

Think you are too busy to exercise?

February 28 2012



(Medical Xpress) -- The typical response to the word “exercise” is negative, especially for non-exercisers. They think of the phrase “no pain, no gain” and assume this is the effort needed to get any benefit out of exercising.

“This is partially true, especially for athletes,” says UConn Health Center physician assistant Brad Biskup. “However, for the rest of us who exercise for health, this isn’t the case. The benefit is much greater with moderate intensity exercise, especially when we are trying to improve cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, and lose weight. The higher the intensity, the greater the risk of injury and the more likely you’ll have sore muscles, and eventually stop exercising.”

“Rome wasn’t built in a day,” and people don’t get out of shape in a day,

notes Biskup. The key to getting healthier is gradually doing more, whether that is working out at a gym or doing more steps with a pedometer. If you haven't walked a mile in 10 years, don't expect to do it tomorrow without significant soreness. Start with a 10-minute walk daily for two weeks and then add five minutes every two weeks until you are up to 30-45 minutes, four to five days per week.

If your knees bother you, look for exercises that don't stress your knees, such as water aerobics or an exercise bike. Be creative and find activities that you like that aren't painful.

If you are looking for exercise equipment, it doesn't have to be new. With so many people just using it to hang clothes on, used equipment can be a good bargain! People complain about how expensive a piece of exercise equipment is, however, they will spend \$100 for dinner without thinking about it. Exercise equipment will usually last years and the improvement in your health will far outweigh the cost.

Remember that exercise is any continuous muscle movement, so even if you think you don't have time for a formal exercise plan, you can increase your heart rate just by adding these activities to your daily routine.

Take the stairs

Why take the elevator when you could burn some calories? Even going up one flight can give your heart a workout. If you become short of breath, slow your pace to make it more comfortable. If you're ambitious, try taking every other step for an even better workout!

Park farther away

You may think you're doing yourself a favor by picking the closest parking spot to the building, but you can burn some extra calories just by parking far away from everyone in the back. A bonus will be no dents in

your car from other people's car doors, plus it's easier to find your car!

Take advantage of nearby errands

Is the store just a mile down the road? Don't get in your car – walk, power walk, jog, rollerblade, or bike there. As long as you're not buying a week's worth of groceries, use this time to raise your heart rate.

Stop dreading cleaning

Crank up some music, throw on a pair of loose workout clothes, and get moving when it's time to clean. It'll boost your mood, your health, and your house will be spotless!

Use the “buddy system”

Instead of meeting your friend for your weekly lunch or coffee, find a walking trail. Your chit-chat will make the time go by faster and you will both benefit from the exercise. Plus, it's easier to keep motivated when you exercise with someone else.

Join in on play time

Instead of sitting on the park bench watching your kids play, join in with them! They'll love the extra playtime with you, and your heart will love the challenge of keeping up with their young energy levels.

Game up

Game systems, like Wii, have designed programs to get you off the couch and moving around your living room. Try sports games or dance competitions. Make it a family event or a game night with friends.

Working while you walk

If you have to meet with a co-worker, instead of sitting at a table, see if they would be willing to go for a “walk and talk.” Some companies have conference rooms with treadmills and computers at the front so people can [exercise](#) while they are working.

Everything is an opportunity

Be aware of opportunities to burn some extra calories. Whether it's taking frequent computer breaks by walking up and down the hall, marching in place while watching TV, or lifting weights while listening to music, the benefits will far outweigh the effort.

Provided by University of Connecticut

Citation: Think you are too busy to exercise? (2012, February 28) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-busy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.