

Getting back on track with exercise

May 15 2017, by Regina B. Wheeler, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Sometimes life gets in the way of your workout plans. Maybe an illness or an injury got you off track or you took a break from the gym that lasted a little too long. Getting moving again can be

challenging, but it's certainly doable—and worthwhile.

First, start slowly. Don't try to log five miles after taking a three-month break from running. The American Council on Exercise suggests walking for 20 to 30 minutes two or three times a week. (This is especially good advice for exercise newbies, too.)

Make exercise a priority again. Schedule it into your week like an appointment—one that you can't cancel. You'll soon redevelop this healthy-lifestyle habit.

A tip from the American Heart Association is to set yourself up for success by finding an exercise buddy who won't let you skip your workouts. You can encourage each other and even celebrate fitness victories together.

Also, figure out why you slacked off in the first place. If going to the gym became just another chore, find an activity you enjoy more—that way you'll be more likely to stick with it. You might be more motivated by [outdoor exercise](#) or by using home equipment, which doesn't require travel time to a fitness center.

Of course, if a sports injury or a serious health issue sidelined you, ask your doctor for guidelines before restarting exercise after you complete any needed rehab.

Remember, getting back into shape will take time. But taking that first step is the only way to start.

More information: The American Council on Exercise details a safe return to a variety of fitness disciplines in its article [Jumping Back on the Fitness Bandwagon](#).

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Citation: Getting back on track with exercise (2017, May 15) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-05-track.html>

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