Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Fitness when life feels frenzied



Whether you travel for work, have a busy schedule with your family, or have frequent disruptions to your daily routine, life can feel frenzied. During these times, you may be tempted to move exercise to the bottom of the to-do list because there is so much else to do. But try to resist that urge. Exercise improves your overall quality of life, releases tension, boosts your energy levels, and helps you sleep better, according to Heart and Stroke Canada.

The good news is, even during hectic times, you can fit fitness into your daily schedule without finding an hour to go the gym or run for five miles. Consider giving some of these tips a try to work fitness into your life:

- **Travel and commute in your athletic shoes.** If you're traveling for business, take laps in the airport. If you commute to work, get off the subway or train a couple of blocks short of your destination and walk the rest of the way. Or if you drive, park your car farther away from the door in the parking lot at work or the store.
- **Put fitness clothes or your swimsuit on your packing list.** When you're traveling for business, use your hotel gym equipment, swim laps in the pool, or ask about local hiking trails to explore if time permits. Even a walk around the building or a stroll in a pedestrian-friendly local neighborhood can help keep you on track.
- **Get out of the car to stretch and walk.** Research roadside parks or scenic lookouts along your route if you're going to be driving for a long time.
- **Use your own body weight.** Whether you are at home or away, do jumping jacks, squats or push-ups. Find an exercise video to follow on your laptop or smartphone.
- **Use the stairs instead of the elevator** when at the airport, subway station, office or mall.
- **Exercise while watching TV.** Use dumbbells, do crunches or jump rope while you're catching up on your favorite shows.
- **Go for a stroll while watching your kids.** If your kids are enrolled in sports or other activities, consider asking another parent to join you as you walk and watch them participate.
- **Take a walking break.** If you're at work, use part of your lunch break to get up from your desk. You can also have a walking meeting with colleagues. At home, try taking a walk around the block or to the end of the road and back after putting the laundry in the dryer or dinner in the oven. Your spouse, children or neighbor may enjoy going along, too.
- **Set your alarm 30 minutes earlier.** Use this time to exercise before the day gets busy. You can even wear your workout clothes to bed to save time.
- **If you have young kids, purchase a jogging stroller or a bike trailer.** It's cheaper than the gym in the long run and there is no need for a babysitter. Your kids will enjoy the workout as much as you will.

Making fitness flexible and varied can help keep it fun. Stay away from the "all or nothing" approach. Any time dedicated to exercise is better than none. Your body and mind will thank you.

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