

Complete Body Wellness.

The 'All You Need To Know' Guide To Obtaining Ultimate Health.



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Please Note:

This is not meant to be a "How To" book.

It's simply a collection of Thoughts and Ideas to get you thinking and hopefully take some Action towards improving your personal Health and Fitness.

Hope you enjoy!

Please seek professional help with any medical or exercise queries, don't try and guess your way through and cause injuries to yourself.

Kim – Owner/Director of Beautifully Well Box

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Fitness and Where You Stand Right Now

Fitness is a term that is used to help define 'your ability to stay in the best physical shape you can'.

You may ask, "What am I staying in shape for?"

To each person, this will be something different.

For most, it is a matter of staying healthy to enjoy life for as long as possible.

Your body is designed to work as a machine. When each part of the machine is cared for, the entire machine works the best way that it can.

When the machine is neglected, either in part or in the whole, then the machine doesn't run well and eventually won't run at all.

If your car, for example, is well maintained over a period of many years, it will last many years longer, operate better, cost less to run and be more reliable presentable.

If it isn't taken care of, for example you don't change the oil, brakes, filters or tyres in it, you cut several years off the life and reliability of the car.

That ends up being very costly to you.

But when you look at this as a scenario of your body, you are shaving away days, weeks, and even years off your life if you don't take care of your machine (your body.)

Fitness and Health is a necessary part of life.

But before we get on the soap box, remember that fitness is something that you can get into the habit of doing, which makes it easy.

Fitness is not something that you should struggle with.

When you were three you were probably taught to brush your teeth.

You learned to put your clothes on.

When you were learning how to do this, you likely hated it.

But, once you learned how to do it, it became easy and something that you didn't think twice about.

Do you worry about brushing your teeth or putting your clothes on today?

No, because it's become a habit.

That's what we want you to think of when you think of fitness.
It's just something that you do, to make exercise a habit.
Granted, the first weeks of learning to be fit and healthy will be the hardest.
You'll dread it.
You'll find excuses for not doing it.
You'll claim that getting fit is just too hard.
You will say that you just can't give up what you love. That's not true.
In fact, if you have the will power to save your life by sacrificing just a few weeks,
you'll see that fitness can be easily mastered by you.

Look at yourself right now. What do you see?

If you are unhappy about any part of your body, chances are good that this area of your body is bothering you, because it's an unhealthy area.
Although many people start looking into fitness because they want to lose weight, fitness is not just about weight loss.
By understanding where you stand on your health factors, you can work to improve your overall Wellness and Health and increase your lifespan as well as the quality of your life that you are currently living.
If you don't think that you need to lose weight, that's great!
You are one step closer to being healthy.
But, that's not to say that you don't have other health problems beyond the weight level.
Many people are still at risk from high blood pressure, high cholesterol as well as other concerns even though they aren't technically overweight.
Therefore, you need to take into consideration that overall health is in fact extremely important to improve your daily wellbeing.

The Importance of Physical Fitness

Modern life is a surprisingly sedentary thing, as much as we talk about fitness, what really happens?
We sit at desks crouched over our computers, sit behind a steering wheel battling traffic, or have a cell phone at our ear most of our waking time.
In our increasingly sedentary world, health and fitness too often takes a back seat.

Yet physical fitness and regular exercise are one of the easiest ways to control blood glucose levels, reduce the risks of heart problems, improve mobility, flexibility and the overall quality of life that we all desire.



In truth, everyone should be physically active.

A recent survey showed that only 30% of adults get the recommended minimum half-hour of daily exercise.

What's worse, a quarter of adults are not active at all!

Scientists believe that inactivity is a key reason why we're seeing a sharp increase in the occurrence of type 2 diabetes, heart problems and multiple other problems.

Inactivity compromises fitness, promotes obesity, and obesity promotes a resistance to insulin and other biological processes that prevent disease.

A recent Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism contained the results of a study that found that lack of exercise and poor physical fitness and bad diet were key causes of obesity and serious illnesses like diabetes.

But never fear.

It's never too late to begin to live a healthier life.

Physical fitness doesn't have to be an extreme work out.

Anyone can increase their daily amount of physical activity.

Exercise helps control the onset of many different, and some very serious, diseases.

People with early signs of illnesses like heart failure and diabetes most need physical exercise and fitness programs to improve their health and prevent, or reduce life-threatening problems that will cost you time, money, and happiness if not addressed.

Physical fitness is a sure way to help improve insulin sensitivity, lower the risk of heart disease, and promote weight loss.

It ought to be clear by now that we all need to stay physically fit, active, and generally healthy if we want to prevent such illnesses and the lower quality of life they bring.

Health and Fitness- Make It Your Choice

Health and fitness are no doubt an important chapter in every human being's life. You need to take good care about yours and your family's wellbeing.

Each of your family member's wellbeing is equally as important to you, just like it is your own.

This is exactly the reason why a lot of people read about family fitness, and family health related articles when they get the chance.

There are numerous books, articles, magazines, emails, eBook's and newspapers about fitness and health.

Most of the reading materials seem to be confusing, too much in depth, too long, too serious and sometimes too complicated.

However, these materials contain just the information that you should know.

But information that lies unused is nearly as good as being worthless.

This means, no matter the number of books and information you read on fitness and health, it is no good unless it is used productively and put into action.

All the information you need on fitness and health is available.

Various writers, experts and even trainers say different things, or have differing idea's, but that being said, it should not stop you from gaining fitness.

Hence the sooner you start working upon your own and your family's health and fitness the sooner you will all benefit.

Below are few simple ways which would assist you in your battle to attain your fit healthy family life.

1. Eat only a healthy diet.

- ❖ You need to know what exactly is meant by a healthy diet.
- ❖ Parents must set apt examples to their children about intake of healthy food.
- ❖ If your kids see you eating healthy food, they will undoubtedly follow a similar eating pattern.
- ❖ It is not required that you become technical about your food preparation.
- ❖ With little creativity in cooking and some information on different kinds of food, you can serve healthy nutritious food to your family every day.

2. Include proteins.

- ❖ Right from breakfast till dinner, ensure to have meals rich in proteins.
- ❖ It could include turkey, red meat, eggs, chicken, fish or cottage cheese.
- ❖ Proteins are essential in your body as they maintain your muscle mass.
- ❖ This again is required for excellent health and fitness, it is the key.

3. Avoid excess saturated fat.

- ❖ Excess unhealthy fats are harmful to your body.
- ❖ However, if good fats are included in your meal, then you are on the way towards a fit and healthy body.
- ❖ Always stay a little distance from saturated fat as it could prove to be harmful.

4. Daily exercise.

- ❖ You need to know the significance results of exercising daily.
- ❖ Start where you feel comfortable and make small progressions each time you exercise i.e. – walk a further distance than last time, do 1 more push up than last time
- ❖ You could also work out on preparing your families exercise plan, encouraging children to do the same, so that they learn the goodness of daily exercise.

5. Talk the walk.

- ❖ Talk to your children specifically and your family in general about fitness.
- ❖ They all need to know the right reasons for working out and attaining specific health goals.
- ❖ As your family gets convinced about your intentions, seeing that you are serious and determined, they will sooner or later support and join you.
- ❖ The key is to involve all your family members in your fitness regimen.
- ❖ Act immediately and you will notice your family living a fitter and healthier lifestyle. Your efforts could avoid health problems for yourself and your family in the future.

First Step to a Healthier Life

No matter what your current situation or physical condition, the first step to beginning or changing a fitness plan is a visit to your doctor.

After a complete exam, your doctor may want to refer you to an exercise physiologist who has the training to design a custom physical fitness program for you.

Even if you're already an active person who gets regular exercise, a visit to your doctor to discuss possible changes or improvements in your fitness program would be a good idea.

Consulting your physician can help avoid serious problems and injuries, particularly as you age.

Exercise and physical fitness don't have to be a chore or a bore, choose a daily exercise routine which is both fun and essential for good health.

You can keep it as simple as taking a brisk walk after dinner, walking the dog twice a day, or choosing the stairs over the elevator.

What's important is that you avoid being sedentary and become an active, vital adult.

Even the smallest efforts are progress, and you can make a lot more progress than you realise by thinking about what you're doing and how it will affect your health in the long run.

So, What's Healthy?



Your weight, blood pressure and body mass index are good starter indicators of your overall health.

Yet, it goes a lot further than this.

You should understand how well your body is working.

Do you have any physical limitations?

If you physically can't lift things for fear of hurting your back, well lookout, this could be a potential problem that needs to be considered and looked at.

If you have problems with your legs, your neck, your arms or any other part of your body, you should address these specific concerns without delay.

The best place to start, is to work with your doctor to determine why you aren't as physically fit in those areas as you should be.

That way, you can start to improve your overall health and then improve upon your situation by knowing how to improve.

The foods that you need and eat play a significant role on your health.

Foods are the fuel that your body requires to do a good job at the tasks that you ask it.

In our machine look at the way that food works, the food that you consume is like the fuel you burn that your machine needs.

If you don't give your body quality food, it won't perform the right way or at its best.

Have you ever gone to put fuel into your car and got a very bad petrol station where the fuel wasn't of highest quality or even up to standard?

What happens? Your car slows down, you don't get the gas distance that you are used to, and you may need to perform even more maintenance on your car than you would usually need to do.

In the way of your body, healthy food is just as important.

If you consume the wrong foods all the time, your body will not perform as well as if you gave it the highest quality foods.

Without nutrition, your body can and will become ill faster, and with greater intensity.

Your body also will not heal as quickly as it should from injury.

Your blood pressure rises, and your heart rate increases to unhealthy levels.

You are then more prone to limitations physically as well as mentally.

All sorts of physical problems arise from not eating a healthy diet of food.

But what food is healthy and why is it healthy?

- ❖ Vegetables are one of the highest nutrient rich foods available. Vegetables provide antioxidants to a high level that helps to heal your body and improve your physical fitness from the inside to the outside, and they are very low in calories meaning you can eat more without excessive weight gain.
- ❖ Fruits are generally sweet, so they can solve the sweet tooth addiction. They can also provide you with antioxidants, and all types of nutrients that give your body the fuel it needs.
- ❖ Whole grains are also an important product of a healthy diet Unlike ["white"](#) foods, whole grains give you so much more health. They don't cause you to gain weight like others.



Choosing simple differences from bread to pasta to potatoes allows you to get the tastes that you love but without the added calories, fats, and sugars that can cause health issues.

- ❖ Water intake is also very important. Those that do not get enough fluids end up having a body that retains water creating fluid retention. This creates weight gain. The body goes into a dehydration mode, causing you to keep in all the fluids that you can. Consuming enough water means that your system is fully hydrated, you're eating less and that you aren't getting as many calories as you would from other liquids, i.e. soft drinks.
- ❖ Meats are an extremely important part of your diet, too. You need the protein, but you don't want to get it from fatty meats. Improving your diet by changing to just lean meats will allow you to cut down on the intake of cholesterol, this will help you ultimately avoid clogging your heart and arteries and minimising blood flow to the rest of your body.

If you do nothing else, improving these five areas is all you need to do. The good news is that you don't often need a lot of work to make them happen.

Conclusion

1. Eat lean Meat.
2. Consume More Vegetables.
3. Eat Whole Grains and not White Foods.
4. Consume More Fruit.
5. Increase Water intake.

How You Can Improve?

Improving your body means improving your body's ability to move and function. It's not always an easy thing to do at first, but it will and does get easier.

Our overall plan to improving your body's fitness level is through exercise, coupled with a quality diet.

Exercise is something that some people hate.

But remember your body is built to be used, not to sit in a chair at a desk all day.

It is known that most people don't get the regular exercise that they need, and that leads to all types of health problems.

Again, even if you aren't overweight, chances are good that you aren't getting enough exercise and fitness into your life anyway.

Using your muscles and strengthening them are vital to improving health and fitness.

Okay, here is comes.

The awful, limiting diet that's going to make your taste buds go permanently bland is up next, right?

NO!

You don't have to be limited by what you can eat, because most food that's available that is in its natural state, is just fine for you!

In fact, if you give it a try you may find that you like these foods better than you do those high fat, high cholesterol, sugary foods that you are currently eating. Foods are a main part of why people are unhealthy, and therefore it is a mandatory part of improving your health to improve your diet. If you cannot commit to making changes here, then your diet fitness can threaten your life through disease and even early death. Yet, much of the damage that is done through eating the wrong foods can be reversed over time by eating a healthy diet. That's exactly what you need to strive for here.

How can you improve your mind's fitness?

There are many great ways to make this happen. Remember when we said this fitness plan was going to be fun? There are many great ways to improve your emotional and mental fitness through fun methods. Each aspect is unique, and it will help to improve both your physical fitness and your quality of life. Incorporate as many of these things into your life as you are able, and you'll see differences in the way that you feel and the way that you see the world.

Your Overall Body Fitness Plan

To improve the physical fitness of your body, you need to give it the physical movement that it needs. This means feeding it the right regimen of movements. Start your fitness by working into a daily exercise, through adding light cardio and/or strength training into your day. You can start doing these exercises at home too which will make the process easier and even more enjoyable. To make it even better, consider these easy and fun ways to get in the exercise that you need.

- ❖ Exercise with a partner! You are 80 percent more likely to continue and be successful if you don't try to do it alone! Recruit someone to work out with you!
- ❖ After dinner, head out for a walk with your spouse or a friend for a few minutes. If you can't leave the kids, take them with you. This is a great way to get in some quality time with family away from the television. If you can't leave the television, use a stationary bike. Watch during your favourite show, ride the bike. You get the exercise you need without missing your television program and time will fly by.
- ❖ Do sports and other physical activities that you know you enjoy. Swimming, playing a game with the kids and even joining a sports team is a great way to get your fun and exercise without it feeling like exercise.

Your overall body fitness means exercise and movement.

When you begin to add these into your day, you'll probably try to find every excuse not to do them.

Yet, you will come to enjoy your exercising, and even miss it.

For many it's a great stress relief and can be a lot of fun.

Make it your goal to put together a workout plan that is fun and you enjoy.

It will make all the difference in how effective it is for you.

Here are some tips that will help you get your food and fitness plan off the ground and allow you to improve your health considerably!

Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- ❖ Visit your favourite recipe sites on the web and look for vegetable recipes that aren't rich with sauces, butter or creams. Add at least one new recipe to your diet each week!
- ❖ Try to look for ways to improve your current recipes through replacing butters, salts, and unhealthy foods with foods that are better for you.



- ❖ Start looking for leaner cuts of meat. Remember, meats that are high in saturated fat could be clogging your heart. One good switch is to go with ground meats. Don't always reach for beef but replace at least part of it with ground turkey or pork. You won't notice the taste difference. Eat more fish, chicken and pork over beef.
- ❖ Reduce your portion sizes. No food in one sitting should be a larger quantity than the size of your palm.
- ❖ To help you to avoid the hungry feeling, try to eat a bit slower.
- ❖ Look at your grains. Replace white rice and pasta with whole grain. Replace white bread with whole grain bread. Both are great for weight loss and taste.
- ❖ Remove carbonated soda drinks – This is a must do! They are totally full of damaging sugars. This single change alone will improve your health considerably. Carbonated soda drinks add weight to your body, and it causes various types of health and dental risks later in life.
- ❖ Look at food container labels. Learn to read labels as they tell you what's in the foods you are buying and eating. It's important to reduce the amount of fat, cholesterol, salts and sugars in the foods that you eat.

- ❖ If you need to lose weight, then you need to consider calorie reduction. Dropping just a small amount of weight means that you can eat less and do more in your physical life.

There is no fad diet that is more comprehensively safer and effective than this:

Eat less and get more exercise every day.

Eating healthy isn't an option if you wish to increase your lifespan and increase your health.

While you may love food, learning to make healthier recipes shouldn't be something you put on the back burner because you are too busy.

If you use the excuse of "Don't like those healthier foods", ask yourself:

"Do I really know what they taste like if I have never tried them?"

If you think it's too much work to produce healthy food, you will really need a change of attitude to enable a boost in your health and fitness level.

Food is a requirement to living and a healthy diet is an essential part of living a long, healthy, fit, life.

Don't make sacrifices here for speed, convenience or habit.

Remember; while making your changes it will at first be a challenge, you will need to get into the health and fitness habit and mentality and will eventually love the differences you have made to yourself, guaranteed!

How many times has this been said? I Can't Give It Up!

If you are one of the many that feel that they can't give up the foods that you love no matter what, there are several key things for you to address.

Don't worry, they aren't all bad!

First, find out why it is that you can't give them up.

For example, if you relate to that big slice of apple pie because it was your favourite sweet while growing up, you may have developed an emotional attachment to the apple pie!



But if you love your mashed potatoes loaded with gravy, sour cream and butter just because you love the taste, well that's a totally different story.

Identifying the reason why you love a specific food is important, that way you can see the benefits of not of eating those foods.

If you need apple pie to feel safe, you need to address this emotional problem.

If you just eat it because you love the taste, you can always find ways to get much of the same taste without a lot of those calories.

Next, determine if there is a better way for you to get the foods that you like.

For example, will mashed sweet potato still give you the same texture and creaminess that you are craving for the mashed white potato?

By making small changes to the recipe you can get all the flavour and texture that you want without becoming a victim of the high fats and sugars that really do a number on your entire bodily systems.

You may crave that slice of apple pie. But, use the craving in a different way.

For example, instead of eating it every few days, make it the reward that you get for a week of good eating.

Limiting how often you get the treats means that you don't have to give them up, but you don't consume nearly as much of it, by limiting the amount of treats that

you eat they become a lot more tastier and special, and therefore you can improve your health overall.

One limit to this treat is when the food itself is detrimental to your health condition.

Exercise and Sleeping Better

The physical exercise you exert all day should help you to sleep well at night, that is the key ingredient.

An active body during the daytime is more likely to relax better and sleep faster during the nights.

Regular exercise would ensure improved quality of sleep with regular and very smooth transition in between the phases and cycles.

As you continue with your daily work outs, you will find it easier in dealing with the everyday worries and stress of life.

Studies and various researches indicate a direct relationship between the overall exercise and how much is felt at a later time.

Physical activities during the day need to be increased steadily as your goal is to provide enough stimulation to the body during daytime so that the energy level decreases at night.

A certain dosage of physical activity is required for the body for healthy functioning.

Another significant thing to ensure is that you should not work out for at least two or three hours before bedtime. Give the body time to relax before sleep.



Best Time to Exercise

An ideal time to exercise is either early morning or late afternoon. Ensure you make full use of the active physical energy before your body gets ready to rest and it's time to sleep.

Types of Exercise

Start with brisk walking or even something equally as simple.

The significant goal is to increase the heart rate by strengthening the capacity of your lungs.

By adding regular work outs to your daily and weekly agenda, you will notice your overall health and mind improve over time.

Apart from walking and running, there are various other work-out activities which could be added or alternated into your daily schedule so that your level of physical activity is increased.

If sleeping is still feeling like a battle, you can try aerobic/cardio exercise as one of the better options.

As you exercise, your goal should be to increase the quantity of oxygen reaching your blood stream.

There are different types of cardio work outs to choose from.

Several activities include biking, running, using treadmills, skipping or even dancing which are all good forms of exercise.

To rectify the insomnia problem, there are a few nonaerobic exercises which you may find beneficial.

A few of them are suggested below.

Yoga

Yoga is one form of exercise that shows a stimulatory effect upon the nervous system, and most importantly the brain.



Yoga postures and breathing techniques increase the blood circulation towards the brain.

This greatly assists in helping to obtain regular and relaxing sleeping patterns.

The customary practice of yoga would also assist you in relaxing and relieving you of all stress and tensions.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi refers to an ancient martial art technique of movement and breathing which was developed by Chinese Monks.

All movements involved in Tai Chi are precise and slow which is ideal in cases of joint pains or especially if one is unable to take part in vigorous aerobic exercises. Tai Chi promotes relaxation, helps with joint movement and helps insomnia.



Small Crunches

Try to sneak few moments of activity into your schedule if you feel that you don't have enough time for exercising on everyday basis.

Ensure to take stairs instead of elevators, when possible.

Even such little things can provide wonders to your body.



Be certain to have your car parked at a responsible distance so that you can walk that extra block or two towards your destination.

There are many other small things which could add to increase the mobility and activities in your life. Be Creative!

The essential goal is to achieve a balanced and healthy life with ample sleep.

Exercise and Your Complexion

Exercising assists in many things including the enhancing of complexion.

The extra blood flow created by exercise allows more oxygen to flow around the body improving your skin complexion.

Know your complexion could change wonderfully with the right exercises.

Goodness from inside the body can be achieved with the right exercise.

You can stay trim, have energy boosted and tone your muscles when you exercise.

However, what many don't know about is the complexion enhancement which takes place as you exercise.

Your desired complexion could be assisted with regular exercising.

Exercising regularly will nourish the skin on your body with oxygen, fresh blood and nutrients.

Toxins are drawn out of your body and vital organs are improved, especially the epidermis, when there is generous amount of blood flow and with appropriate blood circulation, the results are gained from exercising.

Sweating Wonders

Many people feel that sweat triggers acne or pimple flare-ups.

Essentially, sweating is good for any kind of congested skin as it assists in promoting the flushing of different impurities from the epidermal layer and cleansing all of your pores.

Exercising vigorously could correct the hormonal imbalances that trigger spots and blemishes. And it can also reduce the likelihood of future outbreaks.

Acne

Physical routines like running, biking, yoga, boxing, Pilates, spinning, etc can help in reducing the life stresses which you can encounter on a regular basis.

This could prevent the causes that create stress related acne.

But always remember that exercising is never a miracle cure for all troubles.

There will be experiences of breakouts every now and then, even though the acne could get less severe and last for a shorter comparative time frame.

Aged skin

Exercising is good for many skin conditions.

When the skin becomes thin, less resilient or loses elasticity, it shows signs of aging and is very common when you get older.

Exercising assists in the tightening of the skin.

When people get older, they lose collagen giving them a very tired look on the face, neck, arm and other areas of the body.

Most of us are unaware of the fact that physical activity promotes good growth of collagen within the skin cells, plumping up facial skin and giving you a younger and more vibrant look.

Relax with Wrinkles

Most people are worried about wrinkles!

In such cases, it is advised to relax after exercising (if you have worked out hard enough, this is all you will want to do)!

Relaxing has an effect of softening your muscles, especially facial muscles. You could conversely state that the lines on your face would appear more less pronounced, this can help towards the more youthful look that you probably want.

As you exercise you could achieve a sleek waist, better toned muscle, softer skin, and less blemishes with an altogether younger and fresher look.

If you wish to change or better your existing complexion, you must show some dedication in your work outs.

Exercise will not just assist you with liveliness but improve the body as well.

Just by sparing a little time from your schedule on a regular basis for exercising, is all that one needs to do.

What Is Stretching?

The goal of stretching is quite simple.

By providing a stretch to the muscle, the range of motion of the joint will be increased to some degree.

Since you were a child, you have been told that stretching is something that you should always be doing.

It doesn't matter if you are just getting up for the day or you are going for a five-km run, stretching is something that you've been told must happen.

The truth is that this is very true.

Although most individuals will say that they know stretching is important, most don't know why it is.

Of course, that could also be that most don't do it as well.

Understanding what happens during stretching will help you to understand why you need to do it.



Stretching. First, The Science

When your muscles are stretched, the muscle fibres are lengthened.

They are pulled out. But, some of those fibres do stay intact at their resting, or normal size.

When you lengthen the muscle to its fullest state, you keep it from becoming injured or otherwise compromised.

When your body is at rest the muscles are at rest, they are not fully ready to be used.

The longer the muscles are at rest, the tighter and shorter they become.

If you consider the exercises you will be doing with your muscles, you will see that you will need full range of motion with your muscles.

For example, if you need to extend the muscles in your legs so that you can run and they aren't fully stretched, there are problems.

First, the muscles are too tight which causes the lack of full function.

Secondly, the muscles are tight which can lead to injury if you pull them out too far.

As you can see, it is quite important for you to take the time to stretch.

By not doing so, you limit what your body can and can't do.

You also put yourself at a real risk of injury if you try to extend those muscles beyond the point of where they are.

The stretching goal is to provide yourself with muscles that are completely flexible, nimble, even and that help you to complete your tasks in the best possible safest manner.

To do this, you must add a stretching workout to your day.

You should consider what stretching can do to improve your body.

Stretching Before Your Work-out

Before you get started with your workout, take a few minutes to stretch.

Work on stretching each of your muscles groups and rotating all your joints from the head down to your toes.

Relax as you stretch and allow your body to really feel the stretching happening.

When this happens, you will fully wake up your body so that it can experience the full benefit of the workout that is to come.

In addition, you'll be able to provide your body with the best protection.

Once you have safely, slowly and actively stretched each muscle group in your body, you can begin your workout.

Why Should You Stretch After Your Work-out?

After you have completed your workout, it is time to begin stretching again.

The stretching that you do before you work out allows your body to be prepared and avoid injury.

The stretching that you will be doing after exercise helps your body to relax and begin to repair the muscles and so helps you to be a lot less sore in the days to come.

By stretching after exercise, you allow your body to cool down and to come to terms with the routine that you just completed.

Stretching in this manner allows you to feel good before, during and after your workout.

Not only do you get more from that workout because you did the stretching, but you also keep yourself from being hurt along the way.

This allows for the most overall beneficial workout that you can gain.

This will mean that you won't be too sore for your next work out.

All of this goes toward helping you lose weight faster and more effectively.

Stretching is something that should be done because it can help you to perform to a fuller degree as well as to help you to prevent injury.

If you don't stretch enough, you may not be able to perform as well with the type of activities that you are looking to do.

Stretching in the right manner is almost a requirement for safety!

Why Do Stretching?

Sure, your gym teacher in elementary school talked about stretching, but why should you do it now?

You are fit.

You are completely comfortable before and after your workout.

So, what is it that you could possibly gain from a few simple and boring stretches?

Unfortunately, this frame of mind is one that will leave you with the potential to be at risk of injury.

In fact, in some instances, athletes have reported an injury rate of 50 percent less from overextending injuries when they do stretches as compared to those that do not stretch.

It is worth the few extra minutes to make this happen.

Here are a few of the things you'll gain by stretching before and after your workout:

- ❖ Stretching provides flexibility to your body.

- ❖ This flexibility is essential to gain a full range of motion for the exercise or physical challenge you plan to put your body through.
- ❖ Stretching helps to prevent soreness after your workout.
- ❖ That dull pain that means you did have a good workout can be lessened. In fact, stretching helps to prepare your muscles to recover faster as well as promotes good muscle growth.
- ❖ Stretching helps to prevent problems with your posture too. With more 'well build muscles', your body can move easier and more effectively.
- ❖ Stretches will increase your range of motion, allowing you to gain muscle faster.
- ❖ Stretching keeps your muscles healthy, not only right now but well into the future beyond your active years of exercise.
- ❖ You reduce the risk of injury when you perform stretches that are appropriate for the activity that you will be doing before you do it.
- ❖ Stretching helps to build larger muscles that are better capable of fitting your needs and muscles help burn fat faster.
- ❖ Stretching also helps your muscles look more natural, more toned and more alluring.

Stretching is essential for everyone that has a need or want to work out.

No matter if you are working out because you need to lose weight, you want to build muscles or just because you plan to run a 5 Klm run next week. Adding stretching into your workout will aid you in becoming a well-built fat-burning muscle machine!

Stretching and Weight Loss

If you are trying to lose weight, stretching should be part of that process. There is nothing like getting started with weight loss exercises and feeling that dull ache running through your body. If you are even slightly overweight, exercising is hard work and it is quite taxing on your body as well as your mind.

One way that you can improve the way that exercise affects your body is to stretch before and after each of the workouts that you do.

While stretching itself won't allow you to lose weight, it prepares your body for all that is to come later.

That's what you need to take into consideration.

Taking A New Look at Diet and Fitness

Over the last decades, health and fitness has become an increasing concern for most of us.

Some people crave a killer body and the attention that comes with it.

Others want the perfect abs, a tighter bottom, or bulging biceps.

The result of this movement has been a proliferation of gyms, health centres, spas, and personal trainers.

Ads for exercise equipment, weight loss products, and star-sponsored fitness routines dominate television, and it's hard not to think you're the only one out there who isn't working on your body.

In fact, the perfect body is only one part of a healthy, quality lifestyle.

Being truly healthy requires a healthy lifestyle and a proper, balanced diet.

Diet for fitness provides the nutrition and energy you need to restore tired muscles and maintain a positive productive energy level.

Think of the various diet approaches there are –

- ❖ high carb,
- ❖ low-fat,
- ❖ all-protein,
- ❖ sugar-free,
- ❖ vegan,
- ❖ Atkins,
- ❖ So many more!

There is no shortage of great-sounding fad diets out there.

If you pay attention to advertisements and special programs that focus on dieting and weight loss programs, you may not know where to turn for dependable, honest facts about nutrition and health.

In fact, most fad diets don't work, and they sure don't support your health.

So, what can you do to find out what's best, and most healthy, for you?

There are two basic diet approaches: high-carb diets and high-fat diets.

High-carb diets focus on eating lots of carbohydrate-rich foods, and high-fat diets endorse fat-rich foods.

High carb diets burn the [glycogen](#) in your liver and muscles.

This glucose complex provides quick energy that you use in anaerobic exercises.

Fats are the richest source of calories, containing more than twice as much calorie value than either carbohydrates or proteins.

When metabolising carbohydrates, the human body burns 24 calories, yet it only takes three calories to burn the same amount of fat.

So, which one is best?

Neither.

Each diet approach yields results, so long as you stick to one type.

You can adopt a high-carb, low-fat diet or a low-carb, high-fat diet.

Just don't try both at the same time unless you want to gain weight.

But diets shouldn't be just about losing fat.

A healthy balanced diet maintains a healthy weight and avoids weight gains.

Successful weight loss can only be realised when the daily diet reflects lifestyle, individual food preferences, unique physical needs, and feeling satisfied with what you eat.

There's only one diet that will work for you. That's the diet that helps you stay fit, feeling healthy and satisfied with who you are.

And that diet is unique to you.

When you diet for fitness, there are three things to remember: moderation, variation, and balance.

Plan your meal schedule so that you don't get too full or too hungry at any time of day.

This may mean three meals, five meals, or one meal. It depends your schedule and your physical needs.

Moderation means eating when you need to and eating the amount that satisfies without adding calories that your body will only store as fat.

Balance means selecting a healthy diversity - the basic food groups.

It means getting the proper amounts of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and fibre to keep your body functioning at its highest potential.

Variation means giving yourself enough choice to keep interested in the foods you eat.

Eating the same things all the time is not only boring, it's unhealthy.

Having a salad one time and chicken the next will assure you get both the nutrition and the diversity you need.

The bottom line is that important decision isn't what diet program will work.

It's about what diet program will work to keep YOU fit and healthy.

It doesn't mean going on a fad diet for a few weeks or months and then going back to your old habits.

It means adopting a well-balanced, nutritious diet in combination with regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle and sticking to it - for life!

One last word of advice: experiment.

Try new foods to keep your diet interesting and nutritious.

Try new recipes to get a new take on the familiar. Who knows? You might even learn to love kale!

The best advice is, **“Get advice from a professional nutritionist.”**

Learn the Benefits of Regular, Moderate Exercise

Which do you prefer, aerobic or anaerobic exercises?

Do you know the difference?

Does it make a difference?

Not really.

The words aerobic and anaerobic represent different ways the body gets energy for exercise.

In aerobic, meaning with oxygen, exercise involves or uses oxygen to fuel metabolism, and the main fuel comes from burning fat.

This type of exercise involves relatively less muscle fatigue.

Aerobic exercise is of moderate intensity.

Anaerobic, or without oxygen, exercise is higher intensity exercise where the muscles rely on fuels other than oxygen.

Anaerobic exercise burns sugar as the main source of fuel.

Either way, you still burn fat.

Light exercise cleans out lactic acid (a waste product) and stimulates cell regeneration.

To burn fat, rather than sugar, there are several things to remember:

Breathe deeply.

Use your diaphragm to draw in air, through your nose, and hold the breath for a few seconds. Then exhale through your mouth.

Exercise at a comfortable level. If 10 is extreme exertion, exercise at a 7.

You should still be able to carry on a normal conversation while you work out.

Doing this for 45 minutes a day will restore energy and make you feel great!

You may think you don't have time to exercise, but you should make time.

The benefits to your health and well-being far outweigh the cost in time.

Since proper exercise increases energy, you won't need to sleep as much as you have in the past.

So, take a little of your night-time sleep to exercise.

You'll be better for it.

Or use your lunch break to exercise instead of having a heavy lunch that adds fat.

Your productivity will increase.

You'll be more alert and energetic.

And the time you save in added productivity can be applied to those other important tasks you aren't willing to trade for exercise.

Water and Exercise

Poet W.H. Auden said it best:

"Thousands have lived without love, not one without water."

As much as 75% of the human body is water and human beings can't survive without water.

The fact is we can only live for three days without drinking water.

When you consider how long we live without it, water is the most important nutrient in your life.



It's important to remember that water is not only healthy, it's necessary for leading a longer, better quality life.

Individual needs for water varies greatly with lifestyle, weight, and environment.

- ❖ People who exercise a lot need more water.
- ❖ People who weigh heavier need more water.
- ❖ People in dry climates need more water.

Research shows that more than two-thirds of adults don't drink as much water as they should each day.

Drinking enough water replenishes your body and keeps it well-hydrated, allowing it to function as it should.

Water carries oxygen and nutrients throughout our bodies in our blood, and it removes wastes when we sweat or urinate.

Water is important for joint health. And though it offers no energy value, water makes it possible for us to digest our food.

Most of us drink water only when we are thirsty. Mistake!!

Waiting to be thirsty is not the best way to judge your body's needs. In truth, we don't get thirsty until we're already dehydrated!

Dehydration is a common cause of fatigue.

It can also contribute to headaches, dizziness, low blood pressure, and a variety of other minor symptoms.

At its worst, untreated dehydration can lead to hallucinations, loss of consciousness, and even death.

In general, people need to drink at least 2 litres (or 8 cups) of water every day.

People who exercise, carry more weight, or live in dry climates should drink enough water to replace what they lose through sweating.

You might think that any beverage containing water would meet your water needs.

But that's not true.

Other drinks – like sodas, coffee, alcohol - may even deplete your body's water level because they act as a diuretic and cause us to urinate more when we drink them.

In fact, while you may think you're getting more water when you drink these types of beverages, you're really losing it almost as fast as you drink it.

You need more water when you exercise.

Working or working out cause you to perspire, increasing the rate at which you lose the water in your system.

This is true in cold weather as much as in warm climates.

Professionals advise us to drink 1-2 cups of water before we exercise and to continue to drink water as our exercise continues.

Your body even loses water while you sleep.

Drinking a glass or more of water before you go to sleep will help you wake up refreshed and energetic.

Illness is a very important reason to drink more water than usual.

Colds and flu dehydrate our bodies quickly and make us feel even more sick.

You can help to prevent this by drinking more water during the times you're sick.

So is bottled water is better than water from the tap?

In fact, tap water is highly regulated by the government. Unless your local water system is out of compliance with regulations, your tap water is safe to drink.

Bottled water, on the other hand, is not subject to such stringent requirements.

Of course, bottled water is much more expensive than water from the tap and of course the resulting plastic bottle pollution is problem all on its own.

But you should investigate this subject on your own to find out what type of water best meets your needs.

For a long, healthy life, drink a glass or two of water several times each day.

Carry water with you whenever you can, and drink throughout the day.

It's also a good idea to develop the practice of drinking water instead of other drinks that don't replenish your body's nutrients.

Water is necessary for life and for health.

Developing and maintaining healthy habits is one easy way to assure a long, healthy life.

Remember, drink at least two litres of water every day.

Outdoor Exercise and Fitness

People are becoming more and more aware of the importance of fitness and exercise.

Whether inside or outdoors, you'll see people working to get and stay healthy.

Outdoor exercise is a particularly good way to improve your health and enjoy life at the same time!

Gyms are a wonderful asset to people who can afford them, and for people who have the discipline to keep coming back after they've paid their membership dues.

Home gyms are effective ways to work out for people with lots of space and money.

Sports and organised activities are a good way for social types to take care of their health while they are "seeing" and "being seen."

But what about those who live simply - who are happy playing with their kids or their dog, who don't need or want the structure of a gym, who can't afford expensive equipment, who can't work out and talk at the same time, and who don't like competition.

Are they oddballs? **No!**

Exercising outdoors is a fun, simple way to keep fit and enjoy nature.

Outdoor exercise doesn't cost much. It's practically free. It doesn't require a lot of preparation. And it is a healthy lifestyle choice for anyone.

Among the many benefits of outdoor exercise are:

- ❖ you can do it without equipment.
- ❖ you don't have to mess with crowded gyms and perhaps obnoxious people.
- ❖ you don't have to make a long trip to get there.
- ❖ you can breathe fresh air and feel the wind in your hair.
- ❖ you don't have to pay a membership fee or make a down-payment.
- ❖ you don't have to put on that special outfit.
- ❖ you don't have to wear makeup.
- ❖ you do get lots of sunshine and vitamin D for health bones and skin.
- ❖ you can do it anytime, anywhere you want to.

Having established that outdoor exercise is a great way to stay fit and enjoy a healthy life, you might be wondering what to do when you get outside.

Here are seven (there are lots more) popular outdoor exercises that you can do in the privacy of your back yard and will give you a good work out and leave you feeling sweaty, exhausted, and feeling absolutely great!

*** Lunges**

A wonderful outdoor exercise, this is a great way to work your bottom and hamstrings. Lunges come in many different variations.

Here is the basic drop-knee style.

Stand with your feet about three feet apart with your knees at a 90-degree angle. Bend your knees and lower back toward the ground, making sure your heel is flat to the ground and your knees are directly over the centre of your feet.

Keep your upper body straight as you push through the front heel and return to the starting position. Don't lock your knees. Just repeat in a flowing motion.

*** Push-ups**

Great for your upper body, push-ups also have many variations, including standard, wide, and close grips.

They're a perfect outdoor exercise, and if you rotate the three movements, you'll work more muscle groups and get a better result.

For easier motion, elevate your hands. For more resistance, elevate your feet.

If you're really brave, try clapping your hands as you bounce.

Start with your back and knees straight and parallel to the ground.

Slowly lower your body until your nose touches the ground and then return to your starting position with a quick upward press.

Repeat as many times as you can without over-stressing.

*** Squats**

Very easy to do for outdoor exercise, if they're done the right way, squats have tremendous power.

If done improperly, they're less effective.

Squats also have many variations - standing, one leg, wide-stance, pile, and overhead.

As you do repetitions, you'll feel your legs getting tired.

This is a good thing.

They're great for developing your hips, butt, and thighs.

Stand evenly with your feet apart, Keep your back straight and your stomach in. Your knees should be just behind your toes.

Squat to the height of a chair and squeeze your butt as you stand.

Repeat.

For more vigorous exercise, hold weights in your hands as you squat.

* **Step-ups**

Done properly, this can be a brutal outdoor exercise. You can use a bench or stair step as your equipment.

All you need to do is step up and down, being sure to hold your head up and your back straight. Stand behind the platform (weights in hand for more power).

Put your right foot on the bench, transferring your weight to the heel as you come into the step. Use your right leg only, using your left leg for balance.

Slowly step back. Repeat this at least 10 times with your right leg before switching to the left.

* **Chin-ups**

Also known as pull-ups.

You can use a tree branch or playground equipment.

Grab your pull-up bar with an overhand grip.

Your grip should be just wider than your shoulders.

Lift your body upward as high as you can and return gently (don't fall keep it under control) to your starting position.

Repeat the movement as many times as you can. This outdoor exercise will get the sweat going!

* **Uphill sprints**

The essential outdoor exercise, all you need to do is find a hillside, and run up it as fast as you can. It's a lot tougher if you have sand dunes available.

Walk down and repeat.

*** Duck walks**

For the un-embarrassed!

Simple, but hard, this outdoor exercise will give you strong legs and endurance.

Simply squat until your thighs are parallel to the ground.

Walk in that position about ten steps, and then return.

Repeat as much as you can (probably won't be much!).

Doing outdoor exercise is a good workout.

If done properly, these outdoor exercises will give you benefits as good, if not better than you'll get in the fanciest gym in town using the most expensive equipment on the floor.

Outdoor exercise also lets you remember how great it is to be outside, rain or shine, breathing fresh air and listening to the birds sing.

So, go to it!

Try some outdoor exercise now!

Six Fitness Tips: Improving the Quality of Life

The term "physical fitness" describes a human body that can function without becoming too fatigued.

That is, the body stores enough energy to work, play, and meet physical stresses with awareness and vigour.

Your level of alertness, endurance and strength, heart rate, and blood pressure are good indicators of your physical fitness.

Beyond these basic measures, your degree of coordination, flexibility, and agility also reflect how fit you are.

Doctors use stress testing to measure your body's ability to respond to sustained powerful physical demands to analyse your physical fitness and diagnose problems.

Regular systematic exercise is one way to condition the body and improve physical fitness.

Daily moderate activity can maintain your body's ability to cope with the ordinary stresses of life without injury or illness.

But to improve health and fitness, you need to adopt and stick to a regular, intensive exercise program to promote improved vitality and maintain high functioning physiological systems.

Here are seven tips that will help you improve your health and the quality of your life:

1. Exercise daily.

Whether through a formal workout or through normal activities, you should do activities that raise your heart rate.

Aerobic routines are an excellent way to raise your heart rate over time, but you can accomplish the same goal when you attend to household and work chores. Making healthy choices, like walking instead of driving, can raise your heart rate. Using a push lawn mower instead or climbing stairs instead of using the elevator are also excellent examples of things you can do to exercise every day.

2. Eat more fruits and vegetables.

The convenience of fast and processed foods is a threat to your good health. Try to establish and follow a better diet that contains plenty of dark green vegetables and fruit.

They provide energy, essential nutrients, and fibre.

Try to find organic products that have not been treated with chemical fertilisers or pesticides.

3. Train with weights.

Strength training builds healthy muscles and bones and increases endurance.

Working out with weights can be as simple as using hand-held dumbbells or as complicated as state-of-the-art weight training machines.

Weight training builds strength but also helps you reduce body fat and develop more defined muscles.

4. Try circuit training.

When you circuit train, you combine weight training with aerobic exercises to get a more balanced workout.

You build muscle strength and tone as well as getting a good cardiovascular workout.

In rapid succession, you can go through a set of strength building weight exercises, then aerobic movements like squats, push-ups, trusts, or jumping jacks. When you finish the cycle, you begin again with the weights and repeat the circuit.

5. Stretch your muscles.

Especially important for a warm-up before strenuous exercise, resistance training that uses elastic tension to strengthen and tone muscles through sustained stretching.

Stretching helps improve flexibility and strength and gives you greater mobility and range of motion.

It also decreases your risk of injury.

Stretching before and after strenuous exercise prevents strain, warms up the heart rate, and makes your muscles more flexible.

6. Get plenty of fluids.

Our bodies are mostly water, and water is the most essential nutrient for life.

When we exercise, we lose water and important minerals that keep our muscles well-toned and our brains sharp and clear.

Every human being should drink at least eight cups of water every day, and more active people should drink more.

Those on detox diets, who are clearing impurities and toxins from their bodies, should drink double the water dosage per day.

Some drinks - coffee, tea, soda, and alcohol - cause dehydration and should not be consumed during or after exercise.

These simple strategies will help keep your body fit and healthy, yet it's easy to lose sight of their importance to daily living.

People fail to integrate regular exercise into their routine for a variety of reasons.

Perhaps they feel time pressures due to family and work demands.

Or maybe they think they need to join a gym to get healthy exercise.

Maybe they are interested in other hobbies and interests and they're not willing to "sacrifice" for the sake of exercise.

Unfortunately, exercise is not a luxury.

It's a necessary part of maintaining good health and fitness.

Consider the costs of not exercising enough:

- ❖ more injuries from poor coordination and agility.
- ❖ more illnesses due to impaired resistance.
- ❖ greater physical and psychological stress.
- ❖ greater likelihood of poor health resulting from being overweight or obese.
- ❖ limited mental agility and clarity.
- ❖ greater vulnerability to specific serious diseases.
- ❖ greater likelihood of needing major surgery later in life.

The truth is we can't afford not to get regular exercise.

Being physically fit isn't just a way to keep a toned, sexy body.

It's a way to build and have a better quality of life.

Exercise doesn't just improve you physically.

It improves your emotional balance and helps you cope with common stresses.

It promotes positive, healthy attitudes and transforms negative thinking.

It helps you work through destructive emotions like anger, thereby reducing consequences of ill-advised behaviour.

It makes you a better, more vibrant companion for family and friends, and it relieves boredom.

So next time you plan and set priorities for your day, put exercise and fitness at the top of your list!

Exercise and Play

Many children return from an afternoon's play looking exhausted and feeling ready for a nap.

For kids, play is very hard work.

Play for children is more than just play.

It's a way to grow physically, socially, and emotionally and helps them become responsible productive adults.

Busy parents, with their jobs and adult responsibilities, may be tempted to set their kids about homework and household chores rather than sending them outside to play or giving them a book or art supplies.

But parents need to remember how important play can be in making their children ready to eventually enter the adult world as mature, happy participants.

Zoologists and anthropologists recognize the importance of play to the young of most mammal species.

Play is essential to healthy development, both physically and socially.

The most healthy, well-adjusted adults are people who played as children, both alone and with others.

In addition to helping us develop sharp motor skills and strong, healthy bones and muscles, play helps us develop as members of a larger community.

Participating in organised sports, playing organised games, and being part of a close-knit team makes us more human and teaches us how to relate to other humans throughout our lives.

In the modern world of business, play is essential to learn the skills necessary to succeed professionally.

What do we learn while we play?

- ❖ how to interpret body language.
- ❖ how to cope with conflict.
- ❖ how to enjoy nature.
- ❖ how to communicate our ideas to others.
- ❖ how to use our imagination to find practical solution.
- ❖ how to enjoy simple activities and other people.

- ❖ how to share and cooperate.
- ❖ how to value the contributions of others.
- ❖ how to be a productive member of a productive team.

Play is also important to self-discovery.

In addition to building a physically healthy body, play helps us learn what our strengths and limitations are.

It helps us learn to control human-animal instincts like aggression, anger, and violence.

Through play, we learn our society's customs and language and become a part of our culture.

In play, we learn to imagine and innovate to reach our goals and solve our problems.

Play helps to teach us how to understand the messages our body sends to our brains.

Throwing a ball at a target, responding to a signal, and communicating through facial expressions are subtle ways to communicate.

As we play, we learn how to interpret and communicate those subtle messages.

Through play, we learn about nature and the environment.

The benefits of play continue to repay us throughout our lives.

Our bodies are stronger, and we live a better quality of life because we developed strong bones and muscles.

Our minds are sharper, and our social skills are better because we learned how to work (through play) with others for positive results.

We are more well-rounded emotionally and psychologically because we learned to identify our own needs and the needs of others, negotiate, and resolve conflicts.

Finally, we learned to deal with stress through physical activity and exercise.

Remember that play is a critical part of learning how to live in the world.

Children will get their chores done but make play an important priority in your household.

Adults should learn to play more, to remember your childhood and embrace it.

Play Sports for Fun and Fitness

What do you think of when you hear the term "sports fitness"?

Do you see football players on the field, soccer players scuffling over a ball, a volleyball team at the beach, or a tennis match?

There is a tendency to understand the term to mean the sport itself, rather than a way to stay fit.



People engage in sports for specific recreation-related reasons like entertainment, competition, or self-satisfaction.

Because sports involve physical activity, most fitness experts and health care professionals know that sports are one way to stay fit and healthy.

Sports fitness, as opposed to "exercise" or "physical fitness," however, involves developing a skill or ability.

Sports fitness is an opportunity for personal growth.

Sports enthusiasts may be more likely to maintain a healthy lifestyle (although some would question that assertion) because of the inherent discipline and physical demands.

But sports fitness can also mean weight loss, better mobility, greater energy, and a host of the things we use to describe good health.

Sports fitness is a character-building pursuit.

Sports do teach people to value their health.

Without health, they couldn't maintain the energy and vitality necessary to participate.

Especially if they are in professional sports, their livelihood may depend on their fitness and health.

Sports fitness is a lifestyle.

Let's assume, for a minute, that you are a person who needs more exercise to get or stay physically fit and healthy.

You have many options: gyms, health centres, home exercise.

You can do aerobic exercise routines, undertake a weight training program, or spend hours on an exercise bike or treadmill.

Those are all beneficial activities.

But some of us find them boring.

We won't stick to them because we're not having fun.

Sports fitness is fun!

One way to get healthy and have fun at the same time is to pursue sports fitness.

You can get your workout on the basketball court or baseball field.

You can enter swimming competitions or run marathons.

These exercise routines involve other people, interaction, and FUN!

Reaching Your Body's Full Potential

Most people might define being fit as having rippling muscles, superman strength, and a body builder build.

But really, fitness is less sexy and more fundamental.

It means having the proper resistance level and stamina to endure sustained physical activity.

Peak fitness is that point where you're meeting your body's potential in strength and stamina.

And physical fitness isn't just for young people. All of us should maintain peak fitness - whether we're the busy young parent, the middle-aged professional, or the older retiree.

Keeping our bodies in peak condition is fundamental to good health and a long, quality life.

There's more to peak fitness than a good build and having the muscles of a construction worker.

It means adhering to healthy habits in what you eat, how much rest you get, and a variety of exercise to develop different muscle groups and maximum stamina.

It means giving your body what it needs to perform at your fullest potential.

Giving your body a healthy balance of energy-building foods (and their calories) is essential to a good fitness program.

That doesn't have to mean cutting out calorie-rich foods to lose weight.

You need calories to have energy.

They are the fuel necessary for the most tasks.

Fibre is important to a healthy diet and peak fitness. It promotes healthy digestion and waste processing.

Fibre-rich foods like unpolished rice, fruits and vegetables, and stone-ground natural wheat fill you up and reduce the temptation to eat too much.

Daily intake of green vegetables and fruits gives you the vitamins and minerals that build stamina and help you resist disease.

You can't achieve peak fitness without a healthy balanced diet.

Sedentary lifestyles make peak fitness impossible.

Movement and exercise keeps you active and interesting.

Making physical activity and exercise a daily habit builds stamina and strength and promotes healthy living.

People who aren't active tend to gain weight from fat, and they're more vulnerable to injury and illness than physically active people.

Just as little as ten minutes a day of active exercise will help you maintain your fitness.

That can be as simple as climbing stairs and stretching to working on the treadmill or exercise bike.

One caution: don't abuse your body in your effort to get and maintain peak fitness.

You can overdo it.

Your body needs a balance of activity and rest to maintain health and peak fitness.

Too much or too little physical exertion are equally dangerous.

Sleep is necessary for your body to refresh and renew tissues and organs, particularly your brain.

While individual needs vary, you should probably get at least six hours of sleep every night.

A good night's sleep helps you recharge and helps your body function at its best. You'll wake refreshed, full of energy and enthusiasm, feeling alive and ready to go.

It's a fundamental contributor to peak fitness.

One way to assess your level of health and fitness is to be aware of your body's response to stress.

First, peak fitness means you're able to respond quickly to emergencies.

Like a well-oiled machine, your joints won't slow you down with creaks and catches when you're at your peak fitness level.

Motions will be smooth and comfortable.

Second, stress produces illness in less than-fit bodies.

If you have colds, flu, headaches, or stomach problems, you probably aren't at peak fitness.

Stress lowers immunity, and healthy bodies have healthy immune responses that result in fewer, less serious illnesses.

Some scientists believe that peak fitness is a great way to prevent more serious diseases like cancer.

So, if you want to get to and stay at your peak fitness level, be sure to eat a well-balanced healthy diet, get regular exercise, and adopt a positive active lifestyle.

Good Health and Fitness Is Easy and Free

You don't have to join a gym or buy expensive equipment to improve your health and become more fit.

There are many items in your home that you can use in an effective health and fitness program.

The important thing to health and fitness is getting good cardiovascular conditioning, developing stronger muscles, and building your strength and endurance.

You can't buy those, but you can earn them with a regular program that promotes your good health and fitness. Good health and fitness is an important goal if you want a long, happy life.

If you follow these basic guidelines, you can get all the exercise you need to improve your physical condition and psychological health. Use them to come up with your own health and fitness program.

1. Select an aerobic exercise that's fun for you and that you can do indoors or outside.

Choose from jogging, hiking, walking, running, playing soccer or tennis, or in-line skating. Cardiovascular conditioning or aerobic exercises can help you attain a total body workout, so be sure that, whatever you do, it's vigorous and sustained. Make sure your heart rate goes up and stays up for at least 20 minutes.

2. Use exercise videos to learn new exercises and have a leader to follow.

There are many interesting and innovative videos on the market today that offer a wide variety of activities, all of them designed to improve your health and fitness. If you can imagine it, someone's made a video to show you how and to keep you moving! Much less expensive than a gym or equipment, these videos give a great workout and some pretty good entertainment. Examples in addition to programs designed for specific parts of the body include kickboxing, body rock, belly dancing, power yoga, and salsa dancing.

3. Change the way you do things around the house and get a good workout.

Instead of using your power lawn mower, use a push mower. Vacuum the whole house. Carry your laundry basket or your groceries up and down the stairs a few times. Wear weights around your ankles and wrists as you go about your daily routine. There are many small ways to improve your health and fitness without even noticing it

4. Turn on your favourite dance music and dance.

See if you can do ballroom or hip hop. No need to be embarrassed - no one's watching. Just have fun. Try some modern dance. This is a great way to get some exercise, improve your health and fitness, and relieve stress.

5. Organise active social events.

Get your friends to join you in a game of touch football. Shoot a few baskets with the boys. Join a soccer team. Get a friend to take dancing lessons with you. Play tennis with your neighbour. Use exercise to build relationships and have a more active social life.

6. Organise any game activities with your friends.

It can include football, basketball, soccer, and more. Other activities that promote muscle workouts through body movements are also a good option.

7. Skip rope with the kids!

This is a very inexpensive and fun cardiovascular workout!

8. Rediscover your local parks.

Many of them have fitness trails you can follow with recommended exercises, instructions, and goals.

There's no excuse now.

It's all laid out before you.

All you need to do is get in motion.

These are just a few suggestions among a million things you could do to improve your health and fitness. Perhaps you've had some ideas of your own as you read the suggestions.

Give them a try.

Before you start any new exercise routine, keep these tips in mind:

❖ **Never start any exercise at full tilt.**

It's important to warm up and cool down when you're doing a workout. You can't have perfect health and fitness in one day. It's a process. Be patient. Start slow and work into a more vigorous routine. And ALWAYS do stretches before and after your workout.

❖ **Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day.**

Vary activities so you don't get bored with one thing. Keep it interesting but keep doing it no matter what. Great health and fitness is not an over-night proposition. And staying fit and healthy is a lifestyle, not a project.

❖ **Make sure you're using the proper clothing and equipment for the exercise you've chosen.**

Otherwise, you may injure yourself and delay the steady progress you hope for. When you dress, think of the temperature, whether inside or out. If you're exercising outside, be sure to wear proper clothing for the conditions. And if you can't exercise outside, you can still pursue your health and fitness program indoors.

❖ **Get a friend to join you.**

The buddy system is very effective for health and fitness programs. It makes exercising more fun and gives you a chance for some social time. It also makes it more likely that you'll stick to the program in the long run. You may even spark some healthy competition that will improve both of you!

❖ **Cross train.**

Change the exercises you do every day. Change the length of time you do them.

Keep some variety in your health and fitness program to prevent boredom and injury.

- ❖ **Always consult your health care provider before you start a new health and fitness program to be sure your plans support your unique physical circumstances.**

That way, you can't work against your own body. Your health care provider can recommend exercises that will strengthen you where your weakest without creating severe or long-term problems.

- ❖ **Don't stop at exercise.**

A comprehensive health and fitness program will include a healthy, well-balanced diet, reduce the sweets and increase the vitamins and minerals.

Don't go to the grocery store hungry and take a well-thought-out list that includes plenty of variety and delicious meals with you.

These suggestions are not hard to follow, but they do require discipline and commitment if your health and fitness program is to succeed.

Good health and a well-toned body are within your reach. All you need to do is work for them.

The benefits are without value –

- ❖ you'll live a longer,
- ❖ happier,
- ❖ better quality life.

So when will you start?

That time should be now, to delay is to do yourself a huge dis-service.

Please Note:

This is not meant to be a “How To” book.

It’s simply a collection of Thoughts and Ideas to get you thinking and hopefully take some Action towards improving your personal Health and Fitness.

Hope you enjoy!

Please seek professional help with any medical or exercise queries, don’t try and guess your way through and cause injuries to yourself.

Kim – Owner/Director of Beautifully Well Box

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