

Keep moving toward a healthier lifestyle

January 6 2017



Credit: The City University of New York

New Year's resolutions vary from person to person but improving one's health rises to the top for many people.

In addition to maintaining a healthy diet, committing to a consistent [exercise](#) routine will deliver positive results, according to Borough of

Manhattan Community College (BMCC/CUNY) Health Education professors.

"There are numerous benefits to exercising regularly. Exercise boosts your immunity, improves your mood, improves sleep and helps with weight control. It adds structure to your routine and increases blood circulation, which improves memory and cognitive functioning," says Lesley Rennis, BMCC Health Education professor.

Balancing work, family and personal time can be stressful, Rennis says. Exercise is one of the more reliable, cost-efficient ways to boost daily activity performance and prevent both short- and long-term illnesses.

The [American Heart Association](#) recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate activity five days a week. Fewer days are sufficient with vigorous exercise—for example, running instead of walking. Weight lifting two to three times a week, and one to two days of flexibility training are also recommended, Rennis says.

"Mix up your exercise routine," says Rennis. "Try jogging, weight training, yoga and dancing. The important thing is to move."

Research also shows that it is also smart to self-regulate your routine and monitor your progress using feedback tools such as a Fitbit, Apple Watch or a pedometer, according to Gloria McNamara, professor, Health Education, BMCC.

"Keeping a daily food diary or journal can also prove beneficial," she said.

The information those tools provide allow a person to track and monitor their progress, which McNamara says can serve as motivation to stay the course. Or if the outcome is not what is desired, a person can change

their diet or [exercise regimen](#).

As the saying goes, the early bird always gets the worm. The same holds true to exercising in the morning, Rennis says.

"Exercising before class or work has been shown to increase metabolism, improve daily mental functioning and increase overall self-discipline," she says.

Professors Rennis and McNamara, offer five basic tips to a healthier lifestyle in 2017:

- Be consistent. Try a daily routine and stick to it.
- Exercise in the morning.
- Create a plan for exercise and for healthy eating.
- Invite a friend to exercise with you.
- Look for new and fun ways to stay active.

Provided by The City University of New York

Citation: Keep moving toward a healthier lifestyle (2017, January 6) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-01-healthier-lifestyle.html>

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