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

Quick tips for starting and sticking with an exercise program



The World Health Organization recommends that adults aged 18 – 64 should get least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, with muscle-strengthening activities on two of those days. Exercise is crucial for good health; it plays a major role in maintaining a healthy weight, lowering the risk of heart disease and other medical problems and providing energy.

Talk to your doctor about starting an exercise program, especially if you don't currently exercise regularly or if you have any medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, or a family history of heart attack or high blood pressure.

Start small. Research shows that exercising for 10 minutes three times a day provides many of the same health benefits as exercising for 30 minutes straight. Think of quick and easy ways to fit exercise into your life. You might try:

- Taking a walk during your lunch break
- Parking a few minutes' walk away from your destinatio
- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator whenever you ca
- Building physical activity into the time that you spend with your family
- Doing exercises while you're watching TV or talking on the phone

Look into structured exercise activities, such as a class at a gym or in your local community. If you prefer to exercise at home, you could follow a workout routine on YouTube. These things will help you gain confidence, feel motivated and learn new techniques with the help of an instructor.

Realize that making exercise a regular part of your life takes time. It may take you several weeks or months to get in the habit of exercising and to get fit.

Plan ahead for exercise. Block off time in your daily schedule for exercise. Try not to exercise too close to bedtime so that it doesn't keep you awake.

Find other people to exercise with you. Take a bike ride with your child or make a date to walk or jog with a friend or your partner. Exercising with a buddy increases your chances of attaining your fitness goals because they will encourage you to get up and go. Also you might have fun competing together, you will have safety in numbers, and they may introduce you to new ways of getting fit.

Do a variety of activities so you don't get bored. Trying new activities on a regular basis will keep you interested and make it less likely that you'll give up.

Set exercise goals and reward yourself when you reach them. For example, if you manage to exercise three times a week for a month, treat yourself (but not with food!) to something special. You can use the SMART method to focus yourself. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-limited. This method helps to focus and plan for success.

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