

Being heart healthy is easier than you think

February 16 2016, by Laura Dawahare

It's the halfway mark of National Heart Month and by now more than one in three people have abandoned their New Year's resolutions.

Even people with the best of intentions to get [heart](#)-healthy in the new year become discouraged after just a handful of long runs or drop their gym memberships after a couple of sessions. Dr. Gretchen Wells, director of women's heart health at the University of Kentucky's Gill Heart Institute, emphasizes that we don't have to exercise strenuously to achieve results.

"You reduce your risk of heart attack by 50 percent if you get 150 minutes of activity a week—or 30 minutes for five out of seven days," Wells said. "That doesn't have to come with a [gym membership](#) or fancy, expensive equipment. A brisk walk can be just as effective in reducing [heart attack](#) risk."

In fact, said Wells, even completing household chores like vacuuming or mowing the lawn can take up a significant chunk of that goal.

Allison Perry, a Lexington, Ky.-based fitness instructor, saw firsthand how being active throughout the day can be as beneficial as a strenuous workout.

"One day I had a mostly sedentary day at my desk, but taught a high-intensity kickboxing class at the end of the day. The next day I walked around a lot at work and taught a spin class, but off the bike. I actually walked more steps and burned more calories on the second day, even

though the first day was the day I went to the gym," said Perry. "There's clearly a tremendous benefit to moving around all day."

Provided by University of Kentucky

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