that perhaps were difficult to do. For example, carrying the groceries from the car; moving without pain; even walking a flight of stairs without huffing and puffing can make you feel better

Regular Exercise Helps You To:

- Boost your endurance
- Build stronger, healthier muscles, joints and bones
- Fine-tune your metabolism, helping you work towards (maintaining) your healthy weight
- Increase your energy levels
- Improve self-confidence and your sense of well-being
- Better handle stressful situations
- Get a better night's sleep and wake feeling refreshed

Prioritise

Life is ever changing. Commitments arise that may take up more of your time, causing you to consider less time for exercise. However, a recent article on some of Australia and New Zealand's most successful people, from CEOs through to members of Parliament, showed that even with their busy schedules, they knew the importance of regular exercise and made it one of their top daily priorities. Just make 30 minutes of physical activity the priority!

No Excuses

Be encouraged to avoid making excuses by looking to inspirational people, such as Lance Armstrong, seven-time winner of the Tour de France and cancer survivor. He persuaded his doctors to allow him to train on a stationary bicycle when gravely ill and undergoing treatment. His justification was, 'If I am moving, I know I am not dead.' We often hear of people who amaze us in their tenacity to keep active in the face of some physical disability. Their conviction is powerfully motivating to help us find a reason to get moving!

Age is No Barrier!

Keeping active becomes more important as we get older to stop muscle-wasting and help prevent osteoporosis.

- Sarcopaenia is the muscle (and lean body tissue) wasting that slowly but typically occurs in sedentary people once they hit their third decade of life. Sarcopaenia can be slowed down, if not stopped and reversed. Many senior people have achieved this when exercise becomes part of their daily life. You've heard the saying 'Use it or Lose it!'
- Osteoporosis is a condition in which the bones become fragile and brittle, leading to a higher risk of fractures (breaks or cracks) than in normal bone. This occurs when bones lose minerals, such as calcium, more quickly than the body can replace them. Exercise has shown to be beneficial in improving bone health particularly weight-bearing and high-impact exercise (for example skipping). Also important is a good quality calcium supplement with vitamin D, synergistic minerals and nutrients

Plan Your Attack

For you to be able to stick to your exercise, it helps to plan exactly what you would like to do, what you want to achieve and how you are going to measure your performance. For example, simply having a goal of exercising may not be sufficient to keep you going after a couple of weeks. Set short and long term goals eg walking three days plus two social games of tennis a week, will help you to achieve your six month goal of dropping a clothes size. If you are more competitive, make sure you have a goal that will stretch you, but is not so far out of sight as to be unobtainable. When you do reach your goal, make sure you reward yourself with something like a new item of clothing.

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CLINICAL INFORMATION

Fuel Your Body

Regular training sharply increases an athlete's need for energy, protein and many micronutrients. Dietary choices can have a great impact on performance and endurance. Many foods today are highly processed or have been stored for long periods and lack the micronutrients required for optimum performance. Here are some suggestions:

- Eat a diet rich in fresh fruit, vegetables, and whole grains
- Select a variety of fresh, brightly coloured fruit and vegetables that are packed with antioxidants and nutrients
- Choose adequate, good quality protein and where possible buy organic. Animal-sourced protein such as free-range eggs, skinless chicken, lean meat and fish or from plant sources such as legumes and soy products including tempeh and tofu
- Fish is recommended at least twice a week as a rich source of omega-3. If you are not eating enough fish, consider a quality omega-3 concentrate supplement to provide the essential omega-3 fatty acids (EPA/DHA) that also help control inflammation caused by exercise
- Eat plenty of magnesium rich foods, such as green leafy vegetables, unrefined grains and nuts. Muscle aches and cramps are often a sign of inadequate dietary magnesium, if this occurs speak to your healthcare practitioner about magnesium supplementation
- Avoid prepackaged and processed foods as they are often full of sugar, salt and empty kilojoules
- Take a good quality multivitamin and mineral formula to insure you're meeting your body's increased requirements
- Top-up on antioxidants. Ask your practitioner for an antioxidant supplement that provides a broad-spectrum of synergistic nutrients such as vitamin C and E, alpha lipoic acid, resveratrol and other antioxidant nutrients
- Coenzyme Q10 is a natural antioxidant that protects cells against free radicals
- Drink plenty of water to rehydrate. Consider using a quality magnesium powder with synergistic minerals and key vitamins to replace lost electrolytes and aid hydration

Eating to Power Your Exercise

What you eat before and after your exercise can quickly determine how much energy you will derive from your exercise. It is not much fun exercising when you feel flat because you lack energy. Likewise, failing to eat appropriately after your exercise can leave you feeling tired and lethargic for the next day. So have a light meal or snack an hour or two before exercise, preferably something low fat, low GI and with a small amount of protein.

Here are some suggestions:

- Low fat yogurt and a piece of fruit
- Handful of raw nuts and fresh fruit
- Berry smoothie with a scoop of whey protein powder
- Bowl of wholegrain cereal such as oats and low fat milk

Unless you are doing an activity for over two hours, you probably won't need to eat anything during the activity itself, but make sure you keep topping up your fluid intake every 15 minutes.

After exercise, replenish your muscles, again with a small meal or snack depending on what is appropriate for you. The main points to consider are:

- Keep it similar to your pre-exercise meal
- Eat as soon after your exercise as possible to make the most of your body's ability to replenish its muscle glycogen stores

Protect Your Body

Protecting the health of weight bearing joints is very important. The cartilage between joints acts as a natural shock absorber and maintains lubrication of the joint surfaces, as a result protecting bones and tissues from the impact associated with movement. Without proper care these joints are prone to degeneration from repetitive use and injury. Ask your practitioner about nutrients such as glucosamine and chondroitin which can help regenerate healthy cartilage and prevent damage.

Don't Get Caught Out!

When starting a new exercise regime it is easy to over-do-it in the first few weeks. This can have a detrimental effect on your immune system and leave you susceptible to colds and flus. Vitamins, minerals and nutrients such as vitamin C, zinc, bioflavonoids and herbs such as Echinacea, Andrographis and Elderberry are great for supporting the immune system and can help prevent common infections. Your practitioner will be able to recommend the best formulation to suit you.

Herbal Tonic Tune-ups!

We're not talking about energy drinks – which can ultimately have a negative effect your adrenal function (your body's in-built stress adaption). Ask your practitioner about herbs that may be suitable for your needs. Some great herbs available, such as Panax and Siberian Ginsengs, Astragalus and Schisandra, may be beneficial for athletic performance and act as a tonic in times of increased need.

Get Moving Now!

When it comes to living a long, healthy life, exercise is not an option - it is essential! Find your motive and put it into action! Talk to your healthcare practitioner about ways to support your body's increased needs and prevent injury. Your health, your family, your work and your friends will thank you for it.

