

Diet and Exercise Tips for Busy People

Many of us have little or no time for a traditional workout. Given the demands of family, work and school, the thought of spending time at the gym or outside jogging can seem like a fantasy. However, even the busiest people can find ways to stay fit by changing their daily routine.

Fitness experts recommend a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes of exercise three times a week. Even the minimum recommended amount of exercise can drastically improve your health, give you more energy and reduce stress.

Use the following tips to incorporate exercise into your day, whether you are at home or at work.

At Home

- Prepare your meals instead of ordering take-out. Not only will you burn calories cooking, but you can also make sure you use healthy ingredients and limit portion sizes.
- Try stretching or doing aerobics while watching TV.
- Clean the old-fashioned way. Vigorous mopping, scrubbing and dusting can burn calories and develop muscles the same way as “real” exercise.
- If you have a yard, use a push lawn mower or hand tools when gardening.
- Take your pets for long walks instead of just letting them outside. You will both benefit from the added exercise, fresh air and time together.
- Play with your children outside instead of watching movies or playing video games.
- Walk to the corner store instead of driving, and walk as much as possible when running errands.

On the Commute

- If you live close enough, walk to work. Even if it is only a mile away, a brisk walk each way can count as your daily exercise.
- If you live a little farther away, consider riding your bike to work. Cycling is one of the most beneficial, rewarding and fun exercise activities. If you make it a part of your daily commute, you will get to work energized and will be able to burn off steam on the way home.
- If walking or cycling is not an option, use public transit. You will get some exercise walking to and from the stops. You will also save money, reduce mileage on your car and promote a cleaner environment.
- If you must drive, park a few blocks away, or at least at the far end of the lot, to force yourself to walk more.

At Work

- Take the stairs to your floor. If you work on a higher floor, walk part of the way, and then take the elevator.
- Bring your lunch. This allows you to pack healthy ingredients and control portions, as well as save money.
- It is okay to go out to lunch occasionally, just not every day. When you do, do not eat the entire meal; take the rest back to the office for lunch the next day.
- Get out of the office on your lunch break. Even if you bring your lunch, do not eat at your desk. Walk somewhere else to build in some easy exercise.
- Drink water. You can remove hundreds of empty calories from your diet per day.
- Turn a coffee break into a walk around the office.
- Take a few minutes every two hours to do some light stretching at your desk.

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