

# Fitting in Fitness

Even before you know where or how to begin an exercise program, the most important thing is simply to **MOVE DAILY!** Step up to the challenge. Identify what you can do from the list that follows:

## STEP 1:

**Ease into exercise.** Find ways to add more lifestyle activity to your daily routine. Which will you try?

- Sit instead of lying down, as you read, watch TV, open mail, etc.
- Stand instead of sitting when talking on the phone.
- Walk instead of driving. You can make many of your local errands fun on foot or bike!
- Take stairs instead of elevators.
- Pick up your walking pace.
- Stoop, bend, reach, stretch—use your muscles. (“Use it or lose it.”)
- Park your car as far as possible from your destination.
- Choose the farthest phone, bathroom or path between two points.
- “Walk and talk.” Visit with a friend or family member on foot.
- Make an after-dinner walk part of your lifestyle.
- Clean your closet, vacuum or mop; do yard work or home repairs; wash your car; sweep.
- Use coffee or lunch breaks at work to climb staircases or walk long hallways.
- Stretch at your desk. Do arm, neck and shoulder rotations.
- Make your own list of ways to move more daily.

## STEP 2:

**Establish a regular exercise program.** Which can you do?

- Set up a personal daily routine of walking, biking, swimming, jogging, etc., at a set time.
- Join a dancing class, spin class, walking club or team sport. Groups are motivational.
- Find an exercise partner. Meet at a designated time daily.
- Involve yourself in active hobbies—gardening, carpentry, dancing, etc.
- Try your hand at a new recreational sport—tennis, volleyball, badminton, ping-pong, bowling, racquetball, golf, etc. Take lessons!
- Meet with a personal trainer or certified fitness specialist to create a game plan that fits your needs.
- Become a mall-walker. Leave your charge card at home!
- Set goals and rewards for yourself. Write them down and keep a daily progress record.

1. Make **SMART** goals:

**S**pecific      **M**easurable      **A**chievable      **R**ewarding      **T**imely

*Example: Walk 2 miles in 36 minutes at 7 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday in my neighborhood, listening to my favorite music and news station.*

2. Write down **realistic** short- and long-term goals (weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly).

*Examples: (a) Be consistent with my aerobic activity 4 times a week and strength-train 3 times a week for the next 6 weeks. (b) Participate in 2 benefit walks/races in my community this year. (c) Plan an active vacation (hiking, biking, etc.). (d) Gain 5 pounds of muscle in one year to restore what I've lost.*

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**STEP 3:****Find ways to “work in” your workout.**

- Choose convenient activities you enjoy.
- Exercise while doing something routine. For example: (1) Walk on your treadmill as you watch the daily news; (2) Listen to TV or tapes as you walk or bike (book tapes are great!); (3) Read as you stationary bike; (4) Pair up with a friend to “walk and talk”; (5) Have meetings “on foot.”
- Go slow at first and avoid strain. Increase your goals weekly.
- Develop your plan of action.
- Strive for sustained exercise of at least 20 minutes at the right intensity to reap the fullest cardiovascular benefits and 30-45 minutes to burn body fat stores for the most consistency.
- Set aside a regular time daily for exercise, and keep with it! Aim for morning!
- Set a goal to burn 200-250+ calories a day.
- Keep a daily activity log and monitor your progress.
- Involve friends and family.
- Focus on benefits you feel.
- Step over stumbling blocks. Although vacations and work schedules can change your routine, try your hardest to include a daily activity so you won’t step out of your routine. Have a backup plan to include a different type of activity on these days.
- Reset your time priorities. You must forego one activity daily to make room for physical activity.
- Make time for physical activity as a stress-reducer. (Kids call it “recess” or “play.”)

**STEP 4:****Balance your program for best results. What’s your next move?**

- Aerobic activity
  - more time       more intensity
  - more distance       more variety
- Warming up/cooling down, five minutes before and after exercise.
- Strength training, 2-3 times a week, 20-30 minutes each time.
- Stretching, 2-3 times a week, 5-10 minutes each time.
- Hiring a qualified trainer

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