

No More Excuses

7 ways to Overcome Exercise Obstacles

"I don't have time"

"I'm too tired"

"I have small children"

"I can't stay motivated"

"Exercise is boring"

"I don't see results"

"I have a sore knee"

"You don't have to be GREAT to start...
but you DO have to start to be great!"

 Fort
HealthCare

FOR HEALTH

1. "Exercise is boring"

SOLUTION:

"Find an exercise that you would really enjoy," says Joan Price 'fitness expert www.joanprice.com and author of *The Anytime, anywhere exercise book: 300+ quick and easy exercises You Can Do Whenever You Want!* Think about what you enjoyed as a child or a teen. Did you dance? Roller skate? Take your dog for a run? "Bring the childlike joy back into your exercise program," she says.

Also make over your mind-set. Stop considering exercise as a chore; think of it as an escape. "Exercise is actually an opportunity to do something strictly for yourself, to have singular focus for a period of time where you're just focusing on you," says Jonathan Ross, owner of Aion Fitness www.aionfitness.com and American Council on Exercise 2006 Personal Trainer of the Year. "Exercise helps clear your mind because it gives you a chance to escape the buzz of everything else."

If your workout is monotonous because you stick with the same activity throughout, mix it up and do what you can to keep it interesting. Larry King walks on the treadmill for 20 minutes and pedals a stationary bike for 20 minutes. "I watch TV while exercising," he says. He also walks three to four miles a day.

2. "I'm too busy"

SOLUTION:

"Make time," says King, founder of The Larry King Cardiac Foundation.

"Anything important, you can make time for. I don't buy that excuse at all. I've made it myself at times, but it's phony." If you're traveling, search out the hotel gym or explore the city on foot. "You'll miss sometimes, but where there's a will there's a way," King says. "That's one of the oldest proverbs, but it really works."

To squeeze some exercise into your busy daily schedule, exercise physiologist Andy Core (www.andycore.com) suggests you wear a pedometer and see how many steps you can walk in a day. Another option is to break up your 30-minute exercise routine into three 10-minute chunks spaced throughout your day. Research by Glenn Gaesser, Ph.D, showed that participants who built up to 15 vigorous 10-minute sessions per week for three weeks lost an average of 3 pounds, improved their aerobic capacity, had a 15-point decrease in total cholesterol, and experienced other health benefits.

3. "I don't see results"

SOLUTION:

Surprise your body by doing new things, Price says. For example, choose a new type of exercise or challenge yourself by adding a bit more incline as you walk on the treadmill or try adding some 15-second higher intensity intervals. "If you've been doing the same program for months or years, your body eventually adapts to that," She says.

You might have to add an extra push, Ross says. "It's really just asking the body to step a little bit outside that comfort zone," he says. "That's how a workout stays progressively challenging, which leads to better results."

4. "I can't stay motivated"

SOLUTION:

Create momentum; it's the key to maintaining motivation, Core says. He suggests keeping an exercise log and checking off your progress. "When you see multiple boxes checked in a row, that gives you some real motivation, some real momentum," he says.

Another way to stay motivated is to grab an exercise buddy. Core tells his clients to find workout partners who are mean. "That way they can help push each other along," he says. If an exercise buddy isn't an option, try channeling your motivation from within. Take a deep breath and think about what made you begin an exercise routine in the first place. Exhale and let those factors motivate you. Try making a list of reason to exercise. Keep the list handy, so you can look at it whenever you motivation is low.

5. "I'm too tired"

SOLUTION:

See your doctor if you're consistently exhausted to rule out a hidden problem. Otherwise, realize that when you first start an exercise routine, you may feel a bit tired as your body faces a new challenge. You'll get a stamina boost if you stick with it. "With consistent effort, there's always an increase in energy level," Ross says. "It's really just asking the body to step just a little bit outside that comfort zone."
-Jonathan Ross, personal trainer.

If you're tempted to skip exercising because you're fatigued at the end of the day, Ross suggests using the 10-minute rule: "After 10 minutes of exercise, if you don't feel better and don't feel like continuing, it's best to just stop and take the night off." However, if this happens often, you may want to try exercising another time of day.

6. "I have a sore knee"

SOLUTION:

Check with your doctor and/or a physical therapist. If the diagnosis is an ailing knee or you have other aches and pains, don't abandon exercise completely.

Instead, ask what you can do. You still may be able to lift weights, swim, or do other light workouts. The point is not to let an injury melt your resolve to live a healthy lifestyle.

"You still may be able to lift light weights, swim, or do other workouts." -Andy Core, Exercise physiologist

7. "I have small children"

SOLUTION:

If you have tiny tots, squeeze in short bouts of exercise throughout your days, sign up for a parent-and-child exercise program, or pop in an exercise video. "It's doubly important for you to be physically active because children are going to imitate what they see," Price says.

Let older kids take the lead and spend time with them tossing a Frisbee, racing through the backyard in a game of tag, or exploring nature on a hike. While your kids are at soccer practice, take a few laps around the field.

"Find ways that you can be physically active," Price says. "Show your kids that yes, this is what grown-ups do, and we love it."

Information provided by: Heart Healthy Living

