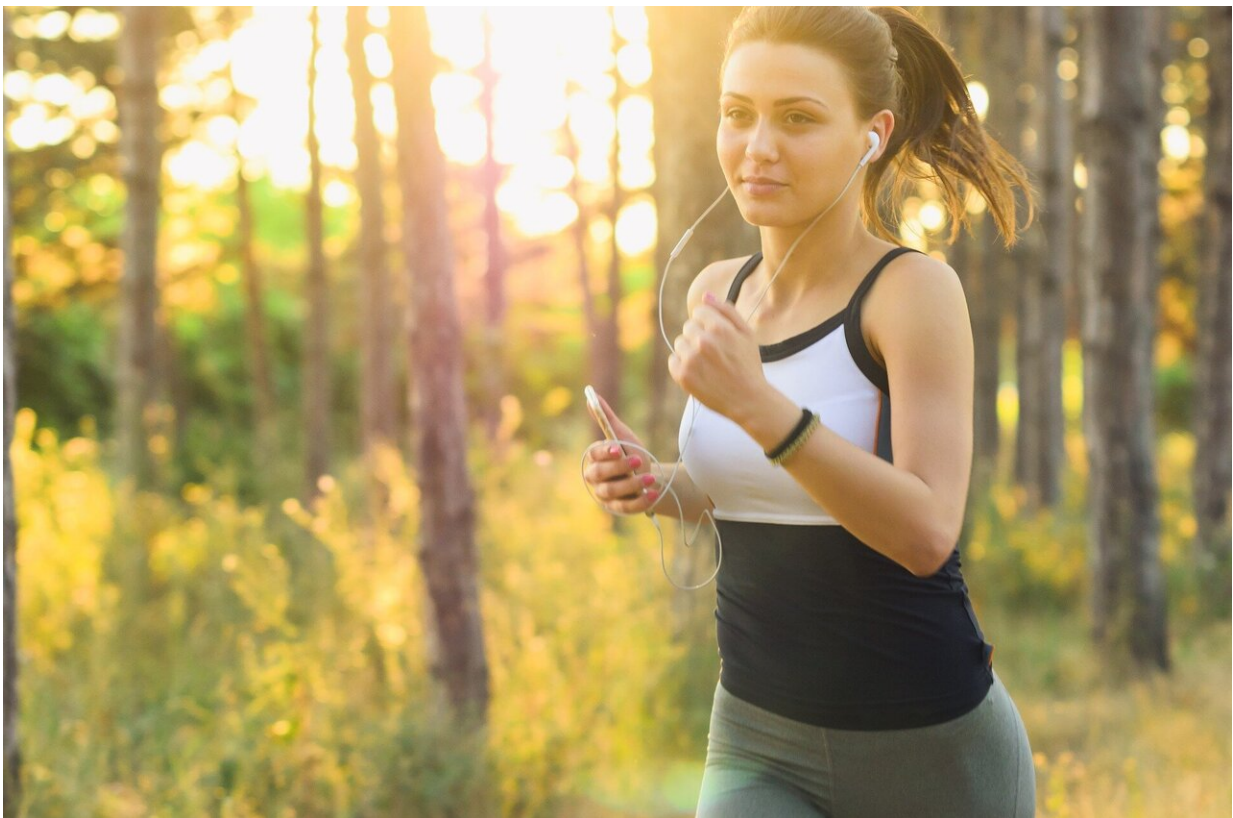


# The 30-30-30 method: How TikTok's latest fitness trend could help you build healthy habits into your day

June 1 2024, by Sinead Roberts

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One of TikTok's latest health trends is the the ["30-30-30"](#) method. This involves eating 30g protein within 30 minutes of waking up—shortly

followed by 30 minutes of low to moderate-intensity cardio.

Proponents of the 30-30-30 method claim it helps you lose weight steadily and sustainably while preserving muscle. But does it really? It might—though its biggest benefit is that it might help you build healthier habits into your daily life.

Let's look first at eating 30g of protein within 30 minutes of waking up.

Protein is the building block of the body. We need to eat protein so that our cells have what they need to [repair and recover](#) from the wear and tear of daily life.

The amount of protein you need varies depending how much stress you put on your body. If you [exercise](#), your body needs more protein to help your muscles repair and recover—typically around [1.2g–2g of protein](#) per kg of bodyweight. It can also be important to eat more protein when trying to lose weight, as research shows higher protein diets (eating over [2g of protein per kg of bodyweight](#)) may help preserve muscle when losing weight.

For many people, breakfast is typically their [lowest protein meal](#) of the day—often consisting of [toast, cereal, pastries or other carbs](#).

By eating [30g protein](#) within 30 minutes of waking, the 30-30-30 method may help increase your total daily protein intake right off the bat. However, this alone doesn't mean you will automatically hit your target daily protein intake. The other food choices you make in the day are also important.

To lose weight, you need to eat [fewer calories](#) than you burn throughout the day. Eating protein first thing in the morning will not directly cause weight loss, but [protein is filling](#). This means it may help you feel fuller

and eat fewer calories overall in the day. This is one reason the diet encourages eating protein right after waking.

But the key word is "may." Some people may not find protein that filling, may have high hunger levels or may snack throughout the day just because.

## **30 minutes of cardio**

Now to look at the exercise component of the 30-30-30 method. There are three parts to the workout that we need to think about: its timing first thing in the morning, its steady-state nature and its 30-minute duration.

[Some research](#) has suggested exercising first thing in the morning may lead to positive health outcomes, such as improved metabolic health which may lower risk of certain conditions—including type 2 diabetes and obesity. But there has been [as much, if not more, research](#) suggesting this is not the case—and that the time you work out doesn't matter for health or fitness.

So, we cannot say that exercising first thing in the morning is inherently better. The best time of day to exercise is probably the time that's most convenient and enjoyable for you. This will increase the likelihood [exercise becomes a habit](#), which is key to consistency and getting any benefits from the exercise.

The 30-30-30 method also states the exercise you do first-thing should be "steady state." This is continuous exercise done at a low or moderate intensity—basically anything that gets your heart rate up, such as a brisk walk or jog.

There's been a lot of debate as to what exercise is best for health and weight loss. World Health Organization [guidelines recommend](#) including

both cardio and strength-based training for good health.

But if we look specifically at cardio exercise, there's little evidence that steady-state training is more beneficial for health or weight loss than other types of exercise. A [2015 study](#) compared steady-state cardio with high-intensity interval training. Both had similar impacts on fitness levels in young, inactive adults.

So similar as the time of day you exercise, the best type of exercise for you is the thing you can stick to.

Finally, the 30-30-30 method prescribes 30 minutes exercise. While this may just be because it makes for a catchy title, there might be some practicality to it.

It's short enough to be relatively achievable even in a busy day and not too tiring. It's also long enough to break a sweat, burn some calories—and is also enough to build [cardiovascular benefits](#). In other words, a stronger and more robust heart. But again, if you have less than 30 minutes or want to do more than 30 minutes, this can be effective too.

But it's worth noting that doing more exercise won't necessarily help you lose more weight. Although exercise requires energy (so it burns calories), this effect [does not increase linearly](#) the more you exercise in a day.

This is because the body appears to compensate for the excess amounts of energy expended during exercise by [reducing the amount of energy](#) it uses to perform other bodily functions. This effect appears to be more pronounced when we're [on a diet](#).

But while longer workouts may not equate to a proportional increase in

calories burned, exercise still has many other benefits that are arguably more valuable to health than just weight loss. For example, it improves [cardiovascular health and respiratory function](#)—and may even be good for cognitive function, too.

The 30-30-30 method promotes habits that combined together can support health and weight loss. Focusing on these elements first-thing in the morning may make it easier to build other healthy habits into the rest of your day—but it's by no means a perfect formula for [weight loss](#).

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