

May 2013

May: Physical Fitness

Family Tips for Getting Fit

Look for ways to stay active together, experts say

Families hoping to improve their fitness and overall health in 2013 should spend less time in front of a TV or computer screen and more time being active together, according to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. The Alliance is a nonprofit organization, which was formed to combat childhood obesity.

The group offers the following tips to help your family get moving and stay fit throughout the year:

- **Take a walk.** Stroll together after a family meal or walk around the mall when it's cold or raining.
- **Choose an outing.** Spend a weekend afternoon going to a pool, skating rink or basketball court.
- **Take breaks.** Try to fit in 10 to 15 minutes of rigorous physical activity several times a day.
- **Team up.** Have the family sign up for a group run, walk or car wash.
- **Limit TV.** Select which shows kids will watch ahead of time and limit screen time to just those programs. Designate screen-free time. Don't turn on the TV first thing in the morning. Turn off the TV during dinner. Instead, eat outside or have a family talk. Remove electronics from bedrooms.
- **Join a club.** Buy a family membership to a town recreation center, YMCA or health club.
- **Learn something new.** Have family members take a lesson in an activity, such as martial arts, fencing or gymnastics.
- **Chores count.** Working together around the house or in the yard is another way families can stay active.

The key is to find the right exercise for you. If it is fun, you are more likely to stay motivated. You may want to walk with a friend, join a class or plan a group bike ride. If you've been inactive for awhile, use a sensible approach and start out slowly.

The Alliance added that parents should be role models for their children. That means they should strive to make healthier changes in their own lives as well as their children's routines.

Source: Alliance for a Healthier Generation
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<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=660017>

Booklet Offers Tips for Staying Fit

Spring is here—a perfect time to get outside and get moving. You don't need fancy equipment or a gym membership to get fit. A new National Institutes of Health booklet shows how you can use what you already have, or can easily get, to improve your health.

The 8-page publication, *The World Around You: Use What You Have to Stay Healthy and Fit*, has realistic suggestions for eating better and getting active. Try different activities to see what works best for you.

You might enjoy walking with “exercise buddies” around a track at the local school. For better nutrition, try adding canned or frozen vegetables to any pasta or rice dish. Set healthy goals and keep track of your progress. These activities might help you maintain a healthy weight and prevent or delay certain health problems, such as diabetes. *The World Around You* is available online at www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/way.htm. Or you can order a free copy by contacting NIH's Weight-control Information Network, 1 WIN Way, Bethesda, MD 20892-3665. Call toll-free at 1-877-946-4627 or email win@info.niddk.nih.gov.

Source: <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/apr2011/capsule2>

Fit Teens Succeed as Adults

Teens who are physically fit are more likely than other teens to achieve later success at college and work, a study suggests. Teen fitness was also linked to a higher IQ.

Scientists looked at over 1.2 million men born in Sweden between 1950 and 1976. All had physical fitness and intelligence tests at age 18.

The researchers compared this information to academic and lifestyle data in national databases. They found that physical fitness in the 18-year-olds was strongly linked to scores on intelligence tests. Muscular strength, though, showed little connection to intelligence.

“Being fit means that you also have good heart and lung capacity and that your brain gets plenty of oxygen,” says study coauthor Dr. Michael Nilsson of the University of Gothenburg. “This may be one of the reasons why we can see a clear link with fitness, but not with muscular strength.”

To see if genes and upbringing were responsible, the researchers looked at a subset of twins in an NIH-funded database. The link between fitness and intelligence held even in identical twins. Fit teens were also more likely to get a university degree later in life, and they landed better jobs—with higher pay or management responsibilities—up to 36 years later.

These findings point to the importance of encouraging physical fitness in teens.

Source: *NIH News in Health*
Copyright © February 2010 National Institutes of Health
<http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2010/February/capsules.htm>

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Exercise: The Right Program and the Right Preparation

To be physically fit you do not have to exercise intensely for long periods of time. Experts agree that physical activity does not necessarily have to be vigorous, and recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate continuous physical activity daily, or on most days of the week.

To achieve and maintain physical and cardiovascular fitness, health professionals advise following a balanced fitness program - a program that includes the following:

- If you have an existing medical condition, or are just starting an exercise program, be sure to consult your physician prior to beginning the program to make sure the exercise program that you choose is designed with your health and wellness in mind.
- If you are just starting with an exercise program start slowly and gradually build up to 30 minutes a day.
- Choose an activity that you will enjoy. You are more likely to continue exercising if you are doing something that you like.
- In the beginning, follow a program that includes moderate, not vigorous, physical activity. Start off with 30 minutes a day, and add some variety in your fitness routine -- not only in the fitness activity that you choose, but in the time and setting. This helps to eliminate boredom with any one activity or location.
- Be sure to start off any work-out/exercise session with proper warm-up and stretching exercises. This will help to avoid post-exercise soreness or injury.
- Wear the proper attire when exercising, including shoes with the proper support for the activity. Also, be sure to dress appropriately for the weather.
- Just as warming-up and stretching is important as you begin each exercise session, so is a cool-down period at the end of your exercise activity. This should include at least several minutes of stretching or walking to allow your heart rate to come down slowly.

Experts now recommend participating in two types of physical activity each week to ensure aerobic health and muscle strengthening. Muscle strengthening activities include lifting weights, using resistance bands, yoga, or Pilates. Such exercises should be performed twice a week and include the major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, chest, arms, shoulders, and abdomen).

Source: Copyright © 2012 Krames StayWell

An Overview of Fitness

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports offers an overview of fitness for people of all ages. Topics include fitness fundamentals, guidelines for starting and sticking with an exercise program, how to keep your kids fit and active, fitness for those in midlife and older, and a guide for parents whose children participate in organized sports.

The Council educates, engages and empowers all Americans to adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes regular physical activity and good nutrition. It is made up of athletes, chefs, physicians, fitness professionals, and educators who are appointed by the President.

To navigate to the site, copy/paste the hyperlink below into your internet browser.

Source: Copyright © 2012 Krames StayWell
<http://www.fitness.gov/about-pcfsn/>

Healthy Recipe: 20-Minute Chicken Creole

This quick Southern-style dish contains no added fat and very little added salt in its spicy tomato sauce

Ingredients:

12 oz boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
 1 C canned whole peeled tomatoes, chopped
 1 C chili sauce (look for lowest sodium version)
 1½ C green bell pepper, rinsed and chopped
 1½ C celery, rinsed and chopped
 ¼ C onion, chopped
 1 Tbsp garlic, minced (about 2–3 cloves)
 1 Tbsp fresh basil, rinsed, dried, and chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
 1 Tbsp fresh parsley, rinsed, dried, and chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
 ¼ tsp crushed red pepper
 ¼ tsp salt
 Cooking spray

Instructions:

Spray sauté pan with cooking spray. Preheat over high heat. Cook chicken in hot sauté pan, stirring for 3–5 minutes. Reduce heat. Add tomatoes with juice, chili sauce, green pepper, celery, onion, garlic, basil, parsley, crushed red pepper, and salt. Bring to boil over high heat, and then reduce heat to simmer. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

Serving Size: 1 ½ Cups

Yields: 4 servings.

Nutrition/Amount Per Serving

Calories 274	Total Fat 5g
Cholesterol 73 mg	Carbohydrates 30g
Fiber 4g	Sodium 383 mg
Protein 30g	Potassium 944 mg
Saturated Fat 1g	

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/healthyeating/recipe/detail.aspx?linkId=11&cId=2&rId=18>